



## Game Changer

*Rachel Reid*

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*New York Admirals captain Scott Hunter takes his pregame rituals very seriously. In this case, it's not just a lucky smoothie he's craving—it's the man who made it.*

Pro hockey star Scott Hunter knows a good thing when he sees it. So, when a smoothie made by juice bar barista Kip Grady precedes Scott breaking his on-ice slump, he's desperate to recreate the magic...and to get to know the sexy, funny guy behind the counter.

Kip knew there was more to Scott's frequent visits than blended fruit, but he never let himself imagine being invited back to Scott's penthouse. Or kissed with reckless abandon, never mind touched everywhere all at once. When it happens it's red-hot, incredible and frequent, but also only on Scott's terms and always behind his closed apartment doors.

Scott needs Kip in his life, but with playoff season approaching, the spotlight on him is suddenly brighter than ever. He can't afford to do anything that might derail his career...like introducing the world to his boyfriend. Kip is ready to go all-in with Scott—but how much longer will he have to remain a secret?

## Game Changer Details

Date : Published October 22nd 2018 by Carina Press

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Author : Rachel Reid

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## From Reader Review Game Changer for online ebook

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

[ that needless kiss during their very brief “separation”...thankfully it was never even mentioned which further proves it just wasn’t necessary (hide spoiler)]

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### **.Lili. says**

So glad my GoodReads homie, J, told me about this one.

- It read quick
- Adorable couple
- Swoon-worthy
- Sports romance
- Closeted star hockey player for falls for regular Joe
- Banter
- Plenty of steam
- A touch of heartbreak
- Feel good vibe
- No OTT drama

\*It's a little insta-lovish but I didn't mind- it reeled me right in.

Think of it as NR Walker meets Lily Morton style vibe of writing.

Rachel Reid is an author I'll be looking out for in the future. Fingers crossed a certain Russian gets a book next!

4 Solid Stars!

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### **Elsa Bravante says**

Bueno... El jugador de hockey y el trabajador de un bar de batidos un tanto nerd son muy monos, pero la historia se alarga dando vueltas a lo mismo una otra y otra vez para terminar de forma muy abrupta. No me ha disgustado, pero no me ha llegado a convencer del todo.

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### **Gigi says**

I'm going with 4.5 stars with this one. It was sexy with endearing characters but didn't quite hit the 5 star sweet spot. I think it's because the “I love you” dropped so fast. Maybe?

Recommended.

## Sanaa ? Sanaa's Book Blog ? says

### 3.75 stars.

*Game Changer* was an overall cute read. I love Hockey, M/M and romance so when you turn that into a book, it's what I call heaven. It was my first by Rachel and I'm glad I gave it a try. Though it's not my favorite I did enjoy it and liked the characters as well as the secondary ones. I liked that there was little to no angst. Sometimes that's exactly the type of book I'm looking for. Scott and Kip were the cutest ever when they were together.

The few reasons why I didn't give it 5 stars was because I felt like there was \*almost\* too much sex in this book and not enough talking. Also the fact that a lot of the problems could've went away like Scott's inability to come out, Kip getting angry not telling Scott some important information and running away had they just communicated better.

But overall I'd recommend this and I would continue to read more books by this author in the future.

*An arc was provided in exchange for an honest review.*

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

I've NEVER watched a hockey game in my life, but I love books about hockey players. Because HOCKEY PLAYERS. No explanation required.

Scott Hunter is a closeted star hockey player, team captain, and a minor celebrity in New York. His team is having an amazing season, but he's not bringing his A game. One day, he stops by a smoothie shop and orders a blueberry concoction. The smoothie is good, but the guy who makes it is even better.

Kip is 25 and has an undergrad degree in history. He has no real direction and hates his menial job, but doesn't seem motivated to do much else. Kip is a cutie: sweet, snarky, and utterly obsessed with the hot hockey player who keeps coming round to Straw+Berry.

Scott and Kip jump into a relationship very quickly and have out-of-this-world chemistry. The conflict stems from Scott's unwillingness to come out. Kip doesn't push, not initially, but once Scott's team makes the playoffs, he starts to feel like an accessory to Scott's life, especially when Scott doesn't even consider bringing him as a date to the team's dinner banquet.

I became frustrated with both MCs as the story progressed: Scott adores Kip, but his fear of coming out makes Kip feel like a dirty secret. Kip, on the other hand, gives Scott all his time and attention without asking for anything in return, and when it becomes too much, he runs instead of sitting Scott down and sharing his grievances.

I have to admit that the first half of *Game Changer* dragged a little for me. The MCs jump into bed almost immediately and never come up for air. I scream for steam, so it pains me to say this, but \*whispers\* there was perhaps too much sex in this story. At times, it felt like filler.

The story picked up in the second half, as I became more invested in the men's relationship, which doesn't exist in a vacuum. There's an actual world outside of Scott's bedroom.

**The secondary characters are very well sketched, and the camaraderie Scott has with his team is heartwarming.** I loved Scott's best friend Carter who teases relentlessly because he cares, as well as Kip's friends Elena and Maria, who are hilarious.

The angst is fairly minimal. At one point, Scott has to deal with a destructive teammate, but that story line doesn't go anywhere. Kip's family is super supportive (Kip's dad for the win!), as are Scott's close friends.

Some readers might find Scott and Kip's interactions to be sugar-coma inducing, but I (not so secretly) love that kind of stuff. Close-to-perfect relationships do exist in real life, and it's nice to see two well adjusted men who don't shy away from commitment.

**Includes: romantic dinners, lots of dirty talk, a public kiss that changes everything, humour, and a hopeful HEA.** I see the potential for a fun series (hello, Finnish god of hockey!) and would definitely read another book by Rachel Reid in the future.

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### **Julie Zantopoulos says**

This was a fun arc to read during #ContmporaryAthon and one that was needed to break up the serious books I'd been reading. This was a quick paced but very long m/m romance. I'm used to my smutty reads going a lot fast but at over 350 pages it was a very long and sometimes overwritten novel. That said, I did enjoy Kip and Scott as characters even if their relationship was incredibly, insanely, insta-lovey.

Scott is an NHL player and Kip is a smoothie maker who has no idea what to do with his degree or his life. There's a power imbalance in finances and presumed self-worth. There's also the issue of Scott being closeted which adds conflict to the relationship and it was hard to watch Kip hurt and Scott struggle with that. It's hard coming out when you're in the majors and Scott is justifiably nervous about that, all while understanding why Kip needs to not be a secret.

This is a cute romance, plenty of steamy sex (though the scenes do start to feel formulaic) and super insta-lovey...but hey, a fun read doesn't always need to be an epic masterpiece. If you're looking for a sport-related m/m romance this is a decent one.

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### **Truuss says**

I love this one... the beautiful dynamic between Kip and Scott was really well done.

It was a sweet read. Sometimes a bit bitter but both men were gorgeous together. Scott exploring his boundaries and found out he just can't give in....and Kip with that fact decreases his own...

Give at take... sometimes more give than take... really well written.

Their sexiness together and soon their love making was wonderful done.

it was a very smooth written journey. I love it how it was put together. Both personalities were lovable and

even with a concept which was done before by other authors I really enjoyed this one hard, and this one need a place on the shelf.

It was a solid read, the building up was good and convincing and all well worked out.

Kindly received an arc from the publisher through NetGalley

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**~Mindy Lynn~ says**

4 Stars!

I am a sucker for a sports romance. It doesn't matter the sport. I have no idea what is going on in the hockey world nor have I ever watched a game, but I enjoy reading books with this sport. I am a football fan. I get the lingo and the rules. Any other sport, not so much. Still, I one-click or request these babies right up.

*Game Changer* was an enjoyable tale about a closeted man who falls for an out and proud man and who struggles with the choice of coming out for the sake of love. Yes, the story has been told. But in every story the struggle and emotional journey is different for every character.

Kip and Scott felt an instant attraction for each other and agreed on a strictly sexual relationship because Scott wasn't able or willing to give more. But the longer they are around each other and the more they get to know each other on a non-sexual level the more they fall for each other. But being in a closeted relationship takes a toll on Kip. He wants to do normal things that couples do. Like date. Leave the condo. Be able to hold his boyfriends hand. He knows he agreed he was fine with how things are. He knows Scott plans to come out eventually. What he fears is that the "eventually" Scott keeps promising him will never come.

Despite these issues, Kip and Scott were really cute together. They had great chemistry and steamed up the pages. I liked that the drama and angst was low and not over the top.

It was a great read and I look forward to this author's future work.

Happy reading dolls! xx

*I was given an ARC by the publisher and Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.*

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**Shile says**

**3.5 cute sugar coma stars**

This was me while reading this book!

MC 1: Kip! Like Carter, I like that name- Kip is an out and proud smoothie maker at Straw+Berry place, with a History degree that he has no idea how to use. I loved Kip, he is so adorable, loving, cute.

MC 2: Scott is a closeted hockey star and a sports celebrity. I liked Scott, he is charming, a great hockey player, and so cute. But at some point I wanted to slap him hard for dragging Kip back into the closet.

These two meet when Scott stops by Straw+Berry, to order a smoothie and is served by Kip. The connection is instant. These two stupid fools jump into a relationship faster than a speeding bullet. Although it is Insta lust/love, I felt the chemistry between Kip and Scott from the get go. They were too cute for my taste but I have to admit once in while I like to bathe in sugar and honey and these two gave me that.

The first half of the story was sweet and hot! it focused on Scott and Kip getting to know each other, this part had A LOT of Sex! that became repetitive. I like sex in my books, but here it was just too much, it felt like the sex scenes were used as page fillers. I hope book 2 rectifies that.

The second part is where it all comes together, after the honeymoon sex-fest bliss fades; Kip is really hit with the downside of dating a closeted athlete. I got frustrated with both Kip and Scott. They love each other deeply but Scott is reluctant to come out of the closet and treats Kip like his dirty little secret and Kip is afraid to push, yet he wants to do normal couple things. I just wanted to shake them both.

For a debut book this is well written and a feel good story, we have enough dose of banter. It is cute without being cheesy and the author got me invested enough to continue with this series. The MCs are so likable and the other supporting characters are amazing too.

I would like to believe this is not the final copy, there was a problem with formatting that affected the POV changes.

Overall I really did have a good time with this book.

Recommended when you are in the mood for some sugar rush, cuteness overload, low angst read.

**ARC kindly provided by Netgalley in exchange for an honest review**

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## **Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says**

\*2.5 stars\*

I *almost* rounded up with this one because the ending was 1000% better than the first half, but I remembered how much I didn't enjoy the first 50% of the story and I couldn't do it.

Look, I think a ton of people are going to love this one. It's a cute story about a closeted hockey player (automatic bonus points because HOCKEY) and his smoothie-making love interest. There is a *lot* of sex (more on that later), and I know the story will find its fan base. However, this wasn't the kind of story I typically enjoy.

I have certain requirements when it comes to my romances, and it's really important for me to have a slow burn. If the book is exceptionally good, I can do a quickie and insta-love at first meeting, but that's like a once-a-year exception for me.

*Game Changer* had such a rapid turn from meeting to love that my head was spinning. I really don't like when we get hook-ups and lovey dovey stuff in the first portion of the story, and it was just too fast for me to feel like any of it was real.

Plus, those non-stop sex scenes. I actually skimmed all of them after the first two because constant sex without that sexual tension build-up does nearly nothing for me. It was excessive for my tastes, and I just

wasn't into it at all.

The first part of the story felt superficial, repetitive, and formulaic to me. However, after the 50% mark things started to turn around.

I honestly was happy at the sappy last 25% of the story. I'm a romance reader, so gestures of romance make my heart happy. Though I still don't believe that someone with as much on the line as Scott would move so fast after just a few months of dating, the last portion of the story was much better for me and nearly bumped my rating to 3-stars.

I'm sure this book will do really well, and I'm happy for the author for getting her first book out there (no small thing!), but I don't think I'm the audience for this kind of story, hockey MC aside. Though I'd tune back in if the author went with an enemies-to-lovers or slow-burn theme for her next book in the series...

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

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## **Cadiva says**

Oooh I loved this one. I totally get what Dani meant though with her comment that there's lots of sex because there definitely is!

However, I didn't find it too overwhelming or that the narrative was missing out on story development because of all the sex. I think it felt believable for me that a closeted ice hockey star would go absolutely nuts once he'd found someone he trusted enough to be himself with and Scott and Kip were smoking hot!

I absolutely adored the meet/cute in this one. Scott comes into the shop where history graduate Kip is working while he tries to find a dream job in a museum and orders a smoothie. Kip has no clue that he's the captain of the city's New York Admirals and a bit of a sports megastar.

I also loved that this pair, in the main, talked a lot. There wasn't really much in the way of miscommunication up until the Admirals made the playoffs and Kip started to feel a bit like a dirty secret as Scott became super busy but couldn't/wouldn't bring him along to any of the club's official events.

The blow out was fairly short and over with a bit of common sense talking by Kip's dad (who was awesome) and from Scott's friends on the team (also awesome!) and I'd like to also give a shout-out here to all the secondary characters, who were fully fleshed out and quite vivid even in their limited page time - especially Kip's best friend Elena and Maria who he worked with at the smoothie bar.

Now I want more from the Admirals because there's that long tall Finnish defender and the somewhat mouthy Russian from the Boston opposition who I think might be open for more adventures!

*#ARC kindly provided by the publishers Carina Press via NetGalley in return for an honest and unbiased review*

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## **Zoe says**

Seductive, passionate, and timely!

Game Changer is an engrossing, sensuous, sports romance that features the lonely, closeted Scott, and the handsome, fun-loving Kip as they engage in a love affair strife with issues of insecurities, hidden sexuality, and the stigma and stereotypical mentality surrounding professional sports.

The prose is fervent and sincere. The characters are well-drawn, vulnerable, and endearing. And the plot is an alluring tale full of explosive attraction, heartfelt emotion, friendship, family, acceptance, support, palpable chemistry, hockey, and love.

Overall, Game Changer is a provocative, heartwarming story about love, pure and simple, with no labels, no limits, and no regrets. It's a wonderful debut for Reid that is without a doubt one of my favourite MM novels of the year, and I can't wait to read what she comes up with next.

Thank you to Carina Press and NetGalley for providing me with a copy in exchange for an honest review.

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## Wendy says

I was sold the moment I read the blurb for this book. I mean "**Hockey players**" ... no way I was gonna pass up on this one !!! Everyone knows I love a good "*Sports Romance*" and hockey is definitely my favorite ;)

Scott Hunter is the captain of the New York Admirals Hockey team. He is also very much in the closet. So much so, that he only hooks up when he's on vacation in countries where they don't recognise him.

A **blueberry smoothie** (well there was some kale as well) is about to change of all this though ..

One look at Kip Grady, the smoothie barista and he knows he is in trouble. He keeps coming back to get his smoothie fix...After all, it's very important for hockey-players to keep up their routine..especially when they hit a "*winning streak*" (yeah right) !!

Of course it's not the smoothie Scott is really after, and once this becomes clear, all bets are off.....**Yowza !!**

Now these two got together pretty damn fast. Not that I am complaining, because they were freaking **HOT**... but there is a bit of insta-lust/love going on.

At first Kip is over the moon happy. Who wouldn't be, getting in bed with a sexy NHL player on a regular basis. And they get down and dirty **a lot !!!**

But as time passes, Kip is getting quite frustrated and he's starting to feel like Scott's dirty little secret. Scott is away a lot, and when he isn't, they are always holed up together in his apartment, in fear of being outed. They don't go out together and Kip finds himself more and more alone inside Scott's apartment. It's like

stepping back inside the closet.

I myself got annoyed a time or two with Scott, because he kept taking and taking he wasn't willing to give anything in return. Kip was trying to be so patient with him...up until a certain point that is.

No worries though... Scott definitely won my affection back ;) He just needed a bit of a **slap in the face**, which he got figuratively..

Frustration aside, I really enjoyed this one. I could have done with a bit less steam and a bit more talking though (I can't believe I am actually saying this...)

I recommend this one to anyone looking for a **sweet, hot "sports themed" gay romance**. I myself will be keeping my eye out for more work by this author....maybe Rozanov's story ???

*My reviews are posted on DirtyBooksObsession*

**This review is posted on Wendy's Wycked Words**

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## Sabrina The Trash Queen says

I'm still in the mood to read m/m and I'm getting so fucking satisfied.

Is just so good!! And I'm being extremely lucky to find only great romantic books to read. And sexy too, like they are all sexy.

I'm a sucker for romance and I love being a sucker for romance, is there anything better?

*“He smiled at Kip, whose mouth went dry. He turned on the blender before he could say something stupid like, What do your abs taste like?”*

This was a humorous, cute, sexy with a lot of character and relationship development (that I absolutely loved), a lot of dirty talks (can I get an AMEN!) and great writing.

I love all of the characters and I just adore Scott and Kip together, they are truly made for each other. I love their love.

They get together pretty quickly in the book, but we get to see that develop into something more than just a desire/attraction. I really like how understanding they are of each other, how they are with each other basically.

And we get to see both POV (Scott and Kip). I love to be able to read about both people of the relationship, it gives me a better understanding of the relationship, why they do what they do and what makes them themselves. I LOVE THEM.

Overall this was a combination of everything that I was in the mood to read at the moment, I definitely recommend.

*Thank you to NetGalley for a ARC of this book in exchange of a honest review*

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