



## **Rough Canvas**

*Joey W. Hill*

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When his father dies, Thomas is forced to abandon a burgeoning art career in New York. As difficult as it was to give up his lifelong dream, it's nothing next to walking away from the man he loves. Marcus taught him to embrace who he is, a sexual submissive who responds to the touch of only one Master. But why would the sophisticated Marcus need some farm kid from the South?

Then Marcus shows up and offers him a way to continue his art career and help his family. There's only one hitch-he asks Thomas to spend a week with him in the Berkshires. Thomas knows he should refuse. But he's never been able to say no to his Master.

## **Rough Canvas Details**

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Author : Joey W. Hill

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Genre : Erotica, BdsM, Romance, M M Romance, Adult Fiction, Contemporary

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## From Reader Review Rough Canvas for online ebook

### Vishous says

I have heard so much about this book and I always put it aside for one fine day, but that day came early because I was "molested" by several GR friends to finally read it :D

I never read the blurb, but I read lots of reviews of my GR friends and all of them were high rated (mostly 5 stars).

The reason I was "afraid" to read it was one character - Thomas - because I was afraid he would remind me of one other character which I seriously didn't like and annoyed me.

You know that "pressure" when you know you have to read something and immediately backs you of the book... well I think that was the reason why I had a rocky start with it. I seriously thought about not finishing it, but I decided to take a break and catch up later. Honestly I am glad I didn't give up.

At first I did like it, especially when I read Marcus POV, but later it all went down for me. The reason it all went down for me were the club scenes. Don't get me wrong, I was not disturbed or anything by reading it, not even happy or aroused or some other emotion, I was simply indifferent and actually didn't have the joy of turning and reading next pages. Maybe that sounds a little weird but that was how I really felt.

Everything except that part I really enjoyed, the rest of the book I really loved.

I thought I would love Marcus POV more but it turned up that the only reason I finished this book was actually Thomas - the character I was dreading to read about. Funny, I know :D

I won't write about the story because there are dozens of reviews that will make you read the book as soon as possible, so I will only write how I felt about it in the end.

The whole idea of the story was really excellent, I think that is one of the most beautiful love stories I ever read. I always love to read about that struggle with feelings, with decisions you make, with fears of your actions and in this story you have it on basically every page.

The writing was simply amazing! I think that I never read so many breathtaking sentences in one book ever! I was literally mesmerized how beautiful it was written.

But through the first half of the book I had some issues. At first I didn't like Thomas that much, then I loved Marcus, then I loved Marcus with his POV, then I hated Marcus in Thomas POV, then I loved Thomas, then I hated Marcus in his POV etc. etc. etc.

It was pretty frustrated for me to read it, but then at the second half of the book it all changed. I believe the moment where it all changed for me was the moment when Thomas beat those assholes for hurting Marcus.

So here is what I think why was that moment essential for me to really start devouring the book - because I have mental issues and have to read about ALPHA gays, and even though Thomas was a submissive I kinda couldn't help but feel that deep down he has that beautiful, little, possessive, alpha feature even if it shows up only when protecting Marcus.

When it comes to characters I loved them and hated them, it really depended upon the chapter. I loved Thomas but hated his constant analyzing. I loved how he saw the things around him, and the things he valued. When it comes to Marcus I hated how he didn't want to say anything about him. And I usually hate that in any book... But I loved how he surrendered to Thomas in the end, and with him being a dom, made it

more beautiful.

So when it comes to the story I would have rated it 4 stars, but in the end when I reread some of the quotes I highlighted I will give it a 5 star just because the writing was seriously amazing.

The quotes that I loved the most were this:

**“I’ve never gotten in, so how the hell can I get out?” Thomas snarled. “You want me to be your family? You let family in. Knowing they’ll hurt you, you do it anyway, because that’s what love is. You let them in to hurt you, love you—”**  
**“Leave you?”**

**“But what I’ve realized is that you’re the true problem. What you feel you deserve, the faith you have in us. The question isn’t do I belong in this world of yours, but do you want me to belong in it?”**

**“That’s when I decided not to be afraid of anything. Then you came and I remembered that true fear is knowing you have something you can’t bear losing.”**

**“You understand the darkness without ever having been in it. You see the world as it is, all its misery and pain, all the beauty that somehow rises above it, and you accept all of it. You accept me.”**

So there Blacky and Shelly B, I told you not to be afraid of my review :D

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### **Allison ♡?Will Never Conquer Her TBR♡? says**

I LOVED THIS BOOK! Ten stars!

Oh my goodness. Such a compelling, intense, emotional, carnal, hot crazy ride! The love story of Marcus and Thomas. Marcus, the dominant rich, scarred soul in love with the simple artistic farm boy unwilling to own up to his feelings or commit to his love of another man. The writing was exquisite. It brought out the feelings and raw emotions between these two men. The sexual tension and scenes were scorching hot. This is my first read for this author but definitely not my last . I'm amazed a woman can so thoroughly capture the feelings these men encompassed for each other, the tug of war Thomas felt between his love of Marcus and his commitment to his family in North Carolina and, most importantly, the carnal need to completely dominate the soul of his submissive. It was so raw at times, then other times the heart wrenching love the men felt for each other was captivating. Such a great book. I'm amazed at the author's flawless ability to incorporate such strong romance, eroticism and dominance all rolled into one book. It seems these days a book weighs heavily in one area. Or if an author tries to venture into both romance and eroticism or BDSM, one comes up way short. Not in this book. Flawless. It will be a re-read for me for years to come.

## Gigi says

This is going right on my favorites shelf. Fantastic book. Heart wrenching, loving, spectacular. I can't say enough good things about this. MC Thomas is a sexual sadist, so if that isn't your cup of tea, you may want to skip this one, but the author does a great job of showcasing Thomas and his Master Marcus in a loving, consensual, committed relationship.

If you like high drama, deeply felt family issues, secrets waiting to be revealed, and a soul shattering passionate love between two men, I can **highly recommend** Rough Canvas.

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## Monique says

**This Book is.....AMAZING, WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL, EROTIC, INTENSE, FABULOUS and so much more.....This is an excellent read, please don't be like me and wait to discover the awe inspiring Author that is Joey W Hill.**

I started reading this book and was immediately drawn into the pages by the excellent writing of JWH, her prose flows beautifully, painting a vivid picture, immersing you into the book, grabbing tight and not letting go. Even when you have read the very last word and closed your Kindle, these characters are still with you.

Initially, I thought this would be a BDSM novel that revolves around the club scene and although we do have a glimpse of this, in the sexually intense scenes in chapter 8 and 9 (be warned, not for the faint hearted) this book is so much more than that.

This is the the story of Marcus, Master and Gallery Owner and Thomas, Slave and Aspiring Artist.

In brief, Thomas leaves New York, his life with Marcus and his life's passion of becoming an acclaimed artist behind, to return home to North Carolina when his Father falls ill. His Father dies then his brother has an accident with a tractor and is left crippled and in a wheelchair. This leaves Thomas no other alternative. As the eldest brother he is honour bound by his sense of duty and responsibility to those he loves to stay home and endure his new role as the Head of the family, taking control and running the Hardware Store, trying to live up to their expectations, not wanting to disappoint.

Without Marcus his Master, Thomas is a lost soul, existing rather than living, conforming, doing what is deemed to be right by his family and society.....but inside Thomas is drowning in his misery for what he really wants and needs. His submissive nature is taken advantage of by his bible thumping, religious, bigoted Mother and his bitter and broken Brother, who wallows in his own self pity. These two seriously had me considering anger management classes I was so cross!!!

**12 months later** Marcus walks into the store.....And. onto. the. page. of. my. Kindle.....a vision of beauty, perfect in every way, he demands attention with a look alone, the culture and elegance of a GQ model and an

arrogant confidence of knowing he gets what he wants!!...The epitome of a dominant, oozing sexuality from every pore and what he wants is.....Thomas. At this point a very sexy Mr Gandy popped into my head.....Fan!!! Mister!!! Cold shower!!!...OK, I'm good.

Thomas is in awe of Marcus (still drooling!!) This modest farm boy who is quite and shy and ill at ease with strangers, puts his Master on a pedestal to be worshipped, happy to be a slave at his perfect feet. He wants to be consumed by him, Marcus completes him, he wants nothing more than to serve him....desperate to obey his Master's will.

But...his sense of duty to the family that depends on him alone stops him from realising his own passions and dreams of becoming an accomplished artist in his own right, holding onto his heart, trying to protect himself from the pain and the deep ache inside he has had since leaving New York. Knowing if he lets down his guard, he will be lost to all that is....Marcus.

Marcus needs Thomas, just as much as Thomas needs Marcus. Thomas's artistic talent leaves him breathless, his survival is dependent on Thomas...he needs him, loves him, wants him in his life. But, succumbing to this and sharing his vulnerability would destabilise him. He needs to use all his strength and control to try to keep Thomas.....the man that holds his heart and life in his hands.

As a reader, we have an insight to both characters POV, giving us a window in which to gaze at their inner most thoughts, fears and delights, with neither of them aware of the complexities, deep emotion and the darkness buried deep within, that they are trying to keep hidden from each other. They cannot however, hide the emotional connection and the sexual tension that jumps off the pages and into your heart. They are lost souls needing each other, fitting together perfectly, their souls so intertwined that without each other they will never be whole. There is such a tenderness and beauty between them that it often brought me to tears, ripped me up and tore me apart.....my own heart breaking seeing the overwhelming love and devotion they have for each other.

This book is not all intense and dramatic, the Master/Slave relationship is in the bedroom, out of it there is a lot of humour between the two MC and the amazing cast of secondary characters. Kathy and Walter Briggs, I want them as my Grandparents...I just fell in love with them and Julie well, she has a wicked sense of humour and I want her as my new bestie.

**Authors Note.....Yes, I had to read it right to the very end!!!! Joey W Hill in her Authors Note, describes her writing as giving the reader a moment of magic through written words. Ms Hill, truer words have never been said.....Thank you for my moment of magic, it was truly AMAZING.**

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## **Blacky \*Romance Addict\* says**

**This is one of the best books I have read this year! The quality of the writing and the depth of emotion got me by surprise, I really didn't expect it to be this good. But WOW!**

If I had to describe this book with one word, it would be - **EMOTION**

It's there. All the time. In every sentence, in every scene. When they are together. When they are apart. Even with other characters. Just simply amazing.

I was hooked just with that first chapter. Thomas is dealing with his melancholy and memories of the one man he can't ever forget, and that man, Marcus, has just walked in his store offering a business deal. One week with Marcus doing a big order of paintings. After some reluctance, he accepts and their affair continues for that week alone. I won't go more into the story, if any of you decide to read it, it should be new and amazing and unexpected :)

I'll just say - Marcus and Thomas had the most amazing chemistry, it was full of passion and love, and so beautiful it shocked me because it doesn't happen very often that you can FEEL their love through the pages. In here, you can feel it all the freaking time! While reading the book, half of the time I wanted to cry (and I did a couple of times), the other half was fanning myself for all the hot sex scenes and clutching my stomach when it was too emotionally intense. There were some very sweet times, and I don't know why but I wanted to cry at those too. It's just that you know that they are going to go their own way once he finishes the paintings, so all the stuff they go through makes you sad.

Best scenes:

- when Thomas first sees Marcus in the store
- Marcus in the car after their first meeting
- their picnic, oh that was beautiful
- Thomas takes care of Marcus after the beating
- Thomas making the big painting that represents Marcus and him
- this one isn't my best, it was actually the most horrible scene in the book, but I have to put it here because it made me cry like a baby (view spoiler)
- Marcus losing it, and Thomas bringing him back after (view spoiler)
- although the ending was just a teeny weeny bit too sweet for my taste, it didn't do anything to rock my adoration for this book. Loved it all the same :)

So, I'll be looking for some other works from this author, this book is written in such a beautiful way, I want to read more like it

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## **Mo says**

**FLAGGED FOR A WORK OF ART... SOME RIGHT DICKHEADS OUT THERE**

Well this was going to be a 2 or 3 star read for me when I was about 40% in. Then it all sort of changed and I fell in love with the whole story. I did already love the characters a little bit but the writing became more poetic, the scenes became more special, the characters became more real.

The writing was truly beautiful.

**Wheat colored grass, flowing, rippling like a lover's muscles. Green flowing into the gold like interlocking fingers. Every part different, but all part of the whole. Birds spiraling and speaking in musical tongues, warbling, chirping, trebling the piercing shriek of a hawk. The occasional rasping calls of the crows, or the surprise of an owl's hoot as the sun rose, giving warmth, a dying god's gift, the promise of renewal as it moved inexorably toward the autumn cycle**

I just don't get the whole pleasure from pain thing so when that was going on I just wanted to leave it and read another book. But the five star reviews are all over the place so I knew there was something more.

I highlighted a lot of the second half of the book but am not going to leave quote after quote here, much as I would like to.

Families are funny really. You have a sort of love/hate relationship with them. I am a Catholic and I sort of thought the Bible tells us to be tolerant, to accept people for what they are. Gay, Straight, Rich, Poor, we are all the same in God's eyes. Thomas' mother is Catholic but I suppose she would be of the "old school" where Gay people were seen as evil. Actually she was a right fucking bitch for most of the book. I seriously would like to think if either of my sons came home and told me they were Gay that I would hug them and tell them that I had no problem with that.

**SOMETIMES WHEN YOU LOSE EVERYTHING, THE LAST THING YOU WANT TO DO IS REMEMBER. AND TELLING IS REMEMBERING**

Then we have the whole rural/urban setting. I am from a small village in the West of Ireland. Himself is from a city. He cannot understand how I could stand to grow up in a place like that.

Now I can understand his logic. I could not live there at this stage of my life. But when I was younger, I knew no different. It was home, it was family, it was friendship, it was my soul.

This is one book that I could just go on and on and on and on about but I won't. Thanks to Irene and the gang for ~~encouraging~~ *making* me read it. It truly was a beautiful love story.



Of course I would love an epilogue a few years down the road, just to see where they all are. I even wanted to see if Rory got his head out of his fucking ass and redeemed himself. Silly boy

**He only knew at one time he'd been able to translate all the raw emotion of life to a canvas. Despite how close that emotion cut to his own life, his soul had somehow found a safe haven from which to observe without becoming a paralyzed part of it**

**He had a bashful tendency to look away when he smiled, but the smile was sexy, black Irish**

Yeah, yeah, have to get an Irish bit in there!!

**YIN HAD TO HAVE A YANG**

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**Eda\*\* # Dax Lahn's Golden Tigress # says**

**\*\* 5+ "hold me together" STARS \*\***

***"But...who takes care of you?"***

***"YOU take care of me, pet. Just by breathing and existing, you take care of me in ways you can't imagine."***

*Oh wow... No words, man.*

This was such an emotional rollercoaster for me. I am exhausted and suffering from a massive headache right now, but it was so worth it!

**Marcus Stanton**, you sexy, affectionate, broken beast!

**\*\* FULL REVIEW TO COME!! \*\***

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### **Baba says**

[  
(hide spoiler)]

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### **Shannon The Show Stopper says**

Wow! I don't even know where to start with this book. I don't think I could ever come up with words to do this book justice...If I could, I'd be a writer....It's just that good. So should I try to be serious?

### **It dawned on me while reading this at some point...**

### **Now let's be clear so you're not confused...**

Yeah this book really had me all tore up in about a million different ways. My emotions were running as high as my libido. This was a first for me where if you'd taken away the sex, the book would still have been good. Ok, if you think I'm *suggesting* you take out the sex....Well

I'm just merely pointing out the fact there is a whole lot more to the story than the nookie. Now if you were to take everything out but the sex, you would still be left with a good read ;-D Although I would suggest investing in spare batteries.

This book seriously has it **ALL!**

- Excellent writing : I was blown away by the quality
- Complex characters
- Hot Men
- Even hotter sex
- Mystery & Intrigue

As two added bonuses it has had some authentic Southern characters and my own personal top fantasy.

All I can say is you should read Rough Canvas. You're missing out if don't.

## My final thoughts...

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### Mona says

**I tried not to spoil this book for anyone, but sorry if I did. My review consist of my opinion and feelings on this book. NOT the story line...that's what the book is for and also most of the awesome reviews featured on GR :D**

Where do I begin with my feeling and thoughts on this book. . .this story that pushed me out of a safe place. Protecting myself from words written in books that can tear my heart, instill feelings within me for characters that may seem fiction to others, but oh so real to me. A book that can force tears . . . tears from eyes unwilling to shed.

A story that showed me love that strips you down till you're vulnerable, love that holds the power to expose you to unbearable pain. A love you're willing to beg for, even when it hurts. This is Marcus and Thomas' love.

***"That's when I decided not to be afraid of anything. Then you came and I remembered true fear is knowing you have something you can't bear losing."***

I don't think, even with my feeble attempts, that I could express the depth and beauty of Marcus and Thomas' story. Their beautiful story that's so dark, but yet filled with light.

Together these two beautiful men were beyond intense, overwhelming in their passion and complete in their need for each other. It was amazing when they were together. And heartbreaking when I felt their pain and suffering, when torn apart.

***I don't understand what it's like to lose someone when I'm not expecting it. Have my heart torn from me and be told it's something I just have to accept it."***

At times I didn't think I could handle the intensity of Marcus and Thomas' intimacy, or the depths they took it too, if I wasn't so prepared and eased in to it by the author's talented words. Every word, every harsh scene added in was a necessity that built this story.

Even when I'm against having such a strong dominant and a submissive in stories (personal choice), I felt the importance of it being featured here between Marcus and Thomas. The role they played is a major one in helping them cope and survive the life their given and the past they've endured. But at the same time I didn't feel these roles were over used or forced on us readers.

There was still a lightness to their relationship when it was just Marcus and Thomas. Then when it changed to Master and slave I understand the need for it, Thomas' need to submit to Marcus as part of his nature, the person he truly is, even when he himself held back.

*Sssh...See yourself the way I see you. Feel the way my hands touch you, think about the way I look at you. I see all of you, Thomas. You think I don't, but I do..."*

*"You're mine. Just let go and see it."*

For Marcus' the importance of being the Master was built from past experiences that pushed him to stay in control, when this was previously not an option when fighting for his survival. But even with this need, Marcus had to submit to Thomas, give his all, expose his darkest secrets, to truly commit to their relationship.

*Marcus needed it, needed it like air, needed some outlet for the emotion that clogged in his throat and made his heart want to explode every time he touched Thomas.*

### **Parabelle~ Hold On For Me**

*If you just stop to wind me up  
I'll race on my way*

*And I will run as fast as I can  
Just to see you safe  
Just to see you open your eyes  
And see how far you could go  
If you just hold on for me*

*Time will overcome it always does but now  
Am I the only one who sees the sad die young*

*And I will run as fast as I can  
Just to see you safe  
Just to see you open your eyes  
And see how far you could go  
If you just hold on for me.*

**From Thomas to Marcus when he needed him.**

Marcus and Thomas' story will stay with me for years to come. Its *perfect*, amazing and beyond any ordinary love story.

*A special thanks to Baba, for your support while reading this awesome book xx*

*"You're mine, pet. Mine to protect and love."*

*"Same goes. I'm yours, Master."*

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**Rosalinda \*KRASNORADA\* says**

**Rough Canvas is one of the best books I've ever read and it's also my first M/M read. I am going to try my best to make justice to this AH-MAZING book with my review...**

This is the story of Marcus & Thomas. They had been together in the past but they took different paths about a year ago.

**Marcus** is the Dom but he is also my favourite character in the book. You think he is strong, he knows how to control every situation but he is NOT. He's got a heart too and you will end up loving him. He is also a smart ass and I have bookmarked most of the book with his sentences...

**"What you want is for me to bend you over this fence and fuck you hard, fill you where you've been empty for far too long"**

**Thomas** is the farm sweet boy. He loves Marcus but he also loves his family so he is trying to keep them happy hiding his feelings.

**"It doesn't always get to be about what you want. Life sometimes is making the best of what you're given"**

\*\*\*May contain spoilers\*\*\*

Elaine, Thomas mother, does not accept Thomas sexuality and she wants Thomas to marry a woman, Daralyn.

**"Oh, for Christ's sake. Nothing is going to make your boy straight, Elaine. I didn't drag him into anything. But you're absolutely right. This is a battle for his soul, and while you may think I'm Lucifer, you sure as hell aren't God. This isn't about you or me. It's about the gift that defines his soul more than you or I will ever hope to do. If he doesn't have that for himself, neither of us will have anything"**

I need to say that I loved the way Marcus always tried to convince Elaine about how amazing her son was. He got so passionate about Thomas and he always protected the artist in Thomas.

Marcus offers Thomas a way to continue his art career and help his family. But the deal is Thomas has to spend a week with him in the Berkshires.

**"One week when you'll try to get me back in your bed"**

**"Oh, there won't be any trying on that one, Thomas. We both know that's not what's in question. You'll be in my bed "**

Thomas obviously accepts Marcus' deal...

**If you only had one week to have something you always wanted that you could never have again, would you take it?**

**Yes. He would. Even knowing that walking away from it at the end of the week was more than he could bear.**

Thomas has to fight his demons because in my opinion he doesn't even accept himself so there is no way he is gonna make his family accept him for who he is, an extraordinary person.

**"Fuck you."**

**"You do that well enough on your goddamned own. Run. Run from it all you want. Go home to your little farm and pretend there are all these noble reasons to be there rather than the truth, which is you're a coward. Afraid to face who you are and what you want"**

It's a hard book, specially chapters 8 & 9 as Baba told me, I am not going to deny it, but it was also very FUNNY...

"How do you go about it with your little fiancée your mother wants to chain you to?"

"You leave her out of it"

"Your mother I will gladly leave out of any discussion involving sex. However, with respect to this girl... have you made out? How did you get it up? Who would you fantasize about to make her think it was all about her?"

"You arrogant son of a --"

"That's what I thought"

**"If I wanted to be psychoanalyzed every time I made a nasty comment, I'd go straight and find myself a girl"**

"Remember, shampoo followed by conditioner. Use the ones in the black bottles."

**"God, I forget sometimes how gay you are"**

As the week goes by their feelings get more and more intense...

**"No matter what happens, Marcus. With Daralyn, with any of it, you're the only man I want. Now or forever. The only man I'll ever let inside me again"**

**"Then give me your pain Master. I can bear it as long as I know your lips will touch every mark when**

**you're done, signing it as your work"**

Marcus is always proving his love for Thomas, in every single way, even if Thomas is not ready to fight the whole world to protect their love.

I loved when they met Cathy & Walter, God, I loved Cathy!

**"Does your family live in the area, Mr...?"**

**"Just Marcus will do, ma'am. My family's in this room."**

"When you know you're worth loving, you can be a little imperfect"

And what about **Julie Ramirez** ? What a great character!!!

"I keep hoping you'll come up to my place and just stand next to my bed naked and hold the vibrator. Now if you and Thomas did it... hmmm...like Thomas would hold me on his lap...he'd be naked too, of course, and you'd do the vibrator thing, and it would be like a real fantasy."

I don't blame you Julie, I've been dreaming the same since I started the book! ;)

I loved when Julie and Marcus were talking about Thomas and Marcus told her there was no way in hell he was going to give up on them. Aretha Franklin's *Ain't no Way* opening line was helping...

**Ain't no way for me to love you**

**If you won't let me**

**Ain't no way for me to give you all you need**

**If you won't let me give all of me**

I loved Marcus sooo much, I know I have already said that but I can't help it, he is a perfect hero.

**"Years from now, when you've done what you think they wanted you to do and you're coming home every night to sit in your recliner with your beer gut and your passive aggression drowning in cable, you'll be hating that girl you married. The family you thought you loved. And you still won't be enough, because what they want is for you to be truly happy BEING SOMEONE YOU WERE FUCKING NEVER MEANT TO BE! "**

And Thomas finally told Marcus about his feelings, aloud...

**"I love you, Master. Love you... Come for me. Please."**

*Love you... God, finally accepting it was as bad as dying*

**"Accepting what people are, what they can't change and loving them with every part of yourself anyway. That's what love is about."**

As their story comes to an end we get to know more about Marcus life and that was a hard part, I loved him more if possible after knowing about his past...

**"If you stop loving someone, it's easier to forget them."**

*"It's hard, especially for a Dom, to realize that to get what you really want you have to give up control completely, just hoping to hell that Fate doesn't kick your balls into the back of your throat."*

[image error]

**"You're mine pet. Mine to protect and love"**

**"Same goes. I'm yours Master"**

What a beautiful LOVE story, if you haven't read it yet, go enjoy it NOW!

\*\*\*Thanks Haven ladies, I loved reading this with Sammy & Laci!. Thanks Baba & Blacky for your support while reading this PERFECT BOOK\*\*\*

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**Lana ✨Dirty Girl Romance✨ says**

**5+ Utterly Brilliant Stars**

*No matter what happens, I can tell you this. I will always love you. No matter what you feel you need to be, where you need to go, I'll always know you're mine. I understand that now.*

How do you go about reviewing a book that touched you on such an emotional level, you're still trying to work through it?

**Captivating**

**Riveting**

**Emotional**

**Erotic**

**Beautiful**

Hands down one of THE best MM Romances I have had the pleasure of reading to date



In a word...

## **INCREDIBLE**

Having read a few books by Joey Hill in the past, I knew going into this to expect a book that was as intense as it was well written. What I truly was not expecting was the range of emotions that this story would bring out in me.

Joey took 2 characters and painted an emotionally gripping story that will keep you reading from beginning to end completely unable to set it down.

I fell in love with Marcus in Holding The Cards. I couldn't get enough of him; the dry wit, the potent sexuality, everything about him...just GAH

Thomas was by far one of the most endearing characters I've read. The way that he came off both strong and vulnerable is no small feat for an author to show.

I'm in complete awe of this book. No amount of words from me will ever do it justice. I can sit here and regurgitate the plot for you, but I won't. I can sit here and attempt to write a lengthy review that this book deserves, but I won't. Because this is a book that you need to experience for yourself to even begin to come close to understand why I felt about it the way that I did.

*When I've come inside you, lain on you, felt you tremble, felt that silence between us that has everything...you don't think God is there? If there is a God, I've felt It then, and I know you have too.*

I was a highlight slut through the whole book. There is not one chapter that I didn't highlight in this book. Not.A.One.

I knew that when I finally got Marcus's full past it would break my heart. And my GOD. It did and then some. I was an emotional, hysterically sobbing mess for a large part of the book (mainly the last 15%).

*Sometimes when you lose everything, the last thing you want to do is remember. And telling is remembering.*

This is no light read, and it's certainly not for the faint of heart or those never having read BDSM before. What it is, is a poignant, emotional, brilliantly written love story between 2 people that that are broken in their own way but learn to heal one another. Just beautiful.

All I can tell you is read it, read it, READ it.

Now if you'll excuse me, I'm off to deal with what will most likely be a book hangover from hell after finishing this. And I thank you

For more reviews visit

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## **Susan says**

Please pardon me while I have a "moment"...

### **HOLY SHIT THIS BOOK IS EXQUISITE!**

Joey W. Hill, new to me author, writes like an artist. This book felt like I closed my eyes and was listening to a masterpiece composition...music that rolled over me, harshly grabbed me and pulled me under as I was drowning, and then gently brought me back up for air.

The emotions in this book were felt so acutely in my heart, in my gut, in my fingertips, in my...ummmm...well, you know...

The first half of the book I felt so much loss and pain and protectiveness towards Thomas. And because of it, I became obsessed with how Marcus loved him and took care of him. But, very abruptly, not subtle at all, I found myself fiercely aligned with Marcus...even to the point of getting angry at times with Thomas for hurting him.

The most intense and ridiculously-well-written scenes (the BDSM club, the hospital, every interaction between Marcus and Thomas' mom) continue to haunt me.

And I loved the comic relief that the character of Julie brought to the book. I'm obsessed with her.

The book has BDSM in it, but not in a way that is in your face. I felt BDSM was used as a way to shine light into who our characters are in their core and why. For those who are not "fans" of BDSM, don't let that push you away from this book at all...you'll be missing out on a BEAUTIFUL love story.

**READ THIS BOOK!**

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## **Dd says**

*Rough Canvas*

*"What therefore God hath joined together, let no one put asunder."*

**"It was easy when I thought it was sinful,something to do with the flesh.But what I'm seeing is more than that.It's love,and love isn't a sin.So how can God be so cruel as to give that feeling to two men or two women if it's a sin?"**

Thomas is working in his family's hardware store in a part of rural North Carolina.It's of course very far away from New York City where he,a God gifted rising artist had resided for the last few years.But he had to come back when twin calamities struck his family—First when his father died and second when his younger brother Rory had a tractor accident and thus ended up in a wheelchair.

So leaden with responsibilities and guilt,he came home and took over as the head of the family.

But tearing him apart is the truth that when he left New York,he also left the other half of him.**His best friend,his lover,his Master,his life...Marcus Aurelius.**

Marcus,hard muscled six-foot of pure temptation,never opens himself to any kind of vulnerability.He owns galleries in NY and has a special talent of ferreting out true talent(which obviously made him so rich).The first time he saw Thomas,he was captivated not only by the artist's talent but also by the artist himself.And from the first time he claimed Thomas,he had known Thomas was his....

But he lost him.He lost Thomas to fate,when Thomas left New York and him.But now,he wants him back.So as the first step,he offers Thomas the deal that he can paint while remaining in North Carolina and Marcus will take care of selling his paintings in NY.

But Thomas had also lost his muse when he left Marcus.For him,Marcus was everything.But he couldn't have him.His family,especially his mother,a strict Catholic, can never accept their relationship..

***"He was the prince of every fairy tale that had ever been written."***

Not willing to give up,Marcus asks Thomas for one week.One week with him...

*Do Thomas and Marcus finally realize that they can never live without each other?Do they accept their love for each other and realize that it is far greater than any religion?Do they finally surrender their souls to each other???*

*---Well you'll have to read the book to find out.*

And readers I vow when Marcus will lay his heart bare,all of your hearts will break---

(to Thomas's mom)

**"When he was living with me,there was one night...I couldn't sleep.I got some wine,came back and leaned against the bedroom door.There he was,asleep,the moonlight on every inch of him."**

**"Those incredibly talented fingers were on my pillow.He did that whenever I got up at night,to know when I came back.I looked at him and I couldn't speak,couldn't swallow.Couldn't even move."**

**He made a fist,pressed it against his chest."I wanted everything for him.I wanted to see him achieve every dream,embrace every desire.I wanted to protect him from anyone who would cause him harm or**

a moment's pain, tear them apart with my bare hands. Never let him out of my sight even as I wanted him to stretch out his wings as far as they could go and soar. And at the bottom, top and middle of it all, I just wanted to stand there, just that way forever. Not disturb him. Just look at him and love him. Do nothing but simply love him for everything he is, a creation too perfect to be anything but God's gift to the rest of us."

I am declaring and I do not care what anyone says, that I am in love with these two amazing men!!!

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## Richa says

### **Our love is a rough canvas**

With jagged ends and rugged depths

### **So let's paint a picture together**

Paint me *in*,

Paint you *in*

Paint the first time we met *in*

Paint **the intensity, the fierceness that pulled me** *in*

Paint the **love, the lust, the passion that burned as bright as a fire** *in*

Paint **the fears, the pain, the vulnerabilities that tore us apart and brought us closer than ever** *in*

Paint the time we were together *in*,

Paint the time we were apart *in*

Paint that **sexy smile, that beautiful laugh** *in*

Paint the **precious tears you trusted me with** *in*

Paint the times we fought *in*

Paint the times **we made love** *in*

Paint the things that tore us apart *in*

Paint the things that kept us together *in*

Paint the **anguish** *in*

Paint the **joy** *in*

And when it's done, put it on display

Let them look and let them judge

Let them call it a beautiful painting or a terrible joke

**Let them cover it with splashes of white till everything bleeds out....**

Let them **obliterate all the colours....the swirls...the strokes...everything....**

But it won't matter and it won't end....

Because our love is a rough canvas...

**It's *in* you...it's *in* me**

It's in us

And it's here to stay.....

***Mine* and *Yours***

***Yours* and *Mine* ~ R.S.**

Alright, now that all that corny stuff is out of my system ( or may be not ;) ) I have to say this **HOLY. FREAKING. SMOKES. !!!!**

**I loved, loved, looooooved it!** The story, the characters, the horrors, the love, the emotions, everything....I loved it all!

**The story in a nutshell**: There's **Marcus, a rich, polished, smoking hot, droolicious art dealer** who loves **Thomas, a quiet Southern farm boy, an artist who is equally drool worthy but in a more earthy and rugged way**. When a series of disasters strike his family, Thomas leaves Marcus, his Master, his other half to go and shoulder responsibilities as the head of his family. Citing reasons such as guilt and the fact that his family needed him, he goes away...*But is it truly the only reason or is it just a smoke screen for the real reason behind his leaving? Will Marcus see through it?* They want to be together but to do that they'll have to fight for each other, have faith in each other...overcome **obstacles like Thomas' family and Marcus' past, his personal demons**. *Will Marcus let Thomas in all the way? Will he trust him with everything? Will they be together again? and this time forever?* This is just the bare skeleton....the story is so much more than just this.....just read it to find out the essence of it...the true story behind this inadequate description...

Read to find out more...

**Marcus.....here's something for you....**

**You're sexy and you're strong**

You're fragile and you're wrong

You're right and *you belong* (oh boy, oops, I mean man, you definitely belong)

**You're are tortured and you're pure**

**You're innocent in ways you don't know....**

I wish so much that you were real but I'm kinda glad that you're not because if you were listening to this song

I know you would just run away....

I won't blame you if you did! :D

**Thomas for you.....**

**You're like the gentle breeze in the summer**

Your strength, your resilience so hard to resist

**You're like the calming, soothing balm to the wound**

**The gentleman in whose arms I would love to swoon**(never done that before but there's always a first time, right? ;) )

But there's a side to you...**dangerous and unexpected**

The gentle breeze can turn into a storm....

With blazing eyes and powerful arms he will carry you along...

*A man as irresistible as a hearth fire in winter. His proximity was heat and comfort at once.*

[image error]

### **Some of my favourite excerpts:**

Marcus: "...there was one night... I couldn't sleep. I got some wine, came back and leaned against the bedroom door. **There he was, asleep, the moonlight on every inch of him.....Those incredibly talented fingers were on my pillow. He did that whenever I got up at night, to know when I came back. I looked at him and I couldn't speak, couldn't swallow. Couldn't even move.**" He made a fist, pressed it against his chest. **"I wanted everything for him. I wanted to see him achieve every dream, embrace every desire. I wanted to protect him from anyone who would cause him harm or a moment's pain, tear them apart with my bare hands. Never let him out of my sight, even as I wanted him to stretch out his wings as far as they could go and soar. And at the bottom, top and middle of it all, I just wanted to stand there, just that way forever. Not disturb him. Just look at him and love him. Do nothing but simply love him for everything he is, a creation too perfect to be anything but God's gift to the rest of us."** (Ah Marcus....you make me speechless...)

Walter Briggs: **"When you know you're worth loving, you can be a little imperfect.....It makes all the difference in the world when you believe someone loves you enough that they don't overlook the spot and the messed up hair. They just add it to the things about you that make them love you all the more."** (You couldn't be more right, Mr. Briggs!)

[image error]

### **And Julie...you lucky, lovely woman....**

Julie: **"Jesus. Someone who can be that filthy and look that pretty needs to be beaten with a stick. Can I buy you dinner for helping me? Offer you sex? Dinner and sex?"**

Marcus grinned, leaned back on his elbows next to her, his shoulder brushing hers companionably. **"I'll take you up on dinner, but I'm afraid I'm going to pass on the sex. I'd be a disappointment."**

**"Oh."** She digested that.

He was prepared to add more clarification if needed, something to salve the ego, but then she brightened.

**"Oh, for Christ's sake, you're a man. It's sex. Can't you close your eyes and pretend I'm a guy? We can turn off the lights and I'll talk deep, like this."** She mimicked what he thought sounded like a frog with a bad cold.( :D Lol!)

Marcus: **"Accepting what people are, what they can't change and loving them with every part of yourself anyway. That's what love is about.....How we love is our soul."** (Could I love this guy more than I already do? Hell, yes!)

For Marcus and Thomas! :

They all deserve a big round of applause!!!

And there are so many other moments that just made me go all dreamy eyed and teary....maybe I should just copy-paste the whole book here :D .....but I won't spoil it any more....ok, maybe a little bit more.....

**It made me laugh. It made me cry. It moved me. It shocked me. It horrified me. It delighted me. I loved it all. And sometimes my heart just about broke for those two.....**

Elaine said it all so eloquently: *"The way you look at each other, even in the most casual moments. The way the air around you just seems right when your loved one's in the room, in the house."* Her eyes were distant, soft. Sad. *"The way you finish each other's sentences, think of thoughts the other one has a moment earlier. The way you laugh and smile easily with each other, at jokes that if other people said them, it wouldn't be the same. And still, none of that comes close to describing it, you know? It's this feeling so much a part of you that you don't have to feel it."*

*"I thought...it was easy when I thought it was sinful, something to do with the flesh. But what I'm seeing is more than that. It's love, and love isn't a sin. So how can God be so cruel as to give that feeling to two men or two women if it's a sin? I've always believed God to be compassionate. Loving."*

And in the end.... *What therefore God hath joined together, let no one put asunder.*

**My first M/M romance and now I'm a complete goner....**

Give yourself a pat on the back if you've read the review till here... ;). I did. :D

I'll go now before I embarrass myself any more by being my version of poetic and corny....but I have to say this one more time **HOLY FREAKING SMOKES!!!!**(Don't know what it means but it just keeps popping in my head :D )

*Love doesn't care about boundaries, it doesn't care about religion, race, gender, position, looks....nothing....love only cares for the heart....it looks only at the heart....and there are no boundaries or barriers if two people are destined to be together....if they are connected at the heart...*

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