



# Chartreuse

*T.E. Ridener*

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## **Chartreuse** T.E. Ridener

Kasen Reed was a lonely guy with hardly any friends. Sheltered by his domineering, cynical mother, he never gained much of a social status and he's never known true affection. At the age of 19, he finally moves out to start his own life and he has no idea where he's going from here.

Rowan Kelly moved to the tiny town of Chartreuse, Alabama in hopes of starting anew. After a messy breakup that lingers over his head, and his heart, he believes he's finally found the perfect place to open his clinic and do what he loves best; helping animals. Despite how picture perfect the quaint little town seems, the 26 year old feels like something is missing.....

Two lonesome hearts will have a chance encounter in a town that doesn't seem to be ready for the acceptance of love equality, but will it stop them from being together?

## **Chartreuse Details**

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Author : T.E. Ridener

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## From Reader Review Chartreuse for online ebook

### Mercedes says

2.5 stars

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### Pati says

I bought this book immediately upon learning that the proceeds were being donated to The Trevor Project. That's also the only reason that I am not returning it for a refund. I was very disappointed in this book for many reasons. The biggest reason being that it is in desperate need of either an editor or a proof reader that understands the concept of grammar. Sadly this book is riddled with grammatically incorrect sentences, misspelled words (ie: grown instead of groan) and missing words that continually distracted me from the story. Which was massively frustrating.

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### Nikki Cullan says

I have a new favorite book this year: Chartreuse by T. E. Ridener. It has such an incredible, powerful, and beautiful message! I'd give it 10 stars if I could. Nobody could have written it better. I am awed at how emotional it was and I would recommended it to anyone.

It is a male/male story about a couple who is fighting against hate and striving for equality. There is a little bit of mature content, but it is still absolutely wonderful. I am just speechless. <3

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### Jasmine Cardi says

First off, this is a M/M romance. You know what? That doesn't even matter. The story is so much deeper than that. It is a story about love and acceptance. This book melted my heart, like butter. In theory, no matter what your sexual orientation we all face the same issues in love. This is no different for Rowan and Kasen. I just want to give Kasen a hug! He is the sweetest. Don't get me started on Rowan! He is mature and patient and real. These 2 stole my heart right away. Unfortunately, they live in a tiny little town. You can see where this is going. Is their love strong enough to overcome the obstacles they must face? This is a must read!

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### Debbie says

when I finished this book, my original thought was 4.5 stars. I'm upgrading it to 5 stars, after sleeping on it and I'll explain why shortly.

Kasen has lived in Chartreuse all his 19 years. He hasn't even left the small town, and only recently moved out of his overbearing mothers house. he has a job he loves, his own home, and his dog, Houston. but

something is missing. Rowan moved to Chartreuse to escape his past. 3 years ago he found his long term boyfriend in THEIR bed with someone else, a woman. since then, he has concentrated on her veterinary career and now has his own clinic in Chartreuse.

after meeting while walking their dogs, both men become infatuated with the other, and while Kasen is painfully shy, he finds he can talk to Rowan. when Rowan offers to take food to the local dj, imagine his surprise when Kasen answers the door!

after that. the relationship grows, until something happens that makes Rowan realise just how much young Kasen has come to hold his heart. when Kasen and Rowan are threatened, a surprising source backs not only these two men up, but also a victim of domestic violence.

this book, this love story, is beautifully written, from both Kasen and Rowan's point of view, so we get to hear from them both. it has first love angst from Kasen. it has jumping back into the game angst from Rowan. it has biggotted small minded idiots who think they know best. it has some danger and some passion. and this is where I changed my mind about the star rating.

I do, generally, prefer M/M romances to be a little more explicit. this is not. however, on thinkin on it. this book is not about the sex between these two men, it's about the LOVE and what these two will go through for each other. there is passion, yes, and the first kisses between these two were beautifully written, and the shower scene?? left it all to your imagination!

all in all, a beautiful love story, fought for in the face of small town opinions that need dragging into the 21st Century.

Thank you, Ms Ridener for my copy. you should be very proud x

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## **Jenna says**

DNF @ 36%

I just can't with this book. The writing is driving me nuts with the endless mentions of lips being licked, chewed, bitten, wetted, etc. (144 times in the book according to my kindle), numerous references to the color of their eyes, and frequent headhopping. I finally threw my kindle down when the two adult MCs decided to get out of the car and play an impromptu game of tag in the pouring rain for absolutely no damn reason. This was my facial expression while reading that scene:

I then decided to check out other reviews to see if I'm the only one hating this and saw that the first sex scene is fade-to-black. Oh hell no. I'm done.

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## **Mandy says**

Touching story with a message of hope, sweet love story

Kasen is a shy nineteen year old who doesn't struggle with his identity, but with other's acceptance. He know's he is different when it comes to his sexuality.

He also knows the small town he lives in, may not accept who he is.

Rowan moves to Chartreuse to start a new life after a breakup in his relationship.

He is now the town's Vet. While walking his dog one morning, he meets Kasen. A young man who is shy, and not very talkative.

Rowan has been listens to the towns radio station only he doesn't know Cool Kasey, the DJ at the station is Kasen until he calls in to request a song and ends up offering to bring Kasey some dinner over, he finds Kasen at the station, as Kasey.

There, it all begins.

Rowan takes Kasen out of town for an early breakfast. Just a small Waffle House, but a first for Kasen.

While have breakfast Rowan learns Kasen has lived a very sheltered life, So Rowan makes his job to make sure Kasen gets to finally live life and see other places.

The day Rowan took him to the zoo it was so sweet to read about how excited he was to be there!

On the way home it started to rain

Rowan pulled over they played tag in the rain it was such fun to read that part such a silly thing playing in the rain but it showed the playful sweet side of Rowan and Kasen

Hidden thoughts and actions slowly begin between the two.

This was a very touching story.

Very well written and put together nicely.

If you're looking for hardcore sex scenes, you might want to chose a different book. This is about tender exploring, finding someone you can be comfortable with, slowly receive feelings for, and experiencing what love feels like. For the first time.

I loved this book and hope to read more about Rowan and Kasen's journey together!

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### **Melonie Merritt says**

I completely fell in love with this book and the characters. T.E. Ridener did an amazing job with this book and I am happy that yet another author is bringing awareness to a problem that we have. The characters in the book are so relatable. I love Rowan and Kasen. It was difficult to read some of this book just because I have seen people go through similar things that both these men have to go through. T.E. Ridener did an excellent job at bringing attention to the problem without sugar coating it and also without being so graphic that would make it hard to read. I could not help but want to jump into the book and protect both of these men. I loved the journey that I got to go on with them. I would highly recommend this book.

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### **Sarah says**

I liked this but the writing was annoying. Too many weird wording issues. An author really should know the differences between sit, set and sat. Gah!

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## Ana\_P says

### 2.75 stars

This was literally me trying to rate this book:

There were many parts of the book that I did like and as many I did not.

So, I am breaking this review down to try to make sense of my jumbled thoughts on this book because there were certainly many.

#### The Characters

Kasen is a 19-year-old socially awkward young man who doesn't have any friends and has never been in a relationship, meaning that he is a virgin in *all* senses of the word. (Is it kind of creepy that I am so excited by a virgin character? Eh, probably, but each to his or her own, so don't judge me!) He is afraid of opening himself up to anyone because he really doesn't know how. As it said in the book's blurb, his mother was completely domineering and verbally abusive throughout Kasen's entire childhood, which has shattered his confidence and ability to relate to anyone.

*He didn't feel comfortable on letting anyone in; and that was probably his biggest downfall.*

When he meets Rowan, our second MC, Kasen is truly experiencing many things for the first time, and for the first time in his life, he feels *alive*. It also means that he doesn't know how to handle the many new feelings he is experiencing and to navigate his way in this relationship with anything resembling ease. He doesn't know how to read and interpret all the signals, and he was, understandably, cautious moving forward with Rowan.

*He's a friend. He told himself. That's all he is. He's new and doesn't have anyone to hang out with. So just relax and be cool.*

Even though Kasen was new to the whole dating scene and was moving forward using extreme caution, I didn't feel like he was just a passive participant in the relationship who only followed the much more experienced Rowan's lead.

*...when Kasen began kissing him back, Rowan noticed how experimental that Kasen was. The other was hesitant but eager.*

Rowan is a 26-year-old veterinarian who opens a clinic in Chartreuse, a tiny town in Alabama where Kasen lives. He left his old life behind in Boston when he walked in on his boyfriend doing the dirty with a waitress and found his escape in so-small-it-is-barely-on-the-map Chartreuse. (I have to add my two cents in and say that it seems a wee bit dramatic to run away to a different state after dumping your cheating boyfriend, but I just rolled with it...). Rowan just wanted to move to Chartreuse to live a quiet life and do what he loves the most--working with animals. However, fate through a wrench in his plans, and he found a love interest in a small town in Alabama of all places.

*In the short two months that Rowan had been in Chartreuse, he found himself losing his heart*

*to a younger man with beautiful blue eyes and a contagious laugh. He had no control over the situation, and it terrified him.*

### **The Romance**

This was a slow-burn romance, and I'm so glad it was done this way.

The development of the relationship would not have worked any other way between the characters because we have one MC who is a shy virgin and another who has been recently and just got out of a relationship that ended very badly. Going full throttle would not have made any sense for these two characters.

They were a *truly* adorable couple. It was amazing to see how Rowan helped pull Kasen out of his shell and for Kasen to start making Rowan believe that it is okay to trust again.

Rowan was perfectly patient with Kasen and *never* tried to push him or rush him into anything in their relationship.

*Kasen really was innocent. Rowan understood now. Even with just such a simple touch, it seemed to send the boy into shambles...*

He was aware of the fact that Kasen had been sheltered throughout his life due to his overbearing mother.

Slow-burn was definitely the best way to go for these guys, and I really enjoyed their slow and steady pace. And their first kiss was just absolutely perfect.

### **The Story**

Surprisingly, at least for me, the romance and the developing relationship between Kasen and Rowan was not the whole plot; there was so much more to this book. So, this book took place in a small town in Alabama. You see where I am going with this? Yup, gay bashing and hate crimes. Notice the status below when my adorable little book turned so damned angsty?

Yes, sirree, this is when it happened. People find out about Rowan and Kasen's relationship and some narrow-minded bigots didn't like that.

*The spoiler is a summary of the what the bigoted idiots did to Kasen and Rowan:*  
(view spoiler)

Even though what the homophobes put Kasen and Rowan through was truly horrible, it was awesome to witness how they stuck by each other and grew closer as a couple and refused to let others get in their way. Like I said, my fluffy, light-hearted book definitely had some teeth.

### **Warnings/Trigger Alerts**

Besides the hate crimes, there were some other dark subject matters involved in the book.

Kasen goes to a club, and while he is not looking, some douche in a suit slips a roofie (a date rape drug) in his drink. (view spoiler) The portrayal of this whole scene is not overly explicit and horrifying, and the bastard who slipped Kasen the drug doesn't get to do much before Rowan shows up and beats his ass six

ways from Sunday. However, it is attempted date rape.

There was also an instance of domestic violence involving one of the secondary characters. Jess, a friend of Kasen's, stands up for Kasen and Rowan to her husband, a real piece of work, and he hits her as a result. The domestic violence does not happen on page, but we do see the character right after it happens, and she is, of course, very distraught and scared out of her mind.

I just thought I should warn people about these instances in case they could be triggers or some people just really don't like reading about them. They are just small parts of the book, but they do happen, and I gave warnings just to be on the safe side.

### *Niggles/Flaws/Annoyances*

As I said, there were parts of the book I did not enjoy or that annoyed the ever-loving crap out of me.

✘ When Rowan walks in on his boyfriend engaging in the mattress mambo with a waitress, he is of course upset, and I felt for him. But I did not feel so bad for him that I did not get mad when he alluded to her as a homewrecker and blamed her for ruining his relationship. Yes, he also held his ex accountable but he seemed to blame the woman more, who did not even know that Rowan's boyfriend was seeing anyone else, let alone a guy. I guess this could be my feminist side coming through, but why did the woman have to take most of the blame right away? Grrr....

If she *knew* that the guy she was fornicatin' with was seeing someone else, then, yes, justified anger is justified...

✘ There were a lot extraneous stuff and descriptions thrown in that we really don't need to know or care about.

*Rowan smiled, resting his hand down beside of his thigh as he drove. He'd always been better at driving with one hand. He wasn't sure why. It wasn't as if it were safe to do so, but he somehow managed to control the vehicle better.*

Do I really need to know that you prefer to drive with just one hand?

No...no, I really do not...

✘ There was a distinct lack of descriptors concerning the characters' appearances. Rowan called Kasen "beautiful" a few times, but...is he really? I don't fucking KNOW because I didn't get any more descriptions than eye/hair color. \*taking deep breaths\*

✘ The first time the MCs make love is a fade to fuckin' black, or as I like to call it,

I waited for over 50% of the book for *ze* smex, and I get a fade to fuckin' black???

There was also just one other sex scene in the book, but, at least, it was on-page. Thank heavens for small mercies, yeah?

✘ After all that has happened, I felt that it all wrapped up a little too nicely. The citizens of Chartreuse were pretty much portrayed and described as being mostly homophobic and then they stand up for Kasen and Rowan against the big bad homophobes who had terrorized them and accept them as their own???. It's a nice thought but seems a little too unrealistic with everything else that went down in the book.



✘ This book just had, hands down, some weird-ass grammar. Semi-colons, for example, were often used in place of commas.

*Snow wasn't a big deal for him; ever.*

I guess semi-colons were used in place of commas a few times because commas were overused everywhere else.

*"Fine. Whatever," Kasen slammed the receiver down...*

*"Not yet, at least," His eyes dimmed...*

What did periods ever do to you? It is a-okay to use them more when they are needed! There was also a lot of unnecessary capitalization:

*"It's fine, Rowan," **He** finally said.*

These weird grammar rules that the author seems to have made up occur throughout the *entire* damn book. At least they were consistent.

### **Final Thoughts**

I really liked both of the MCs and the development of their relationship. It was amazing and so swoon-worthy, a slow-burn well done. I definitely also liked how I got so much more than I was expecting in terms of the story. I was not anticipating the author adding the hate crimes and giving this book a real message and a plot that is very significant to today's society. However, many of the flaws and niggles that I found in the book forced me to lower my rating. I just could not get over them. And, the writing overall, not just the grammar mind you, felt stilted and awkward. It was not horrible, but it was not great either.

You know how you read a book and when you put it down for whatever reason, you can't just wait for the time when you are able to pick it up again? Weeeeeelllll, this never happened for me with this book. I was never excited to back to reading, and I had no urge to pick it up again. It was after *forcing* myself to start reading it again that I became interested in the story once more. This cycle kept repeating until I finished the book. As I said before, I liked the story but the writing just made it hard to completely immerse myself in the novel; it always held me back from fully enjoying it.

I really can't decide if I should recommend this one or encourage you to stay the eff away. As I said at the beginning of this monstrous review, there were some parts I enjoyed and some I did not...*at all*. It really is a toss up.

I guess if you choose to read this one, proceed with caution...

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### **Elle Vanzandt says**

T.E. Ridener

This book was not what I was expecting at all, but in the best way possible!

“People are taught to fear what's different. They think they have to question it instead of just accepting it.”

One of the most moving statements in the book, these words struck a cord in me. Kasen Reed is coming into his own. He has made the decision to move out, he is rocking it as ‘Cool Kasey’, and loves his small town.

Enter in Rowan Kelly. A man from the city of Boston finds himself wanting to start over in the small town of Chartreuse, Alabama. Starting his Vet practice with a heart of gold, Rowan starts to become loved by the town.

A meeting on a cool morning at the dog park in town sets Kasen and Rowan on their journey.

This book was a love story. A love story with many obstacles that no one should have to face, but in the end a love story all the same. When the heart finds what it wants and is sure a person would do anything for that love and that is what the reader gets the chance to see in this book.

Watching Kasen become his own person through the love of Rowan and an unlikely friend, Jess, and the events surrounding him was truly moving. One must make the decision to step away in hopes of preventing things from happening or stand up and fight for what's right. To see this couple struggle through both choices and still come out on top in the end was the best feel good moment.

The true feel to the book was a nice change. Some may say what happens in the book is nowhere near close to real life but the startling fact is that it is. With a brilliant message, author T.E. Ridener both made me aware and warmed my heart while reading Chartreuse. I felt for the couple on all levels and a person can only ask one thing of a great book: that it makes you feel.

Chartreuse does just that and therefore making it a great book in my opinion. Give this unconventional romance a chance and fall in love with love all over again.

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## **Erica says**

5 stars for me, if I could give it more I would!!

Rowan moves to small town to start over after heartbreak. He opens his veterinary clinic in what appears to be a friendly small town.

Kasen has always been the quiet guy, sheltered by his mother for so long, at 19 he's just beginning his life. He has no real friends, works the night shift at a radio station where the repeat callers become his friends.

Rowan meets Kasen and likes him, he wants to be his friend but Kasen is so unsure of himself. Rowan knows he has to take it slow with Kasen, he's like a skittish puppy, he needs friends, he needs love, he needs to be himself, but Rowan knows he can't push without scaring Kasen away.

Kasen has finally found a friend. Someone who doesn't judge him, who helps him see the world outside his door and hiding behind a microphone at the radio station. Kasen is attracted to Rowan, but he has no clue how to handle it.

Rowan shows Kasen there's much more to life than he's ever known, shows him the world around him, not just his mother and his tiny town. Kasen is happy, he's found a friends and a lover.

But how does smalltown USA deal with their first homosexual couple?

This is a beautiful story of one mans coming of age basically, learning all he's known is not all there is. Learning to trust, to love and to stand up for himself. While Rowan learns to overcome his past and take a chance again.

I love these two men, the story is so sweet and could happen in any small town still stuck in the dark ages. Chartreuse is a sweet love story but also deals with stereotypes and a young man dealing with making his sexuality known publicly. There are so many obstacles to overcome, but Kasen gets what he needs to be a stronger, sure of himself, happy man.

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### **Elyxyz says**

Storia carina, senza troppe pretese. Ma l'editing del testo italiano va seriamente rivisto.

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### **Sydney Hopke says**

WOW! This is not a genre I normally read but I love the author so I wanted to read it and I wasn't disappointed at all. A story of a small southern town and love and how it grows and is taken by others around them. This was a wonderful love story of 2 people and their journey. You feel their joy and sadness and have surprise moments. The story made my heart happy. A must read for anyone who loves a love story. Another hit for an amazing author!

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### **Maureen Mckenzie says**

Fabulous book by T.E.Ridener. A story about acceptance, love and small, narrow minds who show prejudicial treatment to the inability to accept what they don't understand or perceive as wrong. Unfortunately this plagues cities and towns across all states and hopefully this book will inspire and enlighten victims to believe they shouldn't have to be faces with hate crimes.

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