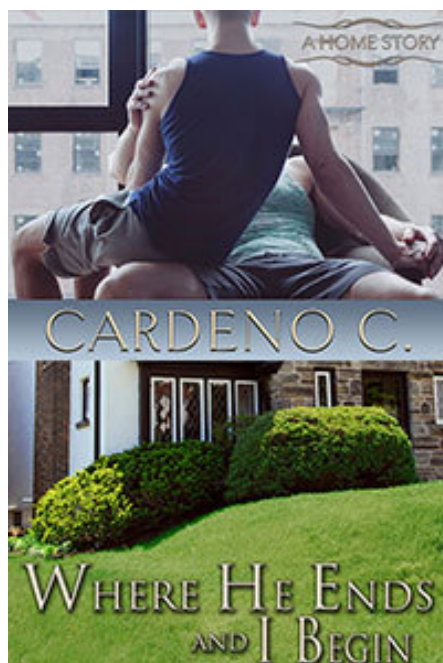




Where He Ends and I Begin

Cardeno C.

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Where He Ends and I Begin Cardeno C.

Aggressive, physical, and brave, Jake Owens is a small town football hero turned big city cop who passes his time with meaningless encounters believing he can't have who he really wants: Nate Richardson, his best friend since before forever. Thoughtful, quiet, and kind, Nate is a brilliant doctor who has always known who he is and has never been able to shake his crush on loyal, courageous, straight Jake.

After a passionate night together, Nate realizes Jake isn't as straight as he assumed, but he worries that what they shared was a fluke, a result of too much closeness for too long. For Jake, the question isn't how they ended up in bed together because he has always known that Nate holds his heart, it's how he'll convince Nate that he wants and needs to stay there.

Word Count: 82,569

Where He Ends and I Begin is set in the *Home* series where the books are linked by theme or world. They are independent and can be read in any order.

Where He Ends and I Begin Details

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From Reader Review Where He Ends and I Begin for online ebook

Susan says

2.5 stars

PSA: This book has a lot of sex. I mean...A LOT...of sex. And when I say a lot of sex, I *mean* A. LOT. OF. SEX. And if I failed to really get my point through, let me just leave it at this...SEX. SEX. SEX. SEX. SEX. Come-multiple-times, don't-need-to-touch-my-dick, inside-outside-anyway-I-can-get-it-or-give-it SEX. Not a chapter and nary a page goes by without some...SEX.

Now, what amazes me is that if you took away ALL THAT SEX, the 10 or so pages of story you're left with are actually my crack. We're talking soul mates...2 guys born to be together. A relationship SO codependent that therapists worldwide are chomping at the bit...and I am lapping this shit up. I love it.

Jake & Nate were destined to be together before they were even conceived. Their mothers were best friends. Their fathers became best friends. They were conceived and born together and grew up inseparable. They were 2 halves to one heart. And when they *finally* realize that, duh, destiny planned from the start that they'd fall in love...let all the I'll-do-anything-for-him choices and actions and life decisions.

I'd tell you more, but...there isn't much more. That's pretty much the story. Yeah, there are a few misunderstandings along the way. There's some adjustment and all. There are some blissfully over-the-top romantic gestures and declarations that had me a puddle of goo. And then there's sex...A LOT OF SEX.

Oh yeah...one beef with this book (besides the, *ahem*, amount of SEX)...the chapters alternated from Nate's and Jake's POV's. I typically don't mind this style at all. But, entire paragraphs of dialogue were replayed, cut & paste style, in each chapter. And this started to get, obviously, repetitive. And I started to get, predictably, annoyed.

Still...this could have been...this would have been...this should have been a story MADE for me. It is Cardeno C after all. And Cardeno C is very often my drug of choice. If it weren't for all that...

...SEX.

Anke says

Can't take it anymore. Every scene is told twice, putting sunscreen on each other values more sentences than the death of the parents of Jake, Jake the hero managed to carry injured Nate miles through the night and still keep pressure on the injury, leaving behind his dying parents and that's it? Off to the next scene of finally making love in the here and now. As harebrained as my review might sound now the whole book was for me. So this is the first DNF for me this year, I'm curious how many will follow.

Lena♥Ribka says

Audible

I can't believe I finished it. At last. It was not easy!!

Where can I pick up my medal?

Susan, as already very often, expressed EXACTLY , 1:1, my opinion about this book.

I'm not sure I want to read more of this series. It's written in a comfortable author's manner - copy & paste & modify & publishing-but it's not what I'm looking for.

I think the reason I managed to listen it up to the end was a narrator, I doubt I could have been able to finish it if I had read it.

.Lili. says

Cardeno C is a new to me author. Never read a full book of hers only tried a sample of one so I wasn't sure what to expect. The first chapter hooked me but when the second chapter started I thought-

Didn't I just read this? Yes, I had. Rather than an alternating dual POV, she'd write the same scene over from the other character's perspective. I found this really irritating and came close to DNFing it. It would take me out of the story and made me backtrack. Luckily, the whole book isn't like that and the story is enjoyable enough that when it did happen I could overlook the annoyingness of it. Now to the positive.

What I loved:

*Nate and Jake. Together and individually.

*The story. I love a great best friends to lovers story and this delivered a great one. These two were *meant* to be together.

*It was low angst, feel good.

*Steam?

Ha! It's off the charts!

*Really great epilogue.

Definitely recommend this one and I'll certainly be looking at this author's backlist. 4 Stars.

P.S. Had this book been told from an alternating POV I'd have given it 5 Stars.

Catherine says

*** 2.5 Stars ***

* So. Much. Sex! My rabbits-would-be-jealous shelf was *made* for a book like this!

* Rotating perspectives with dialogue cut and paste from the previous section that made the story incredibly repetitive.

* Some truly WTF?! moments in which MC actions and reactions were not even remotely based in reality.

* Sweet, fluffy sugar coma - whatever your romantic heart could desire two MCs to say or do or *be* for each other, this book has it. I loved the idea of MCs who were together from the cradle to the grave, though.
happy sigh

Zuzu says

21% DNF

Way too much repetition. The same scenes from both POV's with the exact same info.

Life's too short.

Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

2.5 stars

This story was legit bananas. BANANAS!

Just when I thought I've read the gooiest, mushiest Cardeno C. books, I stumble upon this one and this one puts all other CC books to shame. **TO SHAME.**

This book is like a marshmallow exploded over two sweaty, naked gay guys. It is gay fluffernutter smorgasbord!! It's feast time, baby!

I honestly would have rolled with the **crazy obsessive jealousy, co-dependency, and totally bizarre psychic connection** if it wasn't for a few details. I mean, I KNOW what to expect with Cardeno C., and I think I could have made allowances for the relationship to bend reality so hard that it snaps and shatters in a million little *we-are-one-forever-and-ever- and-ever-OMG* pieces.

But the details really killed it for me.

Picture this: you read a scene (or in my case, listen) in a book from one perspective, then you listen to the **EXACT same scene from the other person's perspective**. Back and forth, the same scenes over and over again. It was crazy! So repetitive, so annoying. I'm a HUGE fan of alternating POVs, but when you have déjà vu from the SAME story being told again and again, it becomes really trying.

Also, this book is all about the **flashbacks**. The whole plot is just an almost nauseatingly sappy series of flashbacks and then jumps to present day. I'm not a huge fan of flashbacks, and I felt like so much of this story was told that way.

One really bright spot was the narration. I enjoyed Alexander Collins's narration a great deal. He read those sex scenes (which came one after another- these guys were like smutty, smutty bunnies!!) with gusto without over acting, and I liked the differentiation between the two MCs' voices. He made the audio very enjoyable, even if I was eye-rolling at the plot the whole time.

This book was so redonculous that I don't think any other story can top it in that department. **If you are into a story with some small misunderstandings followed by insane amounts of sex and sweetness, and like the idea of two guys who are probably clinically obsessed with each other and have a pseudo-incest vibe going on, this story is for you.** For me, it wasn't my favorite CC book, but it also wasn't my least favorite. However, I know Cardeno C. can really knock it out of the park when the stars align, so I will forever read CC's stuff. Hopefully my next CC is a hit.

Copy provided by the author in exchange for an honest review

Gigi says

After reading this book a second time, waiting 2 years in between, I came to the same conclusion as my initial read: **Holy shit, this is the sappiest, stickiest, sweetest M/M romance on the market!**

MCs Jake and Nate have been best friends their entire lives. They were born in the same hospital, their mother's already best friends, and once you get over the fact those these boys were practically *brothers*, you can sink yourself into the flashbacks and overly-sweet love they share. It is a fun read when you just need a huge dose of love-overkill.

So, be prepared for your teeth to hurt at how overly lovey-dovey these boys are, and *don't* think about how close to blood brothers they actually are, and let yourself be swept away in the M/M romance and entirely-too-much sex.

Recommended!

Susan says

Cardeno C. sure knows how to write fluffy books!

This was exactly what I needed.

For the first 30% I wasn't too interested in this couple. I mean, these guys get together on the first page! I thought it would be either filled with angst or boring fluffiness. But actually it was neither.

First of all, there is NO ANGST, none, nada, nothing..

And yes there was fluffiness all around, but it wasn't boring as I thought. It was beautiful. Wonderful fluff.

This is the story of Jake and Nate, 2 best friends since birth. These guys literally cannot live without each other. Nate came out when they were young, but Jake has always had a string of girls. So it comes as a total surprise to Nate when Jake admits he has always been in love with him. It takes some convincing and a whole lot of sex, but finally Nate sees that Jake loves him just as much as Nate loves Jake.

The love these guys shared, it was so beautiful. They grew up together, were always there for each other. It has never crossed their minds that they would ever be apart. They chose a college together, lived together.

It took some getting used to at the beginning, because we get every scene twice. Once from Jake's POV and once from Nate's POV. It felt very repetitive. But halfway through we don't get the same scenes that much anymore, just changing POV's per chapter. That was a lot better.

This was really a beautiful and sweet love. Nate and Jake were two halves of a whole. I loved it.

Breann says

Sticky, ooey gooey, sugary sweetness where everyone is beautiful and perfect!

"I understand, Nate. I get the concept of infinity. It's like the two of us, like our friendship. No end, no limit. We're forever. That's infinity, right?"

Nate and Jake have been *inseparable* since birth. So inseparable that they didn't know where one ended and the other began. They'd always loved each other but they've been *in love* since they were teenagers, unbeknownst to each other. Nate has been out since high school. Jake assumed Nate didn't feel that way towards him since Nate never made a move. Therefore, Jake kept his feelings to himself. All throughout high school, moving to New York together for college and living together as adults, they've been in love. While on vacation, the depth of their feelings for each other finally comes out.

Nate had no idea Jake was even gay, let alone in love with him. He's terrified of scaring Jake away. Jake has

never been one to have relationships and is a one-night kind of guy. So, Nate assumed that that's what this would be, that Jake will get too involved and bail. There's a lot of that going here, Nate making assumptions about Jake. Most of the conflict arose from misconceptions and a lack of communication in the beginning. But, at the same time, it was understandable. If Nate was worried about scaring Jake, talking about feelings is a one-way ticket to freak-out mode.

Their story was **so sweet**. So, so sweet and was filled with lovey dovey syrupy drizzle. The kind that makes you sigh and go "aww". These men were just **loving** and **thoughtful** towards each other. They knew how to treat someone right. Jake said it best, "You don't know how I feel about you? I try to show you how much I care about you every day. How can you not see that?" And he's not just talking about when their relationship turned physical, but throughout their whole lives when they put the other first.

Like I said, there was some conflict in the beginning. After that? None. Everything was very easy, **almost too easy**. There was plenty of opportunity for some angst. But when those problems arose, there was absolutely **zero drama** surrounding the situation, when there should have been something, some kind of conflict because the situations here huge! Problems that could have offered up some delicious, angsty goodness. But no, everyone was happy, beautiful, perfect and completely accepting of everything **all the time**. By the end, the easy solutions were a little redundant and predictable. I would have liked less hearts and rainbows and more angst.

This is a very, very sweet and loving romance. An enjoyable, feel good read if you're in need of something easy, sweet and sexy.

Sandra says

I've gotta say, this *really* did not work for me. To the point where I didn't even want to deal with reviewing it, and then I let too much time go by, and now it's hard to formulate a review. But luckily, I did frequent updates for the first quarter or so before I got *completely* sick of everything. And I feel they sufficiently sum up my feelings:

1.0% "I like that this STARTS with them hooking up, instead of having to work up to it."

3.0% "No, No, NO STUPID MISCOMMUNICATION!"

4.0% "Okay they cleared that up quick, but why is Nate being SO self-conscious despite all the obvious love that Jake is dropping?"

6.0% "So apparently we're going to see EVERY scene from BOTH of their perspectives? Even the dialogue that hasn't changed? Interesting choice."

8.0% "The sex scenes are TOO detailed and overly described to the point of almost being clinical."

15.0% "Kinda bored."

16.0% "Can a smart person really be so stupid? Since Jake didn't want a relationship with any of the women he'd fucked, he can't want one Nate? Even though Jake said it was BECAUSE he loved Nate? Bleh."

30.0% "I'm already skipping sex scenes."

So you get the idea? Nate was an ass and Jake was a doormat. The odd choice to do alternating POV for each scene didn't help, it felt redundant. There was no new information, and never does the narration say "after they talked about [so-and-so]", no we get to hear the *entire* conversation all over again with no change. Why?

And for two guys who've been BEYOND BFF for 28 years, their flirting and sex is oddly generic and porny. I want more EMOTION. I'm not feeling' the love.

The narrator did what he could. There was nothing wrong with audio version, and if you intend to read this book then it's as viable an option as the written version. I just don't think either are for me. Cardeno C. has always been a gamble for me, but if you usually like her then I wouldn't expect this to be any different.

Received audio from the publisher in exchange for an honest review, reviewed for Hearts On Fire

Chelsea says

2.5 hearts

Story:

Sometimes these types of books work for me and other times they just don't. You know the type, that too sweet, too easy, too unrealistic type of relationship book. That is Jake and Nate's story.

Nate and Jake have been inseparable since birth and are as close as two people can be. They start a romantic/sexual relationship when they're twenty eight, which is where the novel begins.

Really not much happens in this story, these two are in love and stay in love. At the beginning they both had huge amounts of insecurities that I found unrealistic for two men who have been best friends for twenty-eight years. This did get better as their relationship progressed, but then they had nothing that added conflict in their relationship, it was all fluffy rainbows and butterflies and this was only at about 45%.

There was *a lot* of reminiscing about their childhood and growing up together, so this gave a bit more story to their current cushy lives, but it did get a bit much when almost every chapter had a large portion of the past in it.

The way the dual point of view (POV) was written was an odd and quite frankly annoying choice. Quite

often we'd hear a chapter from Jake's POV and then the next chapter would be repeating the previous chapter just in Nate's POV. There was hardly any new information given and the repetition became well...repetitive and left me wanting to skim to get to a chapter that progressed the story.

Narration:

The narration by Alexander Collins had a few issues that I couldn't quite overcome to fully engage in the story .

His choice of voices for Jake and Nate left me giggling, rolling my eyes and looking behind my shoulder for the stalker following me. Jake had a very baritone voice, it made it hard to emote at all and words that were accentuated, such as 'cock' and 'touching', left me feeling a little dirty while listening to them. Nate's voice was definitely not creepy and was much more suited to him, however it was constantly whiny. I felt like he'd burst into tears every time he spoke.

After awhile I became more used to his voice and the choice of characters voices, however the accentuated words still felt a bit off. He'd accentuate some words constantly like 'touching' that I couldn't help roll my eyes every time it was said (and it's said frequently!). He also seemed to lack enthusiasm in certain parts of the story that I felt required it, like he was getting bored, or maybe that was just me.

In the end this was a very sweet story about true love lasting forever and the sex was hot in true Cardeno style, but overall I got bored quite quickly and felt the narration lacked enthusiasm. This would definitely work for a large amount of readers, but I was not one of them.

Elsa Bravante says

Madre mía..., pero ¿qué es esto que he leído? Friends to lovers, que más bien parece brothers to lovers, sin ningún tipo de argumento, tan solo flashbacks y escenas que se repiten una y otra vez, primero con un POV, luego con el otro. Frases de algodón de azúcar envueltas en lazo rosa y con un bañito de chocolate acompañadas por sexo, sexo y luego un poquito de sexo más.
Totalmente ridículo.
1.5 estrellas.

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

This review is for the second edition of this book, which includes a bonus chapter originally published in:

Fluffy pink unicorns dancing on rainbows have NOTHING on this book.

This is the ultimate GFY, opposites-attract, BFFs-to-lovers story.

The book BEGINS with a HEA, and the rest is just layer upon layer of happy, sexy, and delicious.

Nate and Jake have been friends FOREVER. They were born on the same day in the same town to moms who were besties, and have been each other's everything always.

Nate is the quiet, brilliant, slightly geeky one, the scientist and doctor, the light to Jake's dark.

Jake is self-assured and broody, an athlete and cop ready to take and protect what's his.

Nate comes out to Jake when the MCs are 13, but Nate assumes Jake is straight, what with Jake fucking every girl in a 50-mile radius.

Little does Nate know that Jake has been screwing women only because it's easy and mindless. **Jake has been in love with Nate for as long as Nate's been in love with him.**

Even saying Jake is gay for Nate is inaccurate. **Jake LIVES for Nate. He BREATHES for Nate. He is Nate-sexual.**

And Nate feels the same about Jake.

Once that little misunderstanding of Jake's sexuality is cleared up (around the 13 percent mark), the rest is SEX and light angst (Nate not trusting that Jake will want him long-term) and SEX and a visit to see the family and SEX and Jake rescuing a prostitute and her baby and SEX and more SEX.

Once these guys start, they don't stop. There's a lot of dirty, luscious, ridiculously smexy action here.

If everything seems too right, that's because it is: perfect and easy and good.

Like with the other books in the series, the ending felt rushed. Big, life-changing decisions (moving back home, adopting a kid) were summarized in a few paragraphs, and the actual costs and logistics were pretty much brushed aside.

This book isn't deep. It isn't even realistic.

But it's fucking awesome, a fantasy of that forever and ever kind of love where family and friends are loving and accepting; the new police sheriff is glad that you're gay and wants you to OWN IT; and you don't know where you end and he begins.

Macky says

Cardeno C says he (yes I found out Cardeno is male) Quote: " is a hopeless romantic who wants to add a little Happiness and a few " Awwws" into a readers day , " well he does that for me in spades and yep, his books are full of sugar and his guys are almost too good to be true...but WHO CARES!!! I'm very happy to be transported to a place where the sex is hot, the love is true, the chemistry explodes and the endings are always happy. Third book in the Home series and granted, for some readers his books might be too much of everything but this is another hit with me. I love his books and I love his couples. Nuff said!
