



# Trying Not to Love You

*N.J. Nielsen*

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Alistair Krunkstone is happy with his life—he plays bass guitar in a band, has a best friend, a family who loves him unconditionally, and yeah, he has a girlfriend, but he doesn't want to talk about her.

Keagan Thames has been in love with his best friend since the day they met. When Alistair breaks up with his girlfriend, Keagan takes him in. Being so close but not touching Alastair will be hard enough without the added burden of Alistair's ex threatening to ruin his life for something he hasn't done.

With the help from the other members of their band "DeRanged", family, and friends, everything comes to light. Will the strong bond they've always shared be enough to pull them through the awkwardness of their changing relationship? Or will it pull them apart forever?

This story was written as a part of the M/M Romance Group's "**Love's Landscapes**" event. Group members were asked to write a story prompt inspired by a photo of their choice. Authors of the group selected a photo and prompt that spoke to them and wrote a short story.

*Dear Author,*

*Who are they? Are they band mates heading home after a gig? Buddies after a long night out? Fans post-concert? Is this the night that changes everything? Or just a night like any other they share? How have they become so comfortable, with themselves, and each other? Is it new and fresh, or solid and steady?*

## Photo Description:

Two guys asleep on a train one lying on top of the other's lap. They're both dressed in torn jeans and T-shirts. One has bluish/green coloured hair. They look to be like they're in a grunge rock band or possibly are on their way home from a concert. The guy with the coloured hair is using the thigh of the guy lying on him as a pillow. They look comfortable with each other.

This story may contain sexually explicit content and is **intended for adult readers**. It may contain content that is disagreeable or distressing to some readers. The M/M Romance Group strongly recommends that each reader review the General Information section before each story for story tags as well as for content warnings.

## Trying Not to Love You Details

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# From Reader Review Trying Not to Love You for online ebook

## Teresa says

Sweet Friends to lovers story about two guys who are clueless about each other's feelings. I thought it was funny that everyone knew how they felt but them. The girlfriend was a piece of work. I liked both mc's though I felt they moved to sex super fast for one of them having been straight.

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## Taintedskyee (Books Books&More Books) says

A good rock band story. Alistair & Keagan were best friend since one was 13 and other 10 yrs old and Keagan knew he loved his best friend from the day they met but only one major problem with that, Alistair was not gay and had a live in girl friend for 5 yrs. But when things went downhill in Alistair relationship both of them realized with a little push from friends and family that he is not so straight after all and loves Keagan in more way than just best friend.

Its a simple gay for you themed story and all the characters are sweet and lovable. I really wouldn't mind finding about Ross & Cooper's story . Oh I didn't mention them before did I?? No read the story to find out:D

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## Nic says

I love a friends-to-lovers, gay-for-you story and this one was no exception. These guys are band members but what I liked was they they weren't superstars, they were 'real'. They had 'a few extra pounds' and day jobs. The story kept me engaged, although I wanted to shake these boys and get them talking! Bitchy ex-girlfriend, interfering families, understanding best friends, happy ending. I'd like to read Ross' story next.

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## Serena Yates says

Sometimes people lead lives that make everyone else think they should be outrageously happy, yet under the surface, there are issues making it impossible for that to happen. And once they are forced to look deeper than the superficial image they have built of themselves and their lives, the crisis is unavoidable.

Deliciously flawed, Alistair in this story is a prime example of someone telling himself everything is okay - even as his life crumbles around him. His girlfriend may kick him out and be a completely insane b\*tch, but he is not without fault. Deep down he knows he doesn't love her like he should. It takes along time, many twists and much craziness for hm to even tart to admit he has not been honest with anyone, including himself about the feelings he has for his best friend and band mate, Keagan.

Keagan, on the other hand, knows he loves Alistair but doesn't want to lose him as a friend. Whole he hopes for more, he believes Alistair's "propaganda" about being straight, and keeps his distance. He does an excellent job, until Alistair's ex completely loses her mind and threatens to ruin Keagan's life, being as she believes Alistair left her for Keagan. Not that she is wrong - but nobody will admit it! Keagan goes through a lot of emotional upheaval and drama before he can even start to work on an honest relationship with the man

he has loved for years.

If you like best-friends-to-lovers stories, if you want to see what a totally deranged woman gets u to when she wants revenge, and if you're looking for a read with lots of angst and drama, then you will probably enjoy this free novella.

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## SheReadsALot says

Alistair Krunkstone...name is awesomesauce.

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## Funzee Shu says

**You've always been my comfort zone. You are the one person I can always count on to be there for me when I need someone.**

It's sweet gay-for-you and friend-to-lover story.

Keagan had been fall in love with his best friend since the first time Alistair "rescued" him from the tree, but he kept his feeling only for himself cuz he didn't want to ruin their friendship, cuz Alistair is straight.

On the other hand, Alistair always put Keagan before everything in his life, including his girlfriend. He love his best friend more than anything, he'll do anything to protect Keagan, even from his crazy ex.

But...it is true that he did all that because Keagan his best friend ? Or...

It's interesting story to follow.

I like the interaction between the characters, especially between Alistair & Keagan. The denial, the realization are enjoyable to read.

But there's a part I found it kinda lame... *"the confession"* ....

I hope it will gonna be climax, but I found it just...yeah...like *that* ...

By the way, it nice picture prompt, but I keep picturing this picture while reading this book...

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## **Dawn Sister says**

Loved this friends to lovers story. There were some really sweet moments between these two friends that made their strong bond believable. The story also included some very likeable secondary characters in the form of a large, meddling family and some friends who might have benefitted from a bit of "mind your own..." which I do think MC Alastair did actually tell them several times.

I do think that perhaps the secondary characters might have been given a little more page space, they did interest, and giving them more would not have detracted from the story, only enhanced it.

Alastair and Keagan were sweet friends and the outcome was inevitable really the fun was reading the thought processes and the meddling family attempts to get the thoughts going in the right direction.

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## **Sandra says**

Offered for FREE from the M/M Romance Group's Love's Landscapes event. Thank you too all the amazing authors who participated!

I freaken love this pic.

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## **Jeanne 'Divinae' says**

Keagan and Alistair have been best friends for years. Well Keagan came out years ago, Alistair is still playing the straight card. Or at least he thinks he is playing it well enough. He is still in a little bit denial about his true feelings about his bestie. They have a very unique and loving relationship. They both fear losing the other if they come clean of their feelings. We have very meddling friends and family that try their best push them together. Throw in a persistent, temperamental ex and we have drama.

I really liked watching them finally coming to terms about their relationship. The ex at first got on my nerves, but I am happy the author made her out to be okay in the end.

So, the story takes place with Allister breaking it off with his (older) girlfriend of five years. His heart was in it and finally gave in and left her. She wasn't happy and kept making appearances, trying to raise hell and ruffle people up. Everyone, or almost everyone, kind of always seen them as a couple. They were used to them always being joined at the hip and when the opportunity finally arises (they are both single) people try their best to bring them together officially.

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## **multitaskingmomma says**

Review: Trying Not to Love You (Love's Landscapes) by N.J. Nielsen

My Rating: 4 of 4 Stars (based on the Short & Light Read Category)

I just love Gay For You stories and this is one of them. Trying Not To Love You is a short freebie that tells the story of two best buddies who watch out for each others' backs since the time one broke his arm after a challenge. Yes, one is younger and the brother of another friend, but their families had bonded tight since the broken arm event and from then on, they were just together. Now that they were adults and members of a popular band, they were closer than ever.

The togetherness of Alistair and Keagan was the norm within the family. When Keagan finally came out as gay, there was no such drama involved and it actually tightened the bond between the two families. When this happened at the time they were already in the public eye, there was no media storm. There was just full acceptance from the fans.

So why all this drama?

Well, for one thing, it does no good when a bitchy, witchy, bitch of a girlfriend suddenly decides to make life miserable for Alistair, Keagan and their families. Threatening threats left and right did not work though, she forgot the families were TIGHT! and had COPS! Then there was the surprise of it all - when Alistair finally realizes his being in love with Keagan was not a secret and his coming out was expected - like, years ago!

hehehehheheheheeeeee

This was such a fairy tale romance and I. Just. Loved. It!

Yes, I agree, this is not a plot that would win a Pulitzer, but it is great entertainment, it is romantic and it has enough angst to make it a fluid read. That it is HEA - well, let me just say, it made me smile big. So definitely a recommended read for those who love HEA, GFY, and sexiness. What I want to know is what happens to the brothers???? I wish I may have a follow up read :D

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### **Sheri says**

Tidying up my Kindle...thought I hadn't read this one before.  
I had.  
Ugh. Certainly didn't need to read it twice.

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### **Adrianamae, Marco's fan says**

The story started well, but then it took a turn -and it became predictable, including the typical, stereotyped, psychotic, ex-girlfriend that we all have grown to expect in some stories . Can we please lose this character?

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### **Mirjam says**

*"The way to hurt me is by hurting you."*

Sweet story about best-friends-to-lovers rock band members.

Keagan has been in love with his best friend Alistair from the day they first met but has never told him or acted on it. But when Alistair and his bigoted girlfriend Lauren break up because she demanded he choose between Keagan or her, Alistair choose his best friend.

*"Lauren never understood why I couldn't give you up."*

Afraid of loosing his best friend Alistair keeps quiet about his true feelings towards Keagan. But their meddling family helps Alistair to get his head out of his arse and man up.

*"I choose you. I need to know if you choose me too. Do you want me in your life as more than just a friend?"*

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### **Kelly H. (Maybedog) says**

I was rather disappointed in this. I expected much better because it looked so sweet. Instead, I got a lot of info dumping and an asshole MC. He was such a jerk for being with a homophobic woman for so long when his best friend was gay. I can't even imagine being friends with someone homophobic let alone dating one. My ex and I almost broke up once because he thought using the expression, "that's so gay" was okay. He eventually understood, but no way would I be with an outright homophobe for several years. I would be hurt and furious if I were the best friend. At the end he even (view spoiler) I'd have bitch slapped him.

But I don't like the vilifying of the girlfriend. That's just not necessary. She was psycho of course (although everyone WAY overreacted to her just her mouthing off when she was mad). I really appreciated that (view spoiler). I don't like how everyone was all wonderful about them except her. So annoyingly easy. The MC was also an ass to her because he spent all his time with his friends instead of her. She had every right to be jealous after a while. If you're not going to spend time with your girlfriend/boyfriend, why are you together? I do have to say that I liked the fact that she was significantly older than he was--by like seven years. That's a big age difference for a heterosexual couple at that age with the female being older.

They talked about stuff way too much for guys their age; for guys in general, actually, but especially for young rockers. The oldest is 23 and they play instruments and video games. (The timeline was all wrong, too. The older one had been with his GF for 5 years. But he had been with her a while when Keagan came out which was when Alistair was 17. Keagan came out 1-2 years (depending on where the birthday falls) before they started dating, so that made no sense.

The story was sweet but Alistair was a jerk and took way too long to figure himself out even when he was reading all the clues and starting to interpret them. It would be one thing if he were completely oblivious, but he wasn't. And there wasn't anything like, "OMG, if I'm gay, the world will end!" He was just annoying.

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~☆~Dæni(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~☆~ says

2.5 stars



I liked the beginning of this book: Alistair and Keagan have been best friends for a decade, ever since that day Alistair sort of pushed Keagan out of a tree.

Three years older than Keagan, Alistair is straight, or so he's always claimed. He even has a girlfriend, the psychotic Lauren who despises gays in general and Keagan specifically.

And this just begs the question: Why the fuck would you stay with someone who hates your best friend? But stay with Lauren Alistair does, FOR FIVE FUCKING YEARS, until one day Lauren dumps his ass. Of course, Lauren expects Alistair to come crawling back, and when he doesn't, well....hell hath no fury like a crazy bitch scorned and all that.

This story felt forced. There was a lot of buildup but not enough resolution. Crazy Lauren, as well as Keagan and Alistair's families and friends, push the MCs together, Lauren inadvertently, the others purposefully, yet the guys don't communicate AT ALL. For being BFFs, they sure don't seem to get each other.

I didn't like the weird push/pull that went on between Alistair and Lauren. I frankly wasn't sure why anyone was giving her the time of day. I didn't believe her weird, sudden change of heart either.

The MCs didn't get together until 90 percent into the book, and by then I was just tired: of Alistair being a weak idiot, of Keagan hiding his feelings, of well-meaning friends and family manipulating both men. And at the end when Alistair does what he does? WTF? I never felt like Alistair made a choice. The choice was made FOR him.

This was fairly well written, although the dialogue didn't feel realistic. The guys were in a band, but there was little talk of their music. This was also set in Australia, but there was no sense of time or place. And the ending was rushed and abrupt. This was a readable enough GFY with college-age MCs (20 and 23, respectively), but it didn't wow me.

I do appreciate the effort all authors put forth into this free event!

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