



# Bundled Up

*Annabeth Albert*

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**Bundled Up** Annabeth Albert

**All three of The Portland Heat Novellas together for the first time!**

## Served Hot

In Portland, Oregon, the only thing hotter than the coffee shops, restaurants, and bakeries are the hard-working men who serve it up—hot, fresh, and ready to go—with no reservations...

Robby is a self-employed barista with a busy coffee cart, a warm smile, and a major crush on one of his customers. David is a handsome finance director who works nearby, eats lunch by himself, and expects nothing but “the usual”—small vanilla latte—from the cute guy in the cart. But when David shows up for his first Portland Pride festival, Robby works up the nerve to take their slow-brewing relationship to the next level. David, however, is newly out and single, still grieving the loss of his longtime lover, and unsure if he’s ready to date again. Yet with every fresh latte, sweet exchange—and near hook-up—David and Robby go from simmering to steaming to piping hot. The question is: Will someone get burned?

## Baked Fresh

From its famous coffee to the mouthwatering fare at its cafés, restaurants, and bakeries, Portland, Oregon, has a lot to whet the appetite, including the hard-working men who serve it all up—hot, fresh, and ready to go—with no reservations...

Vic Degrassi is a baker on the rise, and it’s all thanks to his rare ability to make—and keep—his New Year’s resolutions. Whether it’s losing weight, giving up smoking, or graduating from culinary school, Vic goes after what he wants—and gets it. This year? He wants Robin Dawson, the sweet-hearted hottie who volunteers with him at the local homeless shelter. When he learns that Robin is suddenly single after being unceremoniously dumped, Vic is more than happy to offer a shoulder to cry on—or at least a fresh-baked pastry to bite into. But it’s been a long time since Vic’s gone on a date, and he’s nervous about risking his friendship with Robin. So when their flirtation turns into a steamy night together, Vic and Robin have to figure out if they’re friends with benefits or lovers in the making, and if Robin is ready for something more than just a rebound. There’s only one way to find out: *turn up the heat...*

## Delivered Fast

Portland, Oregon, aka Hotlandia, where the coffee shops, restaurants, and bakeries are ready to serve everything piping hot, fresh, and ready to go—like the hard-working, hard-bodied men behind the counters—with no reservations...Sure, Chris O’Neal has problems. His restaurant is still co-owned by his ex. His flannel-and-tattoos style is making him accidentally trendy. He can’t remember the last time he went out and had fun. But he’s not lonely, he’s driven. And the hot bakery delivery boy is not his problem, no matter how sweet his buns.

Chris is old enough to know Lance Degrassi's sculpted good looks and clever double entendres spell nothing but trouble. Lance is still in college—he should be hitting the clubs and the books, chasing guys his own age, not pursuing some gruff motorcycle-riding workaholic. Especially when he'll be leaving for grad school in a few months. But Lance keeps hanging around, lending a hand, charming Chris to distraction. Maybe some steaming hot no-strings indulgence won't hurt.

Then again, maybe it will...

## **Bundled Up Details**

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Author : Annabeth Albert

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## From Reader Review Bundled Up for online ebook

### Lillian Francis says

These books get better as they go along.

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### Nissy Williams says

I loved each of these books. I totally enjoyed these read.

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### hedgehog says

Individually, these novellas were OK fluff. Saturday afternoon reading that is comfortable if not particularly memorable. Nothing wrong with that. Together, they all kind of blurred. The formula:

- First person POVs that sound alike even though none of the characters have similar backgrounds
- Food metaphors based on POV guy's profession (coffee, baked goods, cooking)
- Someone has a dead or dirtbag ex\*
- The porn always starts with hallway blowjobs. Everyone swallows!
- POV guy falls in love with other guy who has too many hangups to be decent boyfriend material, emotional vampirism ensues for 70%\*\*
- POV guy settles for crumbs while Vampire Love Interest is all 'oh we can't be together, but I'll keep dangling the possibility in front of you and then pulling away for No Reason', until he sensibly grows a spine and realizes any relationship where you're left thinking 'I'm asking for too much wanting to feel emotionally secure in a relationship' is actually not one and you should dump his ass
- Just kidding! POV guy has a moment and then something something happily ever after

\* in the first story, the ex was a dead dirtbag

\*\* the POV guy was Mr. Hot-and-Cold in story three

And again, nothing wrong with firing up the ol' formula (although I clearly did not care for one-half of the couple each time, uh). It was just kind of funny reading all three stories one right after another and going, didn't I just read... oh...

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### Denise GremoryKohta says

This is a bundle of the first three books in the Portland Heat series. While the stories can be read alone, they are so much better when you read them in order. In Served Hot, the first story, we meet David and Robby. David is still grieving the death of his old best friend and lover. Robby is dealing with the fears left over from his ex. They both need to learn to trust if they want a future. In Baked Fresh Vic works at a bakery that donated to the shelter. Robin volunteers at the shelter. Vic has had a crush on Robin for two years. Robin is recently single. Both have a lot of emotional damage but decide to be friends with benefits. But what

happens when love is involved? Delivered Fresh has 23 year old Lance. He is a sexy college student who works doing deliveries at the bakery his cousin Vic works at. Chris is 35 and owns a coffee shop with his ex. He is sure that he is way too old for Lance. They start with a one night stand that turns into a fling that is supposed to end when Lance goes away to college. They both fall hard. Chris has to decide whether to let Lance go to Chase his dream or see if they can find a future together. All three books were great love stories with true emotional depth. I highly recommend them and look forward to reading more from this author.

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## **Linda ~ chock full of hoot, just a little bit of nanny ~ says**

2.5 stars overall

This was disappointing. I really liked Albert's #gaymers series and was hoping this would be more of the same, but alas it was not. This contains the first three novellas of the Portland Heat series, and each one is just not up to snuff. They're rather superficial, actually, with each couple falling into lust with each other and that eventually leads to love after lots and lot and lots of redundant sex scenes. Usually, I'll at least skim the sex scenes if they're spread out enough, but there were too many even for that and I just started skipping them all. What was left was pretty standard fare, but with MCs that were terrible at communication. At least it took them longer than the standard 30 days to say the ILUs and move in together, a timeline that's painfully common in romance these days, so there's that. All stories are 1st-person POV with only one MC getting the POV per story, and all their voices sounded the same.

Served Hot - 2 stars

Robby has his own coffee cart in the business district and has the hots for one of the white-collars who comes to his cart every day. David is a finance director despite being rather young for the position, and he's on the nerdy side. David's getting over a relationship that ended when his lover died, and Robby is the insecure pushy needy emo-dude that he gets stuck with. Yeah, I wasn't feeling this couple at all.

Baked Fresh - 3 stars

Vic is a baker whose addiction to food - and his male relatives' young deaths from heart disease - led him to getting a laparoscopic band surgically placed around his stomach. Robin is a trust-fund baby who's a recovering drug addict and volunteers at a homeless shelter to atone for his past misdeeds while high. He also has a series of sexual hangups that of course can be cured only by lots and lots of sex. \*sigh\* Counseling is a thing, you know. I did not at all like Vic calling Robin "boy" during sex - brain bleach please! - or the mildly quasi-D/s dynamic their sexual relationship had, but I did like the relationship outside the bedroom, especially once they started talking to and supporting each other. These two actually did the most talking and connecting of these three couples. I could believe they'd actually have a future together.

Delivered Fast - 2.5 stars

Oh, it was fast all right. Lance, a younger cousin of Vic, is going to college to be a physical therapist and working part-time making deliveries for bakery where Vic works. Chris - whose name isn't mentioned until more than halfway through the book - co-owns a coffee shop with his ex. Chris is really old, y'all. He's mid-30s! \*gasp\* and so of course the age gap becomes an issue, and Chris is an immature dweeb about it. Lance is just barely given any depth, most of it in the last half of the novella. I skimmed a lot of the set-up with this one, because I was bored with the "guy-sees-guy, guys-boink-a-lot-of-times, and eventually start acting like

a couple" formula. The blurb promises clever double entendres - I don't think the blurb writer knows what those are. And how do you not hear someone riding up on a motorcycle? That scene made no sense. Well, a lot of scenes don't make much sense in this series so far, but that one took the cake. I also wasn't feeling this couple, though this one ended stronger than it started.

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### **Michael Kerr says**

Charming gay romance novellas.

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### **~☆~Dαni(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~☆~ says**

Reviewed separately.

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### **Rissa says**

I enjoyed all three stories! :)

The first one, I felt I read before, I may have and just didn't remember. I had that period where I read but didn't review. I'm glad I reread though because I knew I wouldn't have given the review justice then.

I truly did enjoy the stories. Each one had something I liked and I liked seeing the couples intertwined in the books (be it as family or friends).

I will definitely read more of this author!

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### **?♥? Michaëlle ♡♥? says**

4.0 Stars for the whole bundle

A M/M Romance Group Team Spin Spellapalooza Challenge read. (Go Team 6 - Living In Spin!!!)

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### **Isabella ~Mikku-chan~ says**

what a nice, warming collection of the first three books of the Portland Heat series. :3 I really adored the chemistry between the MC's - all were very different, I like this diversity very much because it was a change from other stories. These guys weren't perfect, mostly only a bit ripped and with sexy bodies (not that I complain about a sexy, built-up guy with steamy muscles :3), they have all these problems or "weak" parts, their problematic areas.... :)

I had the biggest connection to the last story but I also love the other ones. So a solid 5 out of 5 stars for this.

And I can't wait to read the 4th and 5th book :3

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### **Tena says**

All 3 stories were enjoyable, but the last one, *Delivered Fast*, was my favorite. There is something about the way they let their relationship develop -without acknowledging what was happening because then it would have to stop - that was so engaging. I felt their little pauses where they almost let the secret slip, almost took that final step. That pause, that secret known by all, is true romance to me and often takes my breath away.

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### **Susan Reeves says**

Can't express how much I loved each of these little gems in this trilogy. Have pre-ordered and am eagerly awaiting the next set of three.

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### **Vallie says**

This novella collection is very aptly named –it's a bundle of joy! Not that it's all heart and flowers, but the angst is kept at a reasonable volume and the happy feelings ooze out of every story. What I have come to love about this author is the wonderful combination of good quality writing with simple plots that allow for character development. If you enjoy slice of life type of stories, without mysteries or other subplots that take away from the romance, this is for you.

In the first book, *Served Hot*, Robby is crushing on the uptight library accountant who buys coffee from Robby's coffee cart every day. The romance builds slowly because David is grieving and dealing with coming out as well. I feel like the first book in the series served as a set of training wheels for the author. It's good, but not great. The romance is sweet but doesn't blow your mind. The plot is not boring, but it didn't keep me from putting the book down either. And yet, the writing is great, the emotions felt real, and the characters truly connected on a deep level.

By the time we got to the second book, *Baked Fresh*, I started seeing how talented this author truly is. The story explores themes of self-esteem and trust very beautifully, with Vic having lost a lot of weight due to family health concerns. Vic is a happy baker who is honestly just looking for someone to love him. He meets Robin at a shelter where they both volunteer and things take off from there. Robin has dealt with drug abuse in the past and is very sensitive towards the teens that show up at the shelter. Vic and Robin made for an amazing couple. They define friends-to-lovers. Annabeth Albert rocks the authentic dialogue in her novels like nobody's business. I love me some good prose, but I'd take pages and pages filled with dialogue any day of the week. And she nails it!

*Delivered fast* is not only my favourite book of the series, but one of my favourite mm books of all time. As I said before, there are no subplots, no whodunnits, no backstory drama, nada, nyet, nothing. Just two guys falling in love and making a relationship happen. Chris owns an organic goods coffee shop and Lance is the twink that is hitting on him big time. Everything I've already mentioned about the first two books holds here and is magnified tenfold. I highlighted so many lines of inner monologue from Chris in his futile attempts to stay away from Lance. I could read a story like this over and over and over without EVER being bored. Not

to mention, this book is hotter than the first two, the dirty talk has reached higher levels than ever, and we even get a bit of kink in there as well.

Just. Awesome.

Highly recommend this series to all mm fans.

*ARC of Bundled Up provided by the author in exchange for an honest review. See this review at Gay Book Reviews.*

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### **Ani Rid says**

Randy, Robin, Robbie ... ich war manchma ein bisschen verwirrt, insgesamt haben die drei GESchichten aber viel Spaß gemacht <3

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### **MaDoReader says**

Le voy a dar cuatro a sabiendas de que mucha gente no compartirá mi opinión, seguramente, con razón, pero estas 3 novellas sencillas, con la dosis justa de angst y unas parejas monísimas, me han conquistado y me han hecho pasar muy buen rato.

No esperéis grandes conflictos, ni un plot espectacular, son historias de gente que se conoce, tontea, se enrolla, se enamora, se repiensa las cosas y consiguen su HEA. No hay más, ni menos... Tiene a su favor que no me ha resultado aburrido leer el mismo esquema 3 veces, que el banter entre los MC me ha puesto de muy buen humor y que ha habido alguna que otra escena hot hot hot (Vic YKWIM \*se abanica\*)

Totalmente recomendable para días en que necesitamos lecturas fluffy pero con "algo"

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