



Beta Test

Annabeth Albert

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Player vs. Player. Fight!

Brilliant graphic designer Ravi Tandel is ahead of the game—he's just been asked to present a top secret project at a huge conference in Seattle. All systems are go...until he learns his buttoned-up office nemesis is coming along for the ride.

Tristan Jones isn't really the gamer type, but he knows the back end of the video game business inside out. Together, he and Ravi will give an awesome presentation. *If* they survive the cross-country trip first.

Tossed together in close quarters, Ravi's shocked to see Tristan's sexy, softer side emerge from such a conservative shell. He's less shocked to learn his handsome colleague's prominent family would never support an out-and-proud son. But Ravi didn't struggle through his own coming out to hide who he is now. To be together, Tristan will have to push past his fear and ultimately decide: Does he want a future with Ravi? Or is it game over before they've even begun?

Book Two of the #gaymers series

This book is approximately 64,000 words

Beta Test Details

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Author : Annabeth Albert

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From Reader Review Beta Test for online ebook

Elle the ClosetRomanceReader aka Leftie aka Shoebelle says

ARC received from publisher via Netgalley

I swear there is just something about Annabeth's writing that feels like a warm cozy blanket on a chilly night. For its length, everything was just right. I didn't wish it to be longer, nor did I think of it as too short.

Tristan is so adorkable with his methods and systems. Ravi is like the cool kid in the class. It's dual POV so you have access to both their mindsets. Tristan cannot get any more "WASP-y" than he already is, and Ravi brings in his own flavor of culture. I get it, being of minority myself. Yet despite their differences, they can't be any more perfect for each other. I love how they're surrounded by decent people, with the exception of Tristan's mother.

The build up to the relationship from a tentative friendship was just right. The reservations and the inner struggle on both ends felt right. The coming of 2 worlds happened right. The heat hit you right. The sprinkling of familiar characters, the introduction of new ones, the amount of angst, the amount of humor, right, right, right, right...

And on a more personal note, I thoroughly enjoyed their road trip as it was a familiar experience, taking the exact same route (albeit not the same stops) and taking us even further past Seattle. Reminded me of good times. Not as good a time as Tristan and Ravi had, but still good times... hehe...

Can you tell how much I love this one?!?:p

If you're looking for a nice light read with genuine emotions, this book, this series, has got to be on your list!

Ele says

I liked this one **way more** than the first book in the series, which bored me out of my mind. There was tension here, and the MCs were extremey likeable, at least to me.

I didn't care for the road trip, I didn't care for the game details, or the office romance. For me, this book was **all about the characters**.

I liked that these two start out like **real enemies**. Not "I dislike you but I want to bone you" enemies. But "you really piss me off, get out of my sight" enemies.

I completely fell in love with Tristan. His evil ex (who was maybe painted *too evil?*) did a number on him, but I loved how Ravi helped him get comfortable and confident with himself.

Tristan also possessed a quality that I find very important in a partner; **thoughtfulness**. He was always thoughtful about Ravi's likes and needs, and I really appreciated it.

I took me a little longer to connect with Ravi, because he was always holding something back. BUT he really made up for it in the end.

I'm glad I didn't give up on the series. Recommended!

.Lili. says

Annabeth Albert has written a great opposites attracts, friends to lovers story. Ravi and Tristan are like night and day. Ravi is social and flashy while Tristan is cautious and introverted. They get stuck working on a project together that forces them to go on a road trip together. They expected it to be awkward and to drive each other nuts but in the end, it turned out to be the opposite. They ended up enjoying each others company, and the sexual tension between them build with every second they spent together. The only problem is neither man wanted to commit to anything serious for multiple reasons.

My highlights:

- The main characters. Both individually and together. They were lovable and endearing and complimented each other perfectly.
- Character development and growth.
- Relationship build up. It went from annoyance to attraction, to sexual tension, to friends, friends with benefits, then love. And it just flowed perfectly, and it was a joy to read.
- We get alternating POVs giving us a clear picture of where each man is coming from.
- The intimate scenes are sexy and romantic.
- I appreciated that the drama wasn't over dramatic and never took over the story.
- This book has a light feel good vibe.
- Great cast of secondary characters.
- And it has a lovely ending.

Any negatives? Nah.

Can it be read as a standalone? Definitely but the first book is great so do yourself a favor and read it!

All in all, this was another hit for Annabeth Albert. This is a charming story about family, self-discovery, understanding, and love. 5 Stars. Highly recommend.

*ARC kindly provided by Carina Press via NetGalley for an honest review.
This review is cross-posted at Gay Book Reviews.*

Jewel says

3.5 Stars

I was pretty torn as to how I should rate this book. On one hand, I had a lot of trouble connecting with the MC's. But on the other hand, they were struggling to keep family happy while trying to figure out if they could really be themselves. That struggle is so real and heartbreaking.

I very much enjoyed the gaming aspect and I loved the interactions of both MC's (and their smexytimes were deliciously hot), but they both also had personality traits that I had trouble connecting with.

I actually had a harder time relating to and connecting with Tristan, than I did Noah, from book 1. Tristan's rigid insistence on living by his parents rules (he is 25!) even though it was literally killing him slowly, saddened me quite a bit. I hate to see people do that to themselves. And just when he would start to relax and it looked like he was actually human under the robotic exterior, his parents would call or demand that he show up to be paraded as the dutiful son and he would take about 12 steps back into his closet. I hated that. It made me sad. It made me angry. But mostly sad.

And, Ravi, though outwardly outgoing, deflected a lot. His 'head in the sand' approach to things was kind of frustrating. Not just with his insistence of keeping their relationship under wraps (Tristan was on board with that, too, because of his parents), but he had a tendency to keep his life so compartmentalized that I'm surprised he could keep up with it all.

But I kept having to remind myself that these boys are young. 25 is barely old enough to have anything figured out and I can't really blame either of them for wanting their families acceptance. Even if the chances of them getting it are small. My initial reaction to them, I think was a bit unfair.

While they were keeping their relationship under wraps, I really wanted them to talk more. They were both thinking that they wanted to make their relationship official, and they had really good chemistry, but both of them shied away from using their words. I think that might be what frustrated me the most. I just wanted them to stop denying themselves happiness. And, of course they eventually do.

I found the last 10% of *Beta Test* worth the wait, so I guess that really is a win.

Catherine says

*** 4.5 Stars ***

Beta Test was a pretty low-angst story about two very different men who surprised everyone – including themselves – by fitting together perfectly in all the ways that matter.

Uptight, repressed loner Tristan, and stylish, confident social butterfly Ravi may be character types that I've seen paired up a million times before, but I love a good office romance and the way Albert wove their backstories, family interactions, initial personality clashes, and chemistry throughout the story made it feel effortless and fun. Weirdly, I also appreciated the self-awareness shown by both MCs; they understood their personalities (the good and the bad), their personal and professional obligations (both real and self-imposed), and how their past experiences shaped their current reality (including putting certain limitations on their relationship with one another). I refuse to apologize for finding self-awareness sexy.

Ingela says

Review written August 27, 2016

3.3 Stars - Adorable NA M/M fluff for goodfeel days

I really enjoyed reading #1-Status Update (3.8 stars) in this M/M *#gaymers* serie. Then is was about *Adrian & Noah*, a road trip and their cute dogs. — Half a year later, book #2 and hopefully a new interesting couple in Tristan & Ravi.

With big hopes I downloaded the 6:13 hours audiobook narrated by Sean Crisden. A narrator I know since earlier often does it well enough. So also this time.

Tristan Jones in buisness/marketing and the graphic designer **Ravi Tandel** are both the lucky new employees the same day to different dream-jobs. Which addictive game-playing young man doesn't want to earn his money in a very hyped famous California video game business?

These two are in many ways opposites but as we know opposite attraction isn't that unusual and pretty soon are they on their way to a game exhibition in a van. Shared hotel rooms, many hours driving, talking, thinking, discover each other and it starts to bubble steam, angst, strong feeling and smexy heat.

“I'm not thinking about the end right now. Just the beginning.”

Sweeeet, steamy and quite predictable

Not the best ever but good enough and a cute love story. I liked these characters and was glad for their luck and fortune. Maybe too many explicit smex scenes to fit as a good audio listening but that's my opinion.

...Well Annabeth Albert knows how to make up gorgeous cute male characters, a nice plot, some angsty moments and all in all a believable heartwarming lovestory.

I LIKE - lovely hørny boys in moderation... and occasionally

Lisa says

4.5 “*Inconvenient Attraction*” Stars!

“*He’s the thing you can’t quit.*”

Beta Test is the second book in Annabeth Albert's new series entitled #gaymers. It is no secret that I am a huge fan of this author and with each new book she releases she just gets better and better. Seriously, every time I pick up a book by this author, I get giddy. Serious joy! Her books tell emotional, fun and heart-warming stories that leave you happily sighing in romance lala land. This book was no exception from her norm. From the first page I was hooked and wanted to see just how things would play out between the two seemingly opposite protagonists who don't exactly start off on the right foot.

Ravi Tandel and Tristan Jones are both hired on at the same time at Christopher Explorations Industries, the developer of a popular video game called Space Villager. Ravi is a brilliant graphic designer and Tristan is to work in the marketing department/ brand management. The pair are about as different as you can get. Ravi is this out and proud, somewhat flamboyant gay man who frequently rocks some colorful clothing as well as a kick-ass pompadour. Tristan is about as stiff as they come. He's a buttoned-up young man from a politically influential family who has been taught to keep his sexual preferences on the down low. Now, if these two men are so different, how come they seem to keep thinking of the other? Repeatedly.

When food poisoning hits numerous employees at the company with the exception of Ravi and Tristan, they are tasked with having to drive a huge semi-truck to a conference in Seattle containing a top-secret Space Villager project that will be unmasked there. It is a huge responsibility and both men are not in a position to turn down the "request".

As the pair make their way to Seattle the attraction between them becomes very apparent. However, while Ravi lives his life as an openly gay man, Tristan is the complete opposite. Due to his super-conservative family, Tristan is very reluctant to let everyone know that he is gay. Further, both men have some scars from past relationships that they haven't completely gotten over. As they get to know each other, they both begin to slowly puncture the mighty fortress that they each have surrounded themselves with. When our two protagonists finally do give in to what is transpiring between them, both guys have no idea just how powerful and real their connection would be. Falling for someone is always a scary thing, especially when the person you are falling for is your polar opposite and someone you thought you didn't even like to begin with.

I loved the fact that while Ravi and Tristan may have been outwardly different and certainly led very dissimilar lives, there were also many similarities between the two. Both had families that were not exactly supportive and both are lonely, with the major difference being that Ravi is one to surround himself with people while Tristan is more of a solitary loner type. Despite their obvious dissimilarities, they just seemed to work and brought out the best in each other. Ravi is this vibrant and lovable character and he is also a guy who is always on the go, he does not even recognize that he is missing something in his life until he meets Tristan. Tristan needs to break free from the choke-hold that his conservative family and life have around his neck. He has no idea just how much he needs someone like Ravi in his life, not until the sexy graphic designer saunters into his atmosphere. Both men are certainly taken aback by just how profound their feelings for one another become. Certainly something they both are unable to walk away from. Damn the repercussions!

This was a tender, sweet and sexy tale as we watch the two men who are thrown together due to some unforeseen circumstances become everything to one another. Something neither one of them expected when they ventured on trek to Seattle.

All in all, *Beta Test* was a wonderful addition to this series. I love how real and different the characters this author creates seem to be. Tristan and Ravi were no exception. They had their flaws but in the end all that matters is finding someone who accepts you, the good and the bad. Someone who wants you to fulfill your dreams and perhaps make some new ones with you. This is definitely a series to check out for lovers of the M/M genre. Highly recommended.

****An advance reading copy of **Beta Test** by Annabeth Albert was generously provided to me in exchange for an honest review.

Judith says

3.75 Stars.

Ravi

I've got to be honest I really struggled with this one initially. I just couldn't get into it but I'm so glad I carried on because when I got a third of the way through I really started to enjoy it.

Tristan

Ravi and Tristan are both hired at the same time by a Video Game Developer. They are complete opposites...

Ravi is definitely an extrovert. He's flamboyant, very popular and has a large number of friends. His family know he's gay but are kind of in denial, still hoping he's going to meet a nice girl to marry.

Tristan is an introvert, extremely buttoned up with no friends. Like Ravi, his parents know he's gay and while not happy about it, accept it as long as he doesn't flaunt it.

They certainly don't get off to a good start but when they are thrown together through work things change between them.

They develop a tentative friendship which turns to much more but both of them are reluctant to make any promises due to their past.

Ravi has been here before and really doesn't want to get involved with a fellow worker again. Tristan's mother is a political figure and doesn't want the scandal of her gay son being publicized.

This is a sweet, sexy one (not filthy enough for me.....but I'm liking my men more dirty by the day)

♥ ♥ ♥ 4.25 STARS ♥ ♥ ♥

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Oh, that was an intoxicating thought--being enough for Tristan, exactly like this, being everything he needed.



Tristan isn't the only new employee, Ravi Tandel is hired as a graphic designer for the company. Ravi is everything Tristan isn't, confident, charming, and out and proud. So, it's no surprise that they don't exactly like each other when they first meet. However, circumstances put them together when everyone gets food poisoning at a work party, with the exception of Ravi and Tristan who left the party early and without eating. Now they are asked to drive a truck to Seattle together to a convention where they will unveil a top secret project to everyone.

I totally loved these two. It was a slow burn between them but those are usually so delicious and smoking hot, and this one was no exception. I loved their connection. It was sweet and sexy. I loved how their differences complemented each other and brought out a different side of one another. Tristan was left unsure of himself when it comes to sex, due to his past relationship. Ravi, however, had no problem showing Tristan how good he thought Tristan was. It was so great to see Tristan bloom and become more confident. The sexual tension and steam between these two was intensely hot. That is why it comes to no surprise that their feelings for each other change to so much more.



Ravi gave in to the impulse and closed the distance between them, kissing Tristan firmly. Tristan kissed him back eagerly, not even glancing around to see who might be around to see who might be around. That was new, and Ravi loved it. He broke away reluctantly. "I'd wait forever for you. That's what I was trying to say."



I really enjoyed this book a lot. Tristan and Ravi were such an enjoyable couple to read about and I just loved their emotional connection. I really liked the pace of how everything developed between them. This book had steam, humour, emotional moments, and some angst. I love that despite how much both of their parents didn't exactly agree with their life choices and didn't accept their sexuality, they stayed true to themselves. Overall, It was a really great read. If you haven't read the first book, that's okay, because this one can be read as a standalone. I totally recommend this one. If you like your m/m reads to have a perfect blend of sweet and sexy, and you enjoy a good opposites attract story, then give this one a read.

Gigi says

3.5 stars

I didn't love this like so many of my friends did. I did like it, but...

I had a hard time with Ravi and Tristan's inner monologues. Both had reasons they thought made it impossible to have a relationship, but the friends-with-benefits sex knocked them both off their feet so they continued their sexual relationship way past the expiration date. And it made them both miserable. Both wanted to make it work and eventually they both thought the other was the reason they couldn't be together. Now, these are two grown men, mid-twenties, who both had family issues and while I understood their hesitation for not being together, I was incredibly frustrated for most of the book, wishing these two would open their eyes and realize they can't live in the tiny box their parents put them in.

The boys were sweet, the sex was **hot**, but my frustration won over in many instances so it turned this book into a 3.5 book for me overall.

But I'm certainly happy most of my friends loved this one! I loved Adrian and Noah's story in book one and look forward to Josiah and Ryan's story in book three.

***P*u*r*p*l*e* Masochist says**

Arc provided via Netgalley in exchange for honest review.

This review is posted on Way Too Hot Books.

I haven't read the 1st book of the *#gaymers* series yet or anything by this author until this book, so this arc was one of those spur of the moment decisions, but once I started I could not stop. **Fast-paced, fun, steamy and emotional hate-to-love story** with endearing, down to earth characters.

At first glance Tristan & Ravi couldn't be more different from each other. **Ravi**, the top video game developer and artist, the charmer, flamboyant and center of every party. Everybody wants to be his friend or lover. Well, with the exception of his co-worker **Tristan** who is more of an introvert and workaholic with poor social skills and low self-esteem. At the beginning of the story all the guys want is to spend not more than necessary in each other's company, but soon enough they'll be forced by work to set on a cross-country journey when they'll discover that there's more than meets the eye in both cases.

Oh, what a lovely and heartfelt story this was! I loved the portrayal of the MCs who were the type of characters you can relate to, with both virtues and flaws and they completed each other wonderfully. I've been missing out. Must read more of this series ASAP! **Highly recommended** to every mm romance reader fan who wants a story and characters with depth.

Mirjana **DTR - Down to Read says**

*****2.5 Stars*****

"It's not what you fight over, it's what you fight for."

This was a sweet opposites attract and enemies to lovers office romance.

I enjoyed the book, even if it was predictable and a little too heavy on the gaming and work details for my liking.

But, I think my biggest hurdle is that I just didn't buy into Tristan and Ravi's connection. It's like listening to the stove pilot clicking, but the spark never ignites. No flame. No fire.

Also, with Tristan's lack of experience with sex (and thus some low self-esteem in this area), the sex in the book felt detached and robotic. Too many descriptions of the positions and actions and not enough of the emotion. Ravi's need to praise and check in on how Tristan's doing took me out of the moment and made it feel more like a tutorial than a steamy scene.

I'm a fan of Annabeth Albert's books, but unfortunately, this one missed the mark for me.

Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

I really, really love Annabeth Albert, and I'm SO pleased with her newest story in the fab #gaymers series. This is another great story for those of us who LOVE **geeks, opposites attract, and slow-burn romance**.

Where Tristan is quiet, obsessively organized, and introverted, Ravi craves people and energy. Ravi is a big explosion of life and brightness, and Tristan is a harder nut to crack. I was curious as to how Annabeth Albert was going to bring these two guys together, but she did in a glorious, sexy, intimate way.

This book centers around standing up for who you are, especially with outside pressure from **families**. Ravi's traditional Indian family are in denial about him being gay, and Tristan's conservative family wants him to keep it under wraps in public. Both men are struggling with the expectations of their families, and though family angst stories don't usually appeal to me, Annabeth Albert made this one really compelling.

What I loved the most was seeing Tristan break out of his shell. He was put down by his previous boyfriend, and his self-esteem is in the tank. It was amazing watching him come alive with Ravi, and the sexy-times scenes that they had together were suuuuper hot. I love when a shy guy just comes unraveled!

Though this book is part of a series, **it works well as a stand-alone**. This one is for fans of low drama, opposites attract, and nerdy men who are passionate about their jobs. And I, for one, am a huuuuuge fan.

****Copy provided in exchange for an honest review****

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

Ravi is color and charm. He has a million friends and can draw anything. Even his doodles are art.

So what if his traditional Hindu mom and grandma pretend he's not gay a decade after he came out? He lives life on his own terms. **And if Ravi can't bear to be alone, well, no one has to know.**

Years after his older brother's death, Tristan still lives his life to please his conservative parents. (His one rebellion is taking his Stanford MBA and "wasting" it working on video games.) He prefers folders to people and eats lunch at his desk alone. It's easier that way.

Tristan sure loves his color-coded spreadsheets, but his life is grey.

When Ravi and Tristan are forced into a work-related road trip, neither is thrilled. Tristan is prepared for every catastrophe. Ravi just wants to drink coffee and listen to music. Thankfully, they both like 80s pop.

Ravi, feeling guilty for accidentally outing Tristan, vows to tone down the snark. He isn't prepared to see a softer side of Tristan. And when Tristan stands up for him in a town called Weed and takes charge at the gaymers' convention, Ravi knows he's screwed.

***Beta Test* is about two very different men, seemingly all wrong for each other, finding something real and right.**

For all of Tristan's perfectly structured life, he wants all the dirty with Ravi. Tristan doesn't think he's good at sex (his ex did quite a number on his self-esteem), but Ravi sets out to prove him wrong. Ravi has no problem issuing commands, and Tristan is so eager to please.

The sexy scenes in this book are tender, sensual, and so very, very hot. Ravi and Tristan have an intense emotional and sexual connection, and there's a sense of wonder and exploration in every kiss, every touch.

This story is low on the angst. There is some family drama, but it's fairly low key and the men navigate it together.

Communication, people. It's all about the communication. And these two are pretty damn good at it.

While Adrian and Noah from book 1 are in a couple scenes, *Beta Test* can easily be read as a standalone.

This is a sexy, feel-good book with an aww-inducing epilogue. While I still love Noah and Adrian best, it's impossible not to fall for Ravi and Tristan.

A special shoutout to Pac-Man tattoos, pierced nipples, complicated hair, and cinnamon roll frappuccinos.

Life's sweet like that.

BWT (Belen) says

I got the ARC for this story pretty late in the evening and decided I would be a responsible adult, knowing that I had to work in the morning, and only read *one* chapter before bed. Five chapters later I was hooked and I'd made myself into a dirty lying liar who lies. Because who was I kidding? I wasn't putting this down. I mean, do you know how hard it is to create a follow up to a book like Status Update, which I found awesome, entertaining *and* a 5 Star read and then *do it even better*?

While Ravi is all brilliance, extroverted, and the life of a party with mad social skills, Tristan is more shy, introverted and clings desperately to organization to hide his awkwardness in public situations. Are they opposites? Yes. However, they are perfectly suited to one another like a puzzle piece missing from the other one's life. Tristan helps Ravi be more grounded, and Ravi helps Tristan come out of his shell a little. Not that either tries to change the other - they simply accept each other. It just melted my cold, little heart.

I have to tell you - this story, the whole thing: characters, plot, sexy times -

"What do you want, babe?" Ravi mouthed his way down Tristan's neck, wrapping his body around him from the back. They still stood near the bed, but were both bare now, warm skin pressing against warm skin.

"You," Tristan gasped.

"Always." Ravi tumbled them onto the bed, sending the comforter and pillows raining to the floor. He started kissing Tristan's neck more purposefully now, a deliberate downward path.

"Wait." He took a deep breath. "Not...that. Want you to fuck me."

- this whole thing was my jam!

I loved every part of this. Beta Test is a lovely, sweet, low angst romance with some light family drama, plenty of humor and hot sexy times, and such wonderful characters.

Ravi's throat tightened. He didn't know how to express gratitude for how Tristan was always thinking about what he needed and how he managed to make such thoughtfulness appear effortless.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!

NOTE: While the characters, Adrian and Noah, from Status Update are in a couple of scenes, Beta Test can absolutely be read as a standalone.

P.S.: Now I just really, really want Josiah's story. Hopefully in Connection Error (#gaymers #3)?

Advanced Review Galley copy of Beta Test (#gaymers #2) provided by Carina Press in exchange of an honest review.

This review has been cross-posted at Gay Book Reviews.
