



## **True North**

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Small-town engineer Jackson Strange has been clumsy his whole life, so when an accident at work sends him to the local clinic, it's no big shock. The surprise is the magnetic, heated attraction to the enigmatic Julian Piet, a charming doctor with killer good looks that appears to treat him, sending Jack off his lonely course.

Now that their paths have crossed, Jack and Julian head off in a new direction - but between Jack's reluctance to be open about his sexuality and Julian's shattered self-confidence, they can't seem to decide what direction that is. It takes a push from Julian's meddling sister to send them stumbling headfirst into romance.

Happily wrapped up in their fledgling relationship, Jack and Julian think they may have found their way until unexpected roadblocks appear on their path to forever. Wrathful storms, dangerous illness, family connections, and broken hearts threaten their tenuous balance and will send them spinning apart – their love scattered to the four winds - if they cannot believe and trust that together, they can find true north.

## True North Details

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Author : Bethany Brown , Ashlyn Kane

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# From Reader Review True North for online ebook

## DeeNeez says

A sweet romance tale. But I couldn't help but notice Jack's dog disappeared and long forgotten after the beginning of the book.

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## Kris says

The Review:

Honesty from the outset~

Some of my thoughts about True North came together as a result of a discussion about the book I had with my English pal Jenre. (Hey, it's one of my first reviews for the blog. Cut me some slack. \*g\*)

First things first~

I know I've connected with a story when, after reading a particular scene, I find myself saying "Oh, you cow. Tell me that doesn't hurt them later." (you'll know exactly the one I'm talking about when you come across it) and then eagerly continuing to read to find out what DOES happen.

This has to be one of my favourite things about reading; when you feel like you are a participant in the characters' journey. You share their highs and lows and are genuinely happy for them as they head towards a future together.

This was definitely the case for me with True North and, I think, reflects the fact that this book is not only character-driven, but the characters are well written and developed (let's face it, this doesn't always happen) as well as being appealing to the reader.

A couple of issues~

The secondary characters; Julian's cousin and Jack's Mum, play important roles in moving this story forward. There were a few times when Julian's cousin especially annoyed the crap out of me, although I'm still trying to work out whether it may have been because Jack and Julian were angry with her or whether I just wanted her to go get her own life and leave them alone. Good characterisation = connection = reader's joy.

The flow of time in this book is handled extraordinarily well. The reader gets the sense of time passing as the relationship develops, but without the stop/start you can sometimes get in novels, which can be really jarring.

The only negative about this aspect was that, towards the end, I did vaguely (and this is a key word) feel I might have missed some pivotal moments in the relationship. It was through a conversation with Jen that I realised it was not so much something was 'missing', rather that I, as a reader, wanted a few extra steps/scenes showing the progress of the main characters' relationship. In particular, I would have liked to find out more about Jack's increasing comfort and confidence in having a 'real' - and public - relationship with Julian.

The last (very minor) issue I had with True North was Jack's clumsiness seemed to disappear when much was made of it at the beginning of the book. Maybe I just didn't notice it as much as the story progressed??  
\*shrugs\*

My recommendation~

This is a good, solid romance, which I think those who prefer a more 'real' m/m contemporary romance will truly enjoy.

It is a terrific first novel from this writing team and I'll look out for them in the future.

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### **FloJ says**

I enjoyed this. I liked that they actually dealt with a few of the minor characters lives as well.

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### **vLadimiR says**

The chemistry between Jackson and Julian was believable and their first encounter was quite entertaining. The editing could've been executed efficiently to make the story more cohesive though but I guess this writing style is reminiscent of those books published in the early 2000s, or maybe I'm just nit picky. The story set in a small town Canada felt homey and the overall story was enjoyable.

Strongest point of the book for me was the main conflict. Having Julian torn between keeping a secret from Jackson to honor a patients request and being honest with his boyfriend was very interesting and quite emotional.

I was also quite surprised that this book is part of a series after looking up the author's other works.

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### **Monika says**

This turned out to be just an okay read for me. I really liked all the characters and the premise but there was something missing. This story lacked a bit of energy I think.

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### **Melissa says**

This was a very enjoyable story and I look forward to the rest of the series very much. I can't wait to see what happens next. :) The characters were well done, I thought, and while there was added drama for drama sake, there wasn't too much and I didn't really need to roll my eyes much if at all. Recommended for those who like doctor romance and sports!! Plus a sassy sister and an adorable little girl.

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### **Lucy says**

I lost interest so fast in this book. It was so good in the beginning, and then it got so boring. I read a little more thinking that when they get together, it would get better, but no. When sex scenes can't keep me interested, that's when I give up. DNF at halfway.

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### **Gabbi says**

I have read mixed reviews on this one. But, I decided to take a chance on it anyway. I agree that it started out kinda slow. I thought after about 30 pages or so, it picked up. I liked Jackson's character alot. He was funny, clutzy and was willing to take a chance on sexy Julian.

Even for a Doctor, Julian had some self esteem issues, from having a previous bad relationship. I was glad to see Jackson and Julian come together. Too me it was a sweet romance and I liked it.

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### **Vio says**

Very enjoyable story, nice and easy with no major hassles to get your blood pressure up and boiling. Jackson the accident prone klutz and Julian the oh so hunky doctor have quite a bit of fun in the treatment room, yes they have the hots for each other. Its the flirtatious banter which I thought was adorable and funny plus they are charmingly cute too. I really liked the gradual build up of the relationship its a very good romance. Recommended!

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### **Betryal says**

There's only really one word that best describes this book for me. Fantastic! Like it's predecessor Wild Angel I couldn't have asked for more. This book offered everything I look for in a story. After reading Wild Angel which I unknowingly read before this one due to my lack of knowledge that True North was part of this set and came before it, at least my curiosity was appeased and satisfied to wondering how Jack and Julian came to being an item. Now I know.

A recommended read if you haven't yet.

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### **Sarah says**

How can you resist a man in scrubs? Years of watching ER, Chicago Hope and now Grey's obviously has me well conditioned. heh.

This book starts with promise, two guys meet and are attracted to each other, always a bonus in a romance novel. Bit of the whole caretaker hero doing his taking care thing, it was good. I liked Jackson, he was sweet

and had me imagining warm plaid shirts. Not sure why, just did! Julian is a nice foil of slender goodness with much feisty sexiness. There is a beautifully described small town in winter, interesting secondary characters and it was nice and long. (long is good!)

The only problems I had with the book were a few moments with awkward plot devices that had my suspension of disbelief working overtime. I also found some of the explanations about backgrounds and where the boys came from a little confusing, but the rest of the book read reasonably smoothly.

Despite these problematic moments I'll be interested in seeing what their next book is like. It is coming soon from Dreamspinner Press in March.

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### **Sam says**

It's not a bad book but I'm having a hell of a time with the geography. Maybe I'm missing something. I thought they lived in Northern Alberta, but whenever they go to the big city it's Calgary, which is super not north. I live in rural Alberta and work in the oil patch so this is a detail that won't bother most readers, but it's driving me batty. Edmonton would make sense. Hell, even Grande Prairie depending on where they're supposed to be and if all they need is a Wal-Mart or some other basic shopping. But Calgary is not north.

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### **Jenre says**

I bought this book because I had been very impressed with the stories written by these two authors for the Dreamspinner Advent Stories. I wanted to see whether they could sustain that quality of writing over a novel and I'm glad to say that by the end of the book I wasn't disappointed.

The book is set in small town Canada, to which our hero Dr Julian has recently returned as a GP, after working in a large hospital. He misses small town life and his cousin, Ros, with whom he now shares a house. He meets our other hero, Jack, when Jack has to attend the clinic for a knee injury and they hit it off straight away. The trouble is that both of them are in the closet, Jack more than Julian in that he hasn't even come out to his family, whereas Julian has come out to his parents and cousin. Their journey in this book is a slow acceptance of their love for each other as well as a gradual coming out. Underlying all is a pervasive theme of the fear of loss, both in terms of love and family.

The main reason I enjoyed this book was due to the characterisation of Julian and Jack and their developing relationship. At the beginning the two men are almost crippled by their fear of loss and rejection, brought on by past experiences, especially with Julian. The men are lonely and yet scared of opening themselves up to each other to ease this loneliness. As the book progresses, their fears are laid to rest naturally as they learn to love and trust each other. It was beautifully done.

The two secondary characters of Ros and Flo were also well written. What was most interesting was these women were not there just act as 'filler' characters, or to provide someone for each of the heroes to discuss their problems. Rather they were used as catalysts in moving the relationship of Jack and Julian forward. It was nice to see secondary characters take on an important role in the development of the main characters for a change.

There were a couple of small negative points which meant that the book was a bit of a slow starter. Firstly, I was a little confused as to the position of Julian in the small town where he grew up and has now returned. He doesn't seem to know many people beyond his close family and one or two others. What confuses me is how this can be possible when he grew up in the town and went to school with some of the residents. I know that he is described as a loner, but surely he wouldn't have been so isolated? Jack is an outsider who has moved into the town and he knows more people than Julian. I think this part of Julian's character could have been given a little more thought, especially as it is mentioned several times how everyone in the small town knows each other.

Secondly, the way that Jack spoke and thought at the beginning made him seem like a much younger man. He is actually in his mid-30's, yet he some of his phrases made him sound like he was in his early twenties. This got better as the book progressed and by the end I didn't notice it at all.

Having said that, these were only minor points in what was otherwise a very enjoyable book. I was drawn into the lives of these two men, I cared about them, understood their problems and reservations, and, ultimately, was satisfied when the book was finished - what more could you want from a novel?!

On top of this, is the knowledge that this was the first book by these authors - very impressive! I'm giving it a grade of 'Very Good' and I am already looking forward to reading the next book in this series.

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### **Yvonne says**

**2.5 stars** For the Gang Bang Q3 rec by Tana. I didn't really connect to this one. The secondary female characters seem to take over a lot of the story. The big moment when Jackson goes from closeted to not & when he decided he loved Julian felt more like the side story because of this. I was a little bored with it & had to put it off a few times before finishing it.

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### **Debra Guyette says**

Jackson Strange, a small town engineer, has always been clumsy. He winds up once again in the emergency room. Expecting to see his usual doctor, he instead finds Julian Piet, the new doctor. Julian is very sexy and desirable and Jack would like more as does Julian. The two do get together but not for long. There are problems in their happily every after. Julian is struggling with self-confidence and Jack still has a foot in the closet. Add all that to family emergencies, fierce storms, and a few broken hearts, Julian and Jack have stumbling blocks in their road to happiness.

Jack and Julian were beautiful together but just could not see what they had. There were a lot of missteps and misunderstandings they needed to work through. Their families and friends added additional stress with severe medical issues and other problems. Will these two work out all their roadblocks? Read True North and find out for yourself. I am was glad I did. Julian and Jack will stay with you long after the last word has been read.

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