



In and Out

L.B. Gregg

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Alternate title: "Adam and Holden"

They were star-crossed lovers from the start.

Former television sensation and renowned world explorer, Holden Worthington, is held prisoner by crippling agoraphobia. When a sexy young laborer arrives to set his property to rights, a ray of light begins to glimmer in Holden's dark and narrow world. A grisly discovery throws the two men together, and Holden finds his world turned inside out-- by his inappropriate longing for his awkward, young employee, Adam Morgan, and by a threat growing around them both. All of Smithfield believes Holden has something to hide, and Adam is determined to bring everything--including Holden Worthington--into the open.

In and Out Details

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Author : L.B. Gregg

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From Reader Review In and Out for online ebook

Susan says

Book 4: Adam & Holden - 3 stars

SERIES REVIEW HERE: <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

Lena♥Ribka says

Audible + ebook

Rounded up to 4 stars

I don't know if I would have enjoyed this book more or maybe even less if I had had enough time to read it in one sitting. But the previous week was pretty busy for me, and I needed almost 5 days to finish the 150-pages-long book, in spite of the fact that I tried to speed up my reading progress switching between the audio and the ebook.

*** I have a weak spot for writers, as a MC. And Holden, a 40 year old wealthy, sarcastic and eccentric, openly gay, agoraphobic writer with a weak spot for cooking, single, who has been trapped in his house for several months after a painful separation, and who finds himself charming and funny, fits perfectly in my favourite book characters.

*** Add a young attractive gardener with a difficult family background, who is sort of literal because he doesn't understand when people are kidding or making jokes, and who is not actually in the closet but who is totally unaware of his sexuality and utterly innocent, because non-verbal language is foreign to him.

*** And a dead body in the backyard of this huge house, the hub of all main activities.

*** Add HOT sex scenes, funny dialogues and you have it.

The best instalment for me in the series until now.

Catherine says

This was not my kind of book. Really, I shouldn't have enjoyed it at all. And yet, I did. Adam was sweet and

Holden was a Character with a capital "C". The whole thing was like reading a French farce with a tangled mystery and a revolving door of over the top characters. As I said, normally not my thing, but this time around I was digging it. *shrugs*

Genre says

In and Out is the fourth and final book in the *Men of Smithfield* series by LB Gregg. I've enjoyed all the books in the series so far, but I have to say that this one will probably turn out to be my favourite as I found both heroes to be completely delightful.

The book opens with our hero, Holden, ogling the new hired hand, Adam. Holden had a successful career as a travel writer, explorer and television presenter before he was outed on live TV by his ex-lover and friend, not only as a gay man, but as a writer of steamy gay porn novels. In disgrace and crippled by agoraphobia, Holden hides away in the family pile in Smithfield writing his travel cookery book and generally living in fear of a re-occurrence of the media-fuelled days following his outing. When Adam discovers a body in the compost heap, that fear becomes a reality as he battles with sarcastic police officers, intrusive TV cameras, Adam's lawless brothers and the local Catholic priest in order to try and regain some of the peace and quiet he craves. Alongside this, Holden is also fighting his attraction to the much younger Adam, acting as mediator to his brother and soon-to-be ex-sister in law, and providing shelter for his back-stabbing ex.

As you can probably deduce from the above plot summary, there's a lot going on in this book. There are a whole host of different characters who populate the pages of this book, and whose own lives directly affect Holden, our first person narrator. When we first meet Holden he is a rather lonely, and perhaps pathetic figure. He's only 40, but due to his illness cannot leave the house. Thus he spends his days pottering around his huge house, swapping snidely affectionate remarks with his ageing housekeeper and helping his womanising drunkard of a brother up to bed each night. The arrival of Adam proves to be a catalyst for change and, just as the book is set in spring and contains images of renewal and hope, Holden slowly changes as the book progresses, as circumstances and the gentle prodding of Adam begin to help Holden overcome his illness. The portrayal of Holden's agoraphobia was compassionate and realistic. I thought the mix of Holden's frustration at his limitations and his fear was handled well, and those readers who long for a sympathetic character with an illness of the mind can't go wrong with this book.

Before Holden gets to the end of the book, he has to go through an awful lot of inconvenience, deal with many difficult people, be accused of murder and have his whole life turned upside down. Throughout the whole experience, Adam is there offering a whole lot of support in a quiet and unassuming manner. I liked that, although Holden feels a little guilty about the age gap between them (Adam is 24), the decision as to whether Holden should act on his attraction to Adam wasn't made into too much of a big deal. There's no angst or pages of soul searching, it just happens and Holden accepts it and then can concentrate on the other crazy stuff that's happening to him. I think it helped that Adam is generally a calming influence on Holden. In fact they are opposites in many respects: Adam is quiet, thoughtful and has a condition which means he has difficulty understanding humour or sarcasm; Holden is witty, charming and relies on humour to diffuse a situation or hide behind. Because he has to be very literal with Adam, that strips away some of Holden's protective layers and allows him the luxury of honesty and straightforwardness which means their affectionate feelings for each other develop quickly. Despite this I felt that the feelings that develop between them were genuine. It's not just lust - although there's plenty of that, as well as intense sexual tension - but also that there's respect between them which leads to deeper emotions.

Many of LB Gregg's books are packed with humour and funny situations. This was perhaps the most serious book I've read of hers. That doesn't mean that the book totally lacks humour, far from it. The whole situation with Holden and the sheer number of different characters gives the book a slightly mad-cap feel on occasion, and the way that Holden lurches from one situation to another reminded me of those shows like *The Phil Silvers Show* or *Abbot and Costello*, where one problem would be partly resolved only to have the next character/problem arise until a final showdown at the end. There are also a number of comedy lines which had me snorting with laughter. Having said that, there were many quiet, reflective moments in the story too, such as when Adam takes Holden out for a drive, the first time he's been out the house in two years; or the moments when Holden remembers his dead brother. This mix of pathos, humour and quiet reflection appealed to me, and shows a depth of maturity in the writing that perhaps was missing in her earlier books in the series.

I could go on and mention a whole lot of other things I liked about this book, such as Holden's relationship with his brother, housekeeper and friend Tony (the hero from the first book *Gobsmacked*); or that the mystery was satisfying; or the way that the town of Smithfield and its residents play just as much of an important role as the main characters. However, you'll have to discover that for yourself, or this review will run to several pages!

All that remains to say now, is how much I enjoyed *In and Out*. It was a fittingly super end to a very enjoyable series.

ttg says

**Review of Audio Version

For audiobook week at Boys in our Books, I pondered what to pick. This would be my first foray into listening to m/m romance by a narrator. ("How awkward are sex scenes to listen to? If the writer included written-out sex noises like "Unngh!" or "Ahhhhh!", does the narrator then do the sex noises? Am I going to be listening to sex scenes on my crowded bus commute?") These are the things I pondered. Finally when we were all picking books, I opted to try to adhere to my reading challenge—read what you already own—and picked an audio version of a book that's been on my TBR pile for a while—the fourth book in LB Gregg's Men of Smithfield Series, *Adam and Holden*.

I've really enjoyed Gregg's Romano and Albright series (and good news for fans, she's working on the third book now). I've felt more lukewarm to Men of Smithfield—a series of novellas and short novels that revolve around various gay men living in the same picturesque small New England town, except this one had a small pile of small town mysteries to sort through. Book 1 and 2 (*Mark & Tony*, and *Max & Finn*) were okay reads for me, and I enjoyed book #5, *Sam and Aaron*.

How was book 4? This is my favorite of the group so far. The contrast between wealthy, experienced, and agoraphobic Holden and young, guileless, and achingly sincere Adam was a nice mix. For Holden, Adam tapped into newly developed needs to both protect and teach (since Adam is a virgin and also doesn't understand many social cues) and also to be protected and cared for (as Adam is also very caring and strong.) It is hard to not love Adam, who is so honest and sweet, especially when he's confused about a joke or sarcasm. I appreciated Holden more as he came to understand Adam and how best to communicate with him.

The mystery itself was fun and like other Gregg works, a little kooky, and since Holden has a hard time

leaving the house, the story is close to being a closed-room mystery, where most things happen around Holden's lavish home or yard.

How was the narrator? Overall, I thought he was great. His version of Holden was an interesting direction—at times I felt like I was listening to a gay man's version of Katherine Hepburn (with that upper-class Yankee New England drawl.) Sometimes it made it difficult to picture Holden as also the burly strong adventurer that he was, but then I thought I should check myself, and that burly adventurers could talk like a male Katherine Hepburn, just coming off a yachting trip on the lake if he wants to. Why not? The narrator also did voices for the other characters, and changed into them seamlessly, whether it was Adam's earnest young tone, or Officer Tony's brusque deep voice. I could picture all the characters speaking and it was nicely distinct. I thought the narrator was pretty splendid here.

How was listening to M/M in audio? It was fun. I don't know if I'll do audio a lot, but I definitely found the niche. At one point after work, I was so tired and a bit stressed, and I couldn't "land" on reading, so I turned on the audio book instead, and was able to settle on listening. I was tempted to multi-task and listening while cleaning worked well, but listening while web surfing was too distracting, so I have to really pick my activities or else I'll miss whole sections of the story.

Do I recommend this one? Very much so. Not only is the price great (\$2.99!), but the story was also a lot of fun.

Can you dive into this one cold? Maybe? It's hard to say since I've read three of the other books, but the mysteries are all stand-alone and only linked by the setting of Smithfield and some of the same characters (like Tony) pop up. I started reading at book 2, Max & Finn, so you probably could enjoy this one as a start although you may want to go back and check out some of the other stories as well.

I'm grateful that audiobook week helped show me that m/m romance in audio is a fun and relaxing way to get some reading down. Now what to listen to next...?

Karen says

Ok so this is a really bizarre experience because I've listened to the first 3 books in this series and they were all narrated by Shannon Gunn and I enjoyed them so because I've read the books and this is just me listening to the audio books because I wanted to revisit a series that I had enjoyed years ago...until I got here and things kind of tanked a little for me.

Once again Shannon Gunn is the narrator and while I his idea of Adam's voice and the rest of the characters were ok, I can't lie Holden's voice...well...it was...let's just say it was not my idea of how Holden would sound and I might have found it a teensy bit annoying because truthfully for me it just didn't sound like a 40ish year old man but someone who was definitely older and at times the voice for me had a bit of a pervy undertone to it...sorry, but no...for me Holden's voice was just wrong and so for that reason and because he's one of the MCs the story can keep it's 4 stars but the audio only gets 3 stars from me.

Chris says

Very good m/m romance about a disgraced and now agoraphobic writer whose sanctuary is breached by a gardener, a corpse, his ex, and more! I was late to work yesterday morning because I had to finish reading it. :) LB does such a nice job balancing the tender with the madcap, while managing to infuse both with plenty of humor. (I also liked the tie-in to Gobsmacked.)

Amy says

4.5 stars!! This was so different than the rest of the series. More of a murder-mystery storyline. And I loved it! Definitely my favorite in the series. Holden is a former TV star turned recluse because he has agoraphobia (which is a disorder that fascinates me). And Adam is his new gardener. He's much younger than Holden and from the wrong side of town. I just loved the two of them together, plus all the secondary characters were a hoot.... Mrs. Henderson, Father David, Porter, Mitzie, Kipling, Adam's brothers! I loved it all and am so glad I continued with this series :)

JenMcJ says

I enjoyed the 4th book in the series the most. Ironically, as damaged as Holden is, he is the least of the men in any of the books that needs therapy/anger management. He handled the crises (sp?) around him with aplomb even if he was limited in his scope of movement. Adam did not resort to angry violence at any time and there weren't any wacky meltdowns.

This was a story of two men with unique needs that really seem to live up to the idea that there is someone in the world that is perfect for someone else. Even the most unlikely pair can be made for each other.

Oh, and I can't tell you how glad I am that the bad guy didn't turn out to be who it appeared at times. I wasn't shocked at who it was, that was fairly easy to surmise. Had the author chosen to go in the other direction, that cliché would have ruined it. For once it was nice that even dysfunctional families function in their own way.

Tami says

A very good story.

The 1st person narrator, Holden, is a 40 year old former adventurer and writer who is agoraphobic and lusts after his sexy young gardener. He lives in his family's old mansion with an austere housekeeper, his alcoholic brother (who has his wife/ex-wife in tow as well as his best buddy) and his ex-boyfriend "visiting" him. It is a animated, lively coming and going in this house and the murder mystery is smack in the middle. When Adam, the beautiful young man who tends to Holden's garden, finds a body behind the shed not only the police investigation starts - the love story also is kicked off.

I liked both main characters, Adam and Holden. They were very different, both broken in their own way, but without this "oh woe is me" - no self pity, nothing OTT. Just two people with problems, history and quirks. The side characters were also an interesting bunch and really helped the story along.

What I especially liked was the way Adam and Holden communicated. This and the humor made this a very enjoyable read.

Camille Adams says

Audible version.

3.4

Holden's voice and characteristic as "flaming", fussy and WASPy took a little getting used to. I liked Adam and the voice Shannon Gunn uses for him, however.

Plot wise, my desire for greater cohesiveness never really abated throughout the entire read. There were some elements that needed tightening and that sometimes seemed a little messy bordering on irrelevant. The mystery was okay and the reveal felt a little anti-climactic. But it was all still readable with some entertaining parts.

As for the relationship, by the end I quite liked Adam and Holden together -- the balance the two brought to each other and the way that Holden loves him, feeling that he's waited for Adam these many years. That's beautiful.

Deeze says

I think this is my favourite book of the series. Probably more a 3.5 than a full 4

The story in this one is much more fleshed out, the mystery is pretty mysterious lol, it certainly kept me guessing.

The cast of characters were all worth reading.

My only problem with this one is the same as the others, I just don't feel any real emotional connection between the MC. While I liked Adam, he came across as sweetly vulnerable, Holden just came across as a pervy old man. In fact I think I could of happily read this one with all the sex taken out. For me the story just didn't need Holden's creepy perverse thoughts.

Ingie says

Written December 5, 2014

3 1/2 Stars - Nice and fun but maybe not stunning captivating - nevertheless amusing for the moment

Book #4

Adam and Holden is my fourth story about all these adorable gay lovebirds (usually mature men) in *Smithfield*. I have been listening to the 6:20 hours audio edition. Once again narrated in a splendid way by Shannon Gunn. ~ A husky-voiced favorite (gay-steam) narrator by now.

(Finished a week ago and at last a review...)

I got what I expected and I'm on the whole quite happy and satisfied. Not the best book in the series but good enough.

Holden Worthington's days out in the world are over.

Holden hasn't ventured past his own front door (in his huge old mansion like city house) in more than a year. His globetrotters days are over and with them his old partner and boyfriend. Then he get a sexy new young gardener, **Adam Golden**, and something starts to sparks in Holden. Feeling he hasn't felt in a very long time. He even start to feel an interest in the world outside his window.

The plot here is when Adam one day discovers a dead body on the grounds of the estate and the town of *Smithfield* turns a suspicious eye on the reclusive, and to be fare, quite odd Holden.

The male corpse turns out to be a former boyfriend's former now dead lover. It gets more and more messy and Holden's sister in law (soon to be former) turns up and his brother disappears. It is becoming increasingly complicated, cluttered and the crime mystery thickens.

While, at the same time, the emotions, lust and love begins to sprout tender and so very sweet. A romantic hot and cute romance slowly begins to blossom.

These Men of *Smithfield* stories are all smexy steamy, pretty emotional and with that nice light and easy feel I like. The men are usually pretty interesting (feels real ordinary..) and the plot often begins with anger and disappointment. Feelings which later disappears when it pops up an interesting new sexy man to put emotion-commitment on instead.

All four audio books have made me chuckle, giggle and yearn for another series part. Not heaven-storming world-changing grand good, but safe secure romance entertainment. Fun and well made, and it is often good enough.

You don't need to read them in order - just pick one and enjoy. My reviews so far: (view spoiler)

Another fun and enjoying L.B. Gregg romance. Applause for a great audiobook series. I hope the fifth book Men of Smithfield: Sam and Aaron also soon becomes an audiobook narrated by this fantastic Shannon Gunn narrator.

I LIKE - sweet and nice told in a great way

Nic says

While I spent a pleasant afternoon reading this book, it wasn't one that I fell in love with. I am not sure if it is because it is the fourth book in the series and I have perhaps overdone it, but it didn't stand out as anything special.

I hate to admit it but I didn't particularly warm to Holden. I really wanted to but found it hard to garner sympathy for his situation - a lonely house-bound agoraphobic with a ruined career, lost love and problem brother. I did like Adam though!

The story involved a lot of characters, a dead body and mystery to be solved. The plot kept me involved, the romance not really.

Ije the Devourer of Books says

I loved this book. I really love the entire series but this is my favourite. Holden, 40 years old is a recluse. He used to be a well known explorer and something of a globetrotter but all that came to an end when he was betrayed by a former colleague and lover. He is now unable to leave his house but he manages his life by writing books and with the help of his rather impolite housekeeper.

Now a dead body has been found in his garden by his new, much younger, much hunkier gardener. And so a mystery needs to be solved. Throw into the mix: a brother who likes to drink, the brother's lovely but soon to be ex-wife, a puppy, the lying cheating and on the run ex, and the hunky but socially awkward gardener and you have the makings of an incredibly funny and interesting story.

I loved the way things developed between Holden and Adam (hunky gardener). They suited each other. Both of them had difficulties that they needed to get through but they did this together in a way that just seemed to work itself out step by step.

All the secondary characters are great and give the story both humour and mystery. Both men have sadness in their past but it doesn't overwhelm them, instead it adds to who they are and brings colour to their relationship with each other. Holden is polished and used to the good things in life. Adam has had a difficult upbringing and is rather rough at the edges but is unapologetic and gutsy and able to deal with life despite his social difficulties.

Then there is the mystery. Who is the dead man? Why is he in Holden's garden? And who killed him? And

why oh why is the irritating ex hiding in Holden's huge house of many rooms and dodging the police?

As usual there is the background of the familiar town of Smithfield with Tony Gervase as the usual town cop alongside a few new characters. Of course by the end of the story the mystery is solved and Adam and Holden are together but the journey to get there is an entertaining one.

I really like the Men of Smithfield. It is a simple series of men finding love in a small town but the tone of each book is comical and engaging. Unfortunately I have now come to the end of this series but will definitely be checking out the other series from this author.
