



Bare

Lynn Kelling

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Ev Myers is a former high school football star and Republican State Senator's son, raised in a strict Southern Baptist household where his only option was to be silent, behave and, no matter how he might be feeling, to put on a happy smile. Desperate to escape the pressure to be the man his family insists he become, Ev has fled Kansas to attend college and is working to find out who he really is beneath the lies and carefully composed public image. But when he applies for a job as a nude model for a life drawing class out of a desire to be seen in a way that shatters all of his family's taboos, it's just the first step on a path that leads him away from everything he's ever known. Handsome and headstrong adjunct arts professor, Adam Buchanan, is the first person to recognize Ev's potential, and his determination to have Ev realize the importance of truth and stark honesty, as well as the beauty of flawed vulnerability provides the hope Ev needs to escape a world rife with kidnapping, brainwashing and deadly determination cure homosexuality, using whatever means necessary.

[M/M - See publisher's website for content labels.]

Word count: 97,000

Bare Details

Date : Published November 15th 2016 by Fantastic Fiction Publishing

ISBN :

Author : Lynn Kelling

Format : ebook 353 pages

Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Erotica, Bdsm, Contemporary, Adult Fiction

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From Reader Review Bare for online ebook

Fabi says

I'm not entirely sure how to review a five star book that I absolutely hated.

Maybe I'll start by telling you why it was a five star for me.

In a nutshell, it was the intelligent, sensitive and moving plot expertly told by a talented writer. The book is an emotional journey of discovery and courage for Adam and Evelyn. Five stars, hands down.

And now I guess I get to tell you why I hated it. This may be the reason you love it. In fact, this may prompt you to pick up the book while I would have run in the other direction given this information.

Even though there is a WHOLE LOT more to the plot. The story basically develops a BDSM relationship between the two MCs. I don't like to read BDSM romance. In particular, I don't like reading about the power exchange in BDSM stories. While I can handle the kinky sex scenes (for the most part), I simply can't stomach the stories that focus on the power exchange. I have a huge f***ing hangup with that.

I spent the entire book cringing and wanting to look away. Why didn't I dnf? That's my automatic reaction when I accidentally land on a book with this theme. Well, now we're back to the five star rating.

The story is expertly told. The plot riveting. The characters so real, that you fall in love with them in spite of yourself. Add to that the information provided to educate readers to a real and immediate problem in our society and you have an unputdownable book.

So, in spite of having spent my entire reading time curled up tight in a corner trying to escape the scenes. I can honestly recommend this to anyone who wants to read a powerful, moving, coming of age story of self-discovery.

Ariana says

DNF

Darn, this is me being the odd one out.

I will not give this a rating because I'm simply not sure whether this is on my account or the book's.

I didn't like the way Adam treated Ev to start with. There were problems with consent for me.

I mean Ev is seriously traumatized about being gay and Adam just ...pushes him, touches his dick, kisses him when he said he wouldn't touch without asking. And they are going all the way after two days of knowing each other and Ev being a wreck about being gay? And no condoms?

Darn, that is hard to swallow! (and NO pun intended!)

And then the BDSM happens at the same time. I felt seriously challenged because it felt all so wrong, and had to fast forward to see what would happen later and ... no ... I could not take it.

This was highly unexpected. Nothing prepared me for this.

This book feels all confused trying to fit in too many things, not sure what it was trying to be.

I really wanted to like this, but I can't. This was not for me. So sorry.

Someone else will really like it, for sure.

Debra says

Review originally posted at Sinfully.

If you've never read Lynn Kelling because her dark or hardcore subject matter made you nervous, this is the book you should read. It's a beautiful love story that contains the multilayered characters I expect from Lynn Kelling. It's also a coming of age story that follows Ev's breaking away from the constricts placed on him by a religious and political family as he finally follows his heart and explores the sides of himself that make him as nervous and scared as they equally excite him.

When Adam discovers Evelyn as he's working as a nude model for another art teacher, he sees Ev as the perfect model for the series of paintings he is creating for a show that will highlight the vulnerabilities and the feminine beneath the masculine. It's not long at all until Adam has quickly fallen for his muse. It's not just Ev's physical beauty that draws him, it's what he sees beneath. He sees the war between Ev's shame and desire and how Ev fights it and that draws out the dominant side of Adam. The side that wants to take care of Ev.

Evelyn has repressed everything he is in order to survive his family. His father is a US Senator from Kansas and they are religious conservatives. He has been used as a prop for his father's political career. Ev knows his family would never accept what he feels inside and what he wants to do with his life. The fear is greatest with regard to his sexuality as his family and church are affiliated with a conversion camp his cousin was sent to when they were children. The fear of what happened there and the lingering threat that it could happen to him, has kept Ev on the straight and narrow until he finally made his escape across the country to attend college, much to his family's disapproval.

When he takes on a nude modeling job at school, it's a bit of rebellion and also something that excites him, even as he thinks it means there is something wrong with him. He likes being looked at. Ev tries to tell himself that the brief attractions he had to guys in school, teammates in the locker room, were just him liking the attention, but Ev can't say that about Adam. From the moment Adam walks into the art room during a modeling session, Ev is attracted to the intense man with the fiery red hair and blue eyes like he has never been attracted to anyone else. Ev knows the danger of taking on an exclusive modeling job with Adam, but deep down he also senses the opportunity and he can't resist the pull he feels to Adam.

Adam falls quickly for his muse and he challenges Ev like nobody has before. He questions everything and pushes Ev's boundaries until Ev is challenging all his parents' rules and his own repressed desires. From Adam's insistence on using Ev's full name to pushing Ev to voice and accept the truth of who he is and what he wants regardless of his upbringing, Adam is firm but loving and Ev slowly opens up and reveals all his pain, desire and fears to Adam. The modeling and the subject matter of Adam's paintings help Ev work through his embarrassment and shame at being aroused by a man. Adam's touch as he positions Ev lights a fire within him and Ev is soon helpless to resist the sexual attraction.

I loved these two so much, I could have easily kept reading once the story ended. Adam was tough to get a read on at the start, but he very quickly revealed himself to be a firm but caring man, truly invested in Ev's well-being and clearly enchanted with his beauty. Ev is trying so hard to fight every impulse that was ingrained in him that what he feels is wrong, but it's not easy. Ev has always seen beauty in art, appreciated things that his father would have scorned. Ev sees his truth through Adam's paintings of him, in the positions Adam poses him in, and that has so much effect on his eventual decision to accept himself and allow the world to see him for who he truly is.

There is a lot of sex in the book but it's organic to the story, flowing naturally from the modeling and from the intense attraction between the two. It ranges from tender to rough, vanilla to D/s, but all of it was scorching. Ev is new to it all and just finding what he likes and how to voice it, while Adam is an experienced Dom who likes to be in control. It's a gradual journey for Ev opening up, laying himself bare and vulnerable even as the relationship between them moves rather quickly. Ev acknowledges that logically it may be too quick, but he also realizes how much he comes to need the one person who has ever seen the real him.

This is not a story with a magical sex cure, although it is the catalyst for Ev facing his demons. Ev is encouraged to seek counseling to deal with past abuse and the shame that was drilled into his head. The amount of his parents' influence is clear in Ev's shock anytime people accept his relationship with Adam. There is a master-slave relationship that evolves as Ev very naturally falls into the submissive dynamic. Adam reads Ev very well and, cognizant of his fears and worries, brings out in Ev everything he's ever repressed, allowing him to live the life he was always afraid he never could. The master-slave and D/s lifestyle here is fairly light and shouldn't scare you off.

Told from Ev's point of view, you feel his constant fear of the consequences he will face for loving Adam. Those consequences that his parents and church always warned of. While I said this is not dark or hardcore Lynn Kelling, there is a bit of darkness and yes, it was hard to read when Ev has to face just how far his parents will go to save him. Even as his fantasy that someday his parents may accept him is brutally destroyed, we again see just how sensitive and loving Ev is as he still tries to see the best in his family.

There is such beauty in this story and in Lynn Kelling's words. The pictures she paints through Adam's brush were so clear in my mind and added so much to the storytelling. This was a softer side to her writing that I have glimpsed in the past, but is on full display here. If you were ever curious about this author I would have no reservations in recommending you start with this story. I know I'll be reading it again in the future.

Lisa says

This was a different type of book from Lynn Kelling. The books I have read from her so far have been fairly heavily into BDSM.

Here we see Ev, a young man in college who is modelling for his college in order to make a little money for life's essentials. He is the son of a very conservative Senator.

When he starts modelling, Adam another adjunct professor attends the class. Adam asks Ev to model for him as he is painting a series of paintings about vulnerability and he thinks Ev is just who he is looking for.

Ev is not gay but a relationship soon starts between the two.

This was an interesting book. We learn of Ev's background and that of his cousin James. Slowly the men fall into a D/s relationship whilst Ev poses for Adam.

Parts of this story were hard to read. Abuse you might say dealing with the groups who kidnap gay men and try to convert them back to normal. However, Ev stands up for himself and gets through it.

There were just 2 things in this story that made me pause.

I live bareback sex in my books, keep those condoms well away but I was a little disturbed here that there was no condom talk. Yes Ev was a virgin but Adam wasn't and I thought it a little strange.

Also towards the end of the book Ev is thinking about a master/slave relationship but I didn't think that was their relationship and don't remember any talk of this so it kinda comes out of the blue.

That being said it was still a good read for me.

Kazza says

Plenty to like about Lynn Kelling's latest offering - November 15th release. Good characters, master-slave dynamic, but never heavy on that aspect, small town boy from strong GOP and religious roots finding himself, some of the hottest sex scenes you'll read and a good, strong story to back it up. This is *not* a heavy Lynn Kelling read but there is depth and meaning at the heart, with reparative therapy, religion - hello, Adam and Ev - and the emotional conflict these cause running throughout. Enough to make you angry at some people's outdated and dangerous ideas and behaviour. But there's more to cheer about for Adam and Ev. I loved it.

Joyfully Jay says

A Joyfully Jay review.

4.5 stars

Bare by Lynn Kelling is a story that really spoke to me. There's such passion and intensity and a really thought-provoking story that's wrapped within very hot and sexy packaging. I loved watching Ev's exploration of himself as, with Adam's encouragement, and sometimes push, he begins to think about what he really wants and push past the way he's grown up. Being the son of a senator and always in the political eye, Ev had very strict expectations of behavior and it isn't until college that he's able to really shake free from that and think about what he actually wants. Adam really helps Ev to start to look at himself and accept that he does have interest in men and to move past always doing what somebody else expects of him.

Kelling sets up a really nice dynamic here in that we definitely see Adam push Ev to think things through and to grab what he wants, but at the same time we see how well Ev responds to that and how it really helps him. I like that we see Ev reflecting and we know it's not just Adam's pushing, but Ev really taking the time to think about what he wants and reaching for it. That includes not just emotionally, but also sexually, and early on there are a lot of scenes where we see Adam giving Ev little nudges to help him open up and I think that Kelling does a nice job of keeping it right on the line. I never felt like Adam was pushing Ev into something he didn't want, but there's just enough there that we can see how Adam's encouragement is helping Ev to think things through. At one point Ev notes he is at kind of a crossroads; he has begun to take some steps sexually, and he knows he can't go back to the life he had before, but he is struggling to figure out how to move forward, and Adam really helps with that.

Read Jay's review in its entirety [here](#).

Lisa The Novel Approach says

Bare is another compelling work by Lynn Kelling. It is a story about Ev (short for Evelyn) and Adam, but mostly it's about Ev and his need to step outside his lifelong conditioning and be who he really is. Ev is a complicated character: He is conflicted to the point of being emotionally unstable. On his own for the first time in his life, sort of—his family's influence is never far away—Ev is desperate to discover who he is as a man apart from his upbringing. There is a constant religious undertone to the whole story, hence the Adam and Ev names for the characters, and the need to take a man back to his most basic beginnings and strip him down to his most vulnerable, honest and bare. The need to begin anew with almost a rebirth for Ev is crucial to him moving forward from his past. But Adam's role is just as important. Only a man with a strong sense of purpose, trying to be as authentic as he can be, could break the walls down around Ev.

Take one sexually repressed nineteen-year-old, add in a sexy, charismatic painter whose work brings male vulnerability to life on canvas, and is also a dominant personality, and you have a story that will make you squirm in all the right ways. Holy hell, the tension in some of these scenes as Ev sits under Adam's total scrutiny as Adam paints. For the first time in his life, someone sees Ev, and it is overwhelmingly wonderful and awful all at the same time. Adam has a profound need to uncover Ev's true self and at the same time feeling a fierce need to protect him, nurture him and take care of him. Yes, there are elements of BDSM here—this is a Lynn Kelling book—but whips, chains and bondage are not what is needed in this story. Ev needs boundaries, rules, clear expectations and structure and Adam is happy to supply them.

“As soon as he settled on his knees, Ev knew it was right. His hand found Adam's bulge. Burying his nose between it and Adam's hip, Ev found the true scent of his lover. It was better, more real and honest, speaking of all of Adam's masculinity and strength. It emanated sweat, skin, and life.

His thumb brushed the soft curling red hair at Adam's groin and the end of Ev's nose plunged into the curls, then lower, nudging Adam's shaft, then the base of his sac.

He stayed there, breathing deeply, giving over to what he'd found with complete abandon and worship.”

There is something to be said about facing our greatest fears and coming out the other side. We get most of this story from Ev's POV. We experience this story with Ev, and as such, we feel everything he feels. There is an element of conversion therapy, which may disturb some people. Kelling doesn't gloss over what happens in these camps and it gets a little graphic, so be forewarned. At its heart, this is a love story. It may

be, probably is, my favorite from this author because we get a real character driven plot in this book. Lynn Kelling has done a great job creating a story which revolves around and is pushed forward by her MCs. I would definitely recommend this book. But be aware, it does have some intense content along with dubious consent and a nineteen-year-old MC.

Reviewed by Carrie for The Novel Approach Reviews

Bev says

A sensual love story, a coming of age story, multi layered like an onion...when you thought you knew *everything* about Evelyn [and Adam for that matter], something new would be revealed. Is this my fave of Lynn's stories so far?? Not sure, cos I loved Arctic Absolution, but this one is so well-written; when the religious weirdos and their Pathway to Manhood camps were exposed to the world at large, I was happy dancing for Evelyn and Adam towards the end. 5 stars from me.

One of my favourite quotes of this story was "The thing Ev liked most about being on the east coast, studying at a distinctly non-religious institution, was the diversity of the people he was constantly surrounded by. There wasn't a single Stepford-wife-in-training in the bunch."

Natalie says

This was one of the most appropriate book titles I've ever seen. I agree with other reviewers, that this is almost fluffy compared to other Lynn Kelling titles, but it was not a sweet story. It wasn't heavy BDSM but was strong D/s and written so, so well. Adam, who takes on Ev/Evelyn as his muse, was a fabulous character, stripping Ev of his defenses and denials slowly and surely. The sex is frequent but highly erotic and contributes to the process. Ev finds his true self and develops the strength of will that brought him to college and to Adam's attention. Lynn Kelling always adds a fantastic psychological aspect to her stories and explores the different dynamics of power exchanges.

The other subject covered in the story was gay conversion camps. Evelyn's knowledge of what happened to his cousin drove his actions for so long because it was so terrifying and guilt-inducing for him. I really hope people reading the story realize this isn't just fiction. These places still exist and we even have a vice-president elect who believes in them. Some are relatively benign with praying and bible thumping but some use torturous aversion therapy, use them to indulge pedophilia and even for sex trafficking.

It wasn't overdone here though. It was shown as horrible but wasn't gruesome. It was more about twisted psychological torture under the guise of concern and care. It was all balanced so well with strong realistic portrayals of Adam and Ev's reactions, and yes, she chose the names deliberately. Oliver and Rune and Ev's friend Leo as secondary characters were wonderful. There was even a brief glimpse of David and Shea from the Manse. (Loving the Master). Fantastic and highly recommended.

Jan says

****4.5 Stars****

I don't think there is a way to write about this story without spoiling it.
So, read it at your own risk.

I always read the blurb before starting a book; therefore a story hardly gets a chance to surprise me.
However, there is nothing in bare's blurb that implies how deep this book is going to dig in into methods used by sick people to *un-gay* gay people

(Did you get that? You might need to read that sentence again) nor how hard, touching and uncomfortable it's going to make us feel when we face the way this affects the person submitted to this horrendous act.
Bare starts the way I expected after reading the blurb, it leads you to think that you'll get it dirty, sinful, light, fun and very hot. News flash! It was that and then some more.

There he gets a job as a nude model for a life drawing class. He needs the money since his dad is not helping much, the most important reason though is the temptation, the delicious thrill of doing something forbidden behind his *very religious and conservative* family back.

"I'm looking for a guy of your age and your look really works for me."

"...my focus is on exposing the vulnerability in male sexuality," Adam said, his voice lowered. "My work is quite sexual in nature, so if that's a problem for you, I completely understand."

Are you with me? So far, a certain tension hovering in the air, it promises hot and sinful. Well, at least that is what my dirty mind seems to read.

"Evelyn resisted all his life the temptation of being who he wants to be and starts to feel exhausted by this effort."

"Everything up to that point in Ev's experience, tied to affection or sexual physical interactions with other man, had been tainted with layers of pressure to feel ashamed or fearful of his natural reactions."

Well, surprise! surprise! Isn't this shit getting real??

By now, I smell the angst coming. Moreover, glimpses of a strong and solid story line behind all this wicked and sinful relationship starts to shape.

I cannot stress enough how incredible the connection and pull was between these two. Definitely a success

combo: Adam, confident and completely in control of his life and Ev, so vulnerable and at a crucial time of his. Boom!

A mesh in heaven, Evelyn needs all support and attention and Adam is a truly alpha who loves taking care of Evelyn.

Bare has that delicious subtle taboo thrill I like in a book and ~~despite~~ its ugly parts, it was a fantastic read.

Scratch that! Combined with its ugly parts bare turns out as a winner.

Does that really exist? Tell me it doesn't or do not answer me at all.

I just want to say that in moments like this, ignorance seems a safe place.

You chicken! what a shame!

Adam and Evelyn together??

Freaking.Hell.

The scenes where Adam paints Evelyn had sensuality in galore!

I have a minor complaint though and it's related to certain terms used in BDSM. Hence my 4.5 Stars. That said, bare exceeded my expectations.

My first read by this author but I am going to fix this very soon.

I really hope to get a book about Oliver. I won't be taken by surprise this time! I think I am prepared for him.

Bring Oliver on, **please!**

Ele says

"Ev trembled, anticipating everything, struggling to breathe, but it was the sweetness of Adam that hurt the most, cut the deepest through a lifetime of layers of protective denial."

Ev Myers, former high school football star and Republican State Senator's son, needs money. His decision to attend college away from his hometown is only partially supported by his parents. Applying for a job as a nude model for a life drawing class, leads him to meet adjunct arts professor, Adam Buchanan. In Ev, Adam sees his muse. Ev's feelings about Adam are the same as for nude modeling. **He terrifies him, but at the same time he exhilarates him.** And this is how it begins.

In the first part of the book there's no real action. All the action happens inside Ev's head. There's so much **guilt, denial and self-loathing**. You 'll think it's just nude sessions and mind games, at first. But what really happens is that Adam starts breaking down Ev's walls one by one.

I won't lie, this was kind of insta-lovey. The "I love you's" and (view spoiler) came in a matter of weeks. Do I care? No I don't. Because there is a very **genuine connection** between Ev and Adam. Call it luck, call it fate, but **these two complement each other so well!** Adam has it all, but he needs someone to take care of. He's a natural dominant, and Ev just came to...fill in the blanks. And Ev is just so lonely! The quiet,

submissive part of himself craves Adam. And just so you know, Adam does not play around...

“I take things like this very fucking seriously,” Adam added in warning. “This means something to me. If you give me this, I swear on my life I’ll safeguard you in whatever ways you need me to. It’d be a beginning, not the end.”

I knew there was a shitstorm coming (that much is obvious from the blurb), and I was dreading it. Up until that moment, they lived in their bubble, having sex and talking and exploring Ev's identity/sexuality. **What happens next is evilness personified.** But although gut wrenching, **it wasn't overwhelming and it didn't take over the story.** Where I live, conversion camps are just a myth, and I admit that at first, I thought that the facts in this book were maybe a little exaggerated. Yeah, the author's note and a simple google search took care of that. It's just so heartbreaking that there are still people that go through all this torture and pain, caused by their own family. And in the light of recent events, this reality is becoming more and more terrifying.

As far as the BDSM aspect of the story is concerned, I found it to be pretty interesting and different than in other books. The power dynamics are obvious from the beginning. Adam is a dominant, and Ev has submissive tendencies even when he's not aware of it. What I loved (and this is only a personal preference) is the lack of formal protocol. There is bondage, and submission, and, yes, at some point they bring it outside the bedroom. **But there aren't these strict rules, punishments or manners and etiquette.**

“No one else has you like this. No one even gets close,” Adam warned.

The writing is superb. Kelling is an author with a unique ability to make the reader meander through the character's dark mind until light shines through. I can't explain how she does it but it gets me every time.

First and foremost, this is **Ev's journey to self-acceptance and his breaking free from his oppressing past.** Under Adam's guidance he will blossom, and when he lets go he's so very beautiful. But it's Adam's story too, because **he's the kind of man whose money and experience is just a means to a purpose. And he found that purpose in Evan.**

***J* Too Many Books Too Little Time says**

4.5 Stars!

Very different from anything I've read lately. The first 60% or so I was really drawn in to Ev and Adam's world. And it's very much their world. They live in this sort of bubble.

Their chemistry was OFF THE CHARTS!

Some BDSM elements - what I would consider lite. Some bondage, but more control related than anything else. Possessive Adam was all kinds of hot.

There was always this sense of impending doom though given Ev's past and his family. But I was so thankful that wasn't drawn out. It didn't overpower the story.

BUT, the tone of the book took a bit of a dive at the climax of the story. It sort of petered out if you will.

Overall though this one was good. Really good. Great writing. Intriguing plot. Sizzling chemistry between the MCs. I'll definitely be checking more out from this author.

~Kristin~ says

3 Stars

This was just not my cuppa. I knew going in it had some elements that can rub me the wrong way and in this case they did at every turn. I don't want to go into too much detail, especially since it would be somewhat spoilery to do so, but also because I'm just over it. I think I've spent enough time reading this book, I'm just ready to leave it where it's at....and move the hell on!

JustJen "Miss Conduct" says

Review by The Blogger Girls.

Ev is using college as a way to escape from under his parents' thumbs. In one respect, there is the religion and conversion therapy he has seen evidence of when he is caught kissing a boy, though the boy is the one blamed and sent away. Ev realizes that even though he shared the feelings, he must never act on them. Then there is the political side of things where his family is all about image. Looking to make a little extra money, as well as a way to step outside the box his parents have put him in, he takes a job modeling nude for an art class at school. It is there that he meets Adam, another professor who stops in class when Ev is modeling.

Adam encourages Ev to model for him instead. It doesn't take long before Ev finds himself reacting to Adam who basically awakens something in Ev that was dormant for many years. Ev is basically blown away by Adam and the feelings he evokes. As they spend more and more time together, Adam shows Ev how to be himself and that it is ok to be his own person, as opposed to the one his parents expect of him. It's a slow process, understandably, but it was wonderful to watch Ev gradually come out of his shell as he experienced each new situation.

Much of this story is spent with Adam and Ev exploring things and each other as Adam paints, with Ev as his muse. There is an underlying fear of something bad happening with the conversion therapy, but it takes quite a while to get to that point. There were times that the relationship between Adam and Ev felt a little uncomfortable, though I'm not entirely sure of the reason. Ev's parents are truly awful, and it is terrifying to know these places actually exist or that their practices take place today. I loved how realistic it felt that Ev struggled with what he had been brought up to believe and what he knew was just wrong and that he was able to stay strong through it all and come out the other side in one piece, mentally, as well as physically.

While this has a definite dark theme to it, in the grand scheme of Ms. Kelling's work, it really was much lighter and sweeter than I originally anticipated. I enjoyed the dynamic of their relationship and the emotional aspects that were understandably present. If you're looking for a BDSM story that's a little different, with feels and emotions, be sure to give this one a try.

K says

Bare is one of the best Lynn Kelling book I've read. The tension is so thick you can cut it with a knife. You can feel the nervous energy pouring off Ev when Adam walks in the room. You see, Ev is modeling nude for extra money in an art class. He feels vulnerable and exposed already. Self-consciousness with his nudity and everyone staring at him as they draw. He hears heavy boot steps but he's afraid to look or move from his position.

When he's face to face with the eavesdropper, Adam Buchanan, he is drawn to his appeal, his dominance. When he's asked to model, just for him, he's intrigued and interested—even though he knows he shouldn't do it—but knowing he's going to just the same.

I was confused by Adam for quite a while. Is he a jerk? Yeah. . . I think he was. Is he controlling? Oh, yeah. Was he being unprofessional? I thought he was. . . *at first*. But, the more I got into the story, the deeper I went, the more I realized that I could trust Adam and I saw what he was doing. He wasn't a jerk, at all. Far from it. He was pushing Ev past his boundaries, making him reach within to accept the real him. The person he always wanted to be but was and **is** truly fearful of admitting.

I saw where he was going with Ev, who he insisted on calling Evelyn, his given name, even though Ev hated using it because it was feminine. My mother's name was Evelyn, btw, so I rather enjoyed his name. But, I understood why Ev was having trouble and it all stems from a religious, conservative background and a family structured set of boundaries he had to adhere to.

Adam isn't much older than Ev but he is much older in the ways of the world. He's lost his parents, so he's had to do a lot of things on his own, but he has an amazing support system through a very close knit group of friends and a wonderful and loving grandfather. He's been out with his sexuality for a long time and he's proud of who he is as a man and a human being. He's also a Master and a dominant who has had subs and can read Ev clearly and knows he is fighting with an inner struggle against himself.

As Adam paints Ev, he challenges him to confront his fears, face his demons that have haunted him for years, and find and stand up for himself, for the person he wants to be, and in the process an amazing love story develops and unfolds before our very eyes. Ev is a natural sub who doesn't understand the dynamics exactly, but only knows that his world is centered when he's on his knees in front of Adam. He's at peace, a simple existence is there, his world is right.

Of course, his family gets wind of his so-called perversions and they step in to save him from sin. While you may roll your eyes at the intent let me say that **this is hard to read**. This is real-life, this happens, still to this day, which makes me cringe, and the author doesn't spare our feelings. She gutted me with her writing that pulled me and made me feel as though I was running through the halls looking for Ev myself trying to get him out of that dreadful and scary place.

Bare wouldn't be everything that it was without the amazing cast of secondary characters that Kelling introduces us too. There are several so I'm not going to name them here but they are all worthy and fabulous and each had their roles and I would love to get every one of their stories someday. Soon rather than later, lol. Especially Oliver and Leo.

Lynn Kelling is a fabulous storyteller and that is so apparent with this story. The details and descriptions will pull you in and hold you hostage through the whole story. This is a very sexual and highly erotic story. Adam and Ev are in a very passionate and expressive relationship and they are pulled to each other constantly. They get down to the very basics, the raw and dirty, hungry and possessive, love between two men and it's a beautiful story.

I've been a fan of Lynn Kelling for a long time. I love that she can take me to another place and make me feel so many emotions. I was literally consumed the whole day as I read *Bare* and hated the moments when I had to lay it down. However, there were times I thought I was going to have to walk away because the fear was overpowering me, but I stuck with it because I had to know what was around the corner, what was waiting for Ev and Adam, did they have a future together? Ev goes through a rebirth or reawakening and it's beautiful to not only see him find himself but to believe in himself as well. Highly recommended.
