



Must Love Chickens

Jea Hawkins

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City girl meets country girl.

Natalie's life is on a precipice with too many failed career moves in the last year. Faced with the loss of everything she has ever worked for, Natalie looks for a way to get out of the city and realign her priorities.

When Jessica Morgan places an ad for a new farmhand, she doesn't expect to hear from an urbanite. And when the respondent turns out to be gorgeous Natalie Wells, she's really at a loss for words!

Natalie thinks taking a job in the country is a great plan, until she realizes she's attracted to her boss. When she learns her boss's bias against her is the result of issues with an ex-girlfriend, Natalie realizes she's not imagining the sparks between them – that Jess might just be open to a new relationship, if only Natalie can prove she belongs in Jess's life.

The last thing Jess needs is a new love interest, especially one who works for her! But she can't deny Natalie is pretty darn cute trying to learn her way around the farm and as she falls in love, Jess wonders if there's a chance for romance with the city girl...

Must Love Chickens Details

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From Reader Review Must Love Chickens for online ebook

Ally says

So, I'm a city person (well, suburbs kid), and my girlfriend is from the country. The fact that our origins mirrors the premise, plus the title, is what got me to check out this novella.

And it was... okay. The prose is fine, but the dialogue is entirely stiff exposition. To quote Futurama, "you can't just have your characters say how they feel! That makes me angry!"

Plus, it's kinda boring how there's no real conflict in the book, until the end, and even then, it just felt limp. There's no feeling of emotional payoff, because there wasn't anything at stake.

Also, it's curious how the novella is all about ~good ol' country folk~, who are all 100% ok with the gays, and who are also 100% agnostic. In my experience, both of these things are highly unlikely to be found in such a setting.

Danni Mladenovic says

Very, very cute novel. I had a smile on my face while reading it. :) This is certainly the book I'd recommend for a nice, quiet afternoon at home, with a hot tea, cinnamon brownies, while watching the snowflakes sparkling through the window. A perfect romance for a winter afternoon. Both Jess and Natalie are such lovable characters, it really makes you smile spontaneously while reading the novel.

Lou says

Charming, Funny and Chickens. Oh My!

Jea manages to capture city and country alike in this beautiful tale of city girl meeting country girl and country girl falling helplessly in love with city girl and vice versa.

What makes it even better is that there are chickens and like Essie, the characters shine as bright as their clucking counterparts.

I enjoyed reading this sweet tale and would definitely recommend it to all of my friends!!

Joc says

DNF 58%

I really don't like not finishing a book because it feels like I'm not giving it a proper chance but I don't think this book is for me. I think it could be a sweet romance for somebody else but at nearly 60% I haven't connected with either of the characters enough to care what happens. I picked it up because of the title and the lead chicken seems to have quite a cool personality.

Part of what has motivated me to stop reading is when one character found a parallel in her changing life goals to the rabbit's in what sounds like the movie 'Zootopia'.

There are some good parts too, though. I liked that Natalie is not a skinny character and liked it even more that Jess liked her exactly as she is.

Overall, I found it too bland for me.

Ted says

I could have sworn I read this ... like a 2-3 years ago? But GR says nope. So I never picked it up thinking GR was nuts. Looking at my library I was actually remembering Hypnotizing Chickens... lol Anyway.

Jess and Nat are great. City girl/country girl. Nat gets the bad thrown at her early on and moves out of the big city. Jess runs a farm and well... yea. It works.

I seem to be on a bit of a Hawkins run lately. I don't mind. For the most part I like/love all her stuff. So refreshing actually considering the run of bleh I've had lately. Only a few more books and I'll finish up. I don't like having unreads to authors I really like.

Isobel says

This was cute. Not much tension or drama, but there were chickens. And Esmeralda the chicken was adorable: I kept having to remind myself that out garden is not big enough for chickens.

Yes, what I've taken away from this one is a desire for pet chickens. You have been warned...

Erryn Barratt says

I now LOVE chickens

OMG, this is such a sweet and wonderful book. Jea Hawkins is a new author to me, but I plan on reading more by her.

The premise is simple – city girl runs away to the country to lick her wounds and hide out from real life. This story, though, is so much more than that.

Natalie has enjoyed a successful run as an art gallery assistant in New York City, but a string of poorly-reviewed shows has pushed her lower in the echelons of prestige. Realizing she's been betrayed by someone she trusted, she takes a chance on an ad from a farmer who is looking for an assistant. Natalie knows nothing about working the land, but escaping sounds perfect.

Can a woman go from Gucci, Louis Vuitton, and Vera Wang, to mud, apples, and chicken dung?

Jess isn't holding her breath. She's been tricked into hiring Natalie and believes the woman won't last two weeks, let alone an entire season. City women never stay and they only break Jess' heart when they leave.

What begins as a tale about polar opposites soon becomes an exploration of the law of attraction. It doesn't take long for the women to see that not only are they both attracted to women – they are attracted to each other.

I love slow-burn stories. These women don't leap into bed. They get to know each other, care for each other, trust each other. When they do finally acknowledge their feelings, I felt rewarded for having followed them on their journey.

So what happens when reality intrudes? Natalie is summoned to the city and Jess is resigned to losing her forever. I had more faith in the women, but there were a few times when I wondered if either would be willing to compromise—willing to lay her heart on the line.

I liked that each woman held something back because that's often how it is in real life. When they did finally open up, I felt validated for having believed in the women. Jess' story was especially heart-wrenching.

I got my happy ending and I plan to come back for more.

Lori Prince is a new narrator for me. She was perfect for this book, giving unique voices to both women and I'll be happy to listen to more books narrated by her.

Finally, I want to say, I want to meet someone who finds me beautiful—"mind, body, and soul". Jea Hawkins made me believe that there might be someone out there for me as well.

Doreen says

Home Sweet Home.

I dearly love chickens. I loved *Must Love Chickens*, too. Jess and Nat make such a loving couple. Finding home, making a living, taking a path to family and knowing your own needs are all essential to growing up. Natalie took responsibility for herself when her New York City life let her down. She gambled it all on her new job as a farmhand on an apple orchard. Jess is sure that the city girl won't stay long enough to become a country girl. They live, eat and work together. It's understandable when their feelings for each other start to grow.

The pace of the story was perfect. There was no need to rush things or to unnecessarily slow them down. Farm life and work were portrayed as very hard, but honestly rewarding. By comparison, city life came off as fake and toxic. Jea Hawkins writes with sincere insights into life's greatest mysteries. How do we become our best self and how do we share our life with someone else? *Must Love Chickens* is a genuine and enjoyable lesbian romance.

Ayse says

An ok romance -- the writing is a little lacking, particularly the romance part of it. The descriptions and interactions of most other parts of the book were alright but the romantic interactions between Jess and Natalie were flat and uninteresting. Their final declarations were particularly unsatisfying -- ultimately Jess never risked anything, Natalie had already decided. So there was never any real payoff for Jess -- just telling someone something after they had already decided isn't vulnerability or openness. It would have been better if there had been some real conflict with the job offer; some real possibility; something that Jess would have done to earn Natalie coming back. Instead it was just unsatisfying.

Alexis says

Totally cute

This was a sweet story. The main characters had great chemistry and their interaction was often times playful causing me to chuckle here and there. There is not much to mention here really as the story was pretty predictable and there was hardly any angst. This is one of those books that allows you to just shut your mind off and enjoy the journey of two women trying to find their happily ever after.

Morgan says

Well this lesrom book had about as much subtlety as a stampeding elephant. Basic premise is that city girl has a bit of a life crisis and escapes to the "country" to work as a farmhand, where all of the side characters are a little too encouraging of hook up between her and the woman who owns the farm. The dialogue is wooden and is desperately trying to be clever and funny, the sex scenes tended to all contain at least one description or line that would qualify as cringe worthy if not creepy (really, you're going to tell the woman you're having sex with that you're disappointed you can't tell whether they're a natural red-head because they're waxed? and really, where are a woman's "petals" because apparently I missed that in health class). And what about the chickens of the title? They would have been interesting to focus a bit more on and somehow bring the two protagonists together naturally versus someone telling each of them how "obvious" it is that they should be together, within just two days of meeting. A disappointing, predictable, and boring read.

Anja says

This story started well but around the love making scene it went a little downhill. The language used to describe their lovemaking didn't fit the rest of the book and at that time I was missing the chemistry and tension. After that scene the story babbled along, not much drama, just everything nice and easy.

T.B. Markinson says

A cute lesbian romance that'll make you laugh and cheer.

Kara says

“Must Love Chickens” is a very entertaining, sweet story that’s as much a love story for our cultural ideal of small towns as it is a love story for the main characters.

While I do, of course, include the mandated disclaimer at the end of my review, I want to point out right away that I received this audiobook as a free review copy. This is the very first time I’ve ever requested a review copy of any book, and I was very excited to have been accepted to review the book. What I want to explain, or perhaps clarify is a better word, is why I requested this book. Narrator Lori Prince. That’s why.

I was halfway through Jea Hawkins’ “Something About You”, and was about to get on an airplane to visit my mom. At the airport, I realized I would need more Lori Prince. So I bought Heather Blackmore’s “It’s Not a Date”, despite mixed reviews for the storyline. Why? Because Lori Prince is the narrator, and I was really enjoying her voice on “Something About You”. Also, because that’s the same desk that Bold Strokes Books used for the cover of Georgia Beers’ “Right Here, Right Now”. Helloooooo! First those legs, now the bare feet...that’s a nice desk.

Anyway, I’m sitting at the boarding gate, looking at email, and I see that a review copy of “Must Love Chickens” is available. Narrated by...Lori Prince! Oh please!! I requested a copy, got on the plane, and checked my email as soon as we landed four hours later. Hooray! My request was accepted. So...I listened to the book (when my mom wasn’t around!!!), and here’s my review!

As I said earlier, this is a fun story of idyllic farm life; gathering apples by hand (does that really still happen anywhere?) and feeding friendly chickens...each of which has their own personality (the chickens provide eggs, they aren’t eaten!!). The MCs are very very likable, the small town secondary characters are friendly, and the big-city secondary characters are shallow and/or bitchy.

Much of the story revolves around big-city, rich family, MC girl Natalie trying to decide which camp she really belongs with. Family insists on big-city, of course. But who or what will make her happy...or want her to be happy. Yes, those are the questions many of us face, and it’s enjoyable being with Natalie as she decides. We don’t really learn as much of MC Jess....she has her own painful past, but she is more confident in knowing where she belongs...or, I should say....where she WANTS to belong. Understanding and choosing what one wants is very much a central theme of this delightful book.

For the most part, there’s very little angst in the book, and Natalie and Jess often communicate well...both in, and out of the bedroom. ;)

But...there is, in sort of Melissa Brayden fashion, just enough self-doubt and uncertainty thrown in late into the book for each MC to internally question each other’s “true feelings” for each to make assumptions about what the other may want to be moderately annoying. Really...they were doing so well together...this is a sweet romance...assuming the worst without talking....really? Sheesh.

I enjoyed Natalie’s conversation with her grandmother. As much as I agreed with Natalie’s internal assessment of the adage “if you love something set it free” being a “crock of shit”, I was surprised that the author made Jess’ decision not to try to influence Natalie’s ultimate decision work...work very well, in fact.

I really enjoyed listening to “Must Love Chickens”, and I will listen to it again when I want to relax with a story and voice I know will make me happy. 4.25* for the book, at least another half-star added for terrific narration, rounded up without reservation to a highly-recommended 5* audiobook. This isn’t complex or hugely thought-provoking...this is highly enjoyable entertainment. Get this audiobook!!

I was given this free review copy audiobook at my request and have voluntarily left this review.

My rating and my review was not in anyway affected by my having been provided a review copy.

JF says

I purchased this on audible and not even Lori prince as narrator could save this for me .
