



The Country Omega

Penelope Peters

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What if desire really did have the power to sweep you away?

Omega Ethan Downing doesn't want a mate. He wants to play his piano and travel the world. But with his acceptance to a prestigious musical conservatory hanging in the balance – and an ex who won't take "no" for a hint – Ethan's father arranges a bonding with an alpha neither of them have ever met.

Alpha Antonio Valdez's life is perfect. He has the career, the money, the looks. In fact, he'd be perfectly happy never to bond at all. When his overbearing father arranges a bonding for him, he's ready to find every excuse in the world not to go through with it.

One meeting changes both Ethan's and Antonio's minds.

Too bad their fathers have also changed theirs.

Now Ethan and Antonio have to fight for something they never even dreamed they wanted: each other.

The Country Omega is the first book in a three-part series set in the Omegaverse. It is a non-shifter, paranormal world in which mpreg is a possibility (but does not occur in this story).

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5-Heart rating from MMGoodBookReviews.com!

The Country Omega Details

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From Reader Review The Country Omega for online ebook

Deirdre says

This is a very lengthy book was quite a surprise. I put it on and returned it from my Kindle Unlimited ten book limit collection several times. Finally I just meant to read a few pages for the future before I returned it again in exchange for another book I thought I wanted to read more. But I couldn't stop reading this book. Luckily it was the weekend and as I ran errands and did household chores I listened to this fascinating story.

I didn't even realize that it was by a favourite author of mine. Penelope Rivers did an amazing job of world building. The world is full of Alphas, Omegas, and Betas - just not Shifters - though their behaviors bear some similarities such as the need to bond. The Omegas once again are treated like second class citizens. With their fathers being in charge of their lives. But even in the richer families the Patriarch is in control of everything, including their Alpha sons and who they marry.

This is also a tale of Country/Small town life versus City life. In the City, Omegas are never allowed to go out unescorted by an Alpha or Beta or it must be a group of adult Omegas. While in the Country/Small towns, more rural locations where there was a great sense of community - the Omegas had a great deal more freedom, especially up until the beginning of their first estrus or first heat.

At a certain age all young men and women go into the Bonding Pool, unless two Bond partners find each other (Still they need their parents' consent). Some people put off going into the Pool in order to work or in the case of thirty year old Alpha Antonio Valdez because he didn't want a simpering, needy, baby factory Omega who expected Antonio to entertain him or her, to be their everything. Just the thought of accepting such an Omega kept him in the Bonding Pool for several years. His father is furious. He wants his son Bonded and soon with grandchildren. But that was not Antonio's plan. He kept finding something wrong with each Omega, when his father invited their family to discuss Bonding. Since Bonding officially meant the signing of a Contract by the Fathers.

Ethan Downing is a twenty year old Pianist and an Omega. He has the chance to be a Concert Pianist. He's been practicing since he could sit on his piano playing parent's lap. Ethan won't be allowed to attend the Music Conservatory for another year unless he's Bonded to an Alpha. Which is how this book opens with Ethan and his father, Robert Downing on a train on their way to visit the very hospitable Valdez parents. He is extremely nervous, but pushes through to speak with the tall handsome Hispanic man. The moody darkish atmosphere of the beautiful large Valdez apartment is so oppressive that the newly introduced couple is escorted out to the balcony while their fathers get down to business of reviewing the Bonding Contracts. Their chaperone leaves them alone leading to some activity that would not have been allowed if they had been properly supervised. So when Ethan's father abruptly ends the meeting with Antonio's father, taking Ethan back home, Antonio is deeply upset. Ethan is the first Omega that he believes he could marry / Bond with.

He is angry that his father told the Downing parents somethings quite different from what was in fact in the Bonding Contract.

But as far as Ethan is concerned Antonio is no better than his father, if he can't do anything about the terrible Contract that he's so glad his father refused to sign. What kind of Bond mate would he have made? But down deep Ethan is already missing Antonio. And Antonio's getting drunk to finally pass out, only to experience sleep with dreams filled with his "almost" gorgeous talented Omega. Returning home unBonded is not what Ethan or his parents had envisioned. His unBonded status opens up a Pandora's Box full of

unwanted memories, better forgotten activities, secrets, an unrequited possessive angry Alpha, broken trust, creeper behaviors, unmonitored Omegas, and loss innocence.

Ethan has to learn to trust his parents. To stop keeping them in the dark about very important matters. To believe that they have his best interests at heart, especially when he doubts them the most. There are some very important characters introduced in this first book of the Downing trilogy: the Downing siblings, Valdez parents, a very strict Russian piano teacher, band & high school instructor, the Downing parents, visiting Omegas, and a stubborn brooding younger Valdez Alpha.

This was a very well written book. Full of action, suspense, love, longing, loneliness, recalcitrance, arrogance, ignorance, determination, creeper, scenting, narcissism, estrus, piano playing, second class citizens, protection, and loopholes. The only thing I did not like was that the Omega parent was called Mom regardless of his or her gender. I've never liked it when a man is called Mom or referred to as the Mother. I prefer Carrier or Bearer and the parent then referred to as Dad or Papa or Pops or Father. Also I am not happy that the second book in the series will be a MF romance. Otherwise this has become one of my favourite books.

Lisa says

4.5* stars

So, this came up on my recommendations page, I'm always on the lookout for shifter stories, so new author, liked the blurb and Peter pointer.....

To set the scene before I review, I have been reading paranormal since my mid teens, so why in 30 years have I never come across "Omegaverse" before? As with all genres, you have a baseline and then it can go from one extreme to other.....and in Omegaverse, there is a baseline and extremes (Google is your friend....) and this one seems to land in the fair to middling.

I certainly don't want to be telling anyone to suck eggs, but the basics of this 'verse are based around the Alpha, Beta, Omega of a shifter world, all the instincts but none of the shifting. There is still the stimulus of scents, bonding (bite and knotting) and the need of a mate, but it's not the gender that is critical, its your status - Alpha's still being dominant and omega's usually pliant and submissive. Parents can be either or both sexes - you still have a mother and father, but they can be male or female, thus mpreg is just par for the course, as is coming into season or estrus.....with all the consequences!! The world is an everyday modern that makes the illogical plausible and left me ridiculously satisfied!!

Ethan is an omega, the eldest of 3, mother and father are Ben and Robert and he's had a fairly modest liberal upbringing in a small town suburb. A bonding contract has been set up for Ethan to mate with Antonio, an Alpha of some standing from a wealthy family in the City. Ethan is a gifted pianist and wants to study at the music conservatory, but as an omega, he has to be bonded to do this. Both men are sceptical of the mating, but on meeting, pheromones kick in, they scent and should be end of story.....but the Father's can't agree on the bonding contract due to a couple of clauses.....so begins a journey against time to become bonded, but its not just the clause and school in the way, there is Mr Clarke....a predator of young Omega's.....

I became very invested in Ethan, he was bucking the trend of a typical omega. He was independent and wanted a future but with the support of his Alpha, as a true partnership, not as a submissive. Ethan's mother

Ben, was all things - strong, supportive, loving, understanding and you can see where Ethan gets his strength. Antonio quickly comes to realise there is more to this bonding lark than first thought. I loved his musings and questioning himself. The scene with "Ned" made me smirk, even though I should've probably been more sympathetic!! Larissa, Antonio's friend, is also worth a mention for her no nonsense attitude!

There were a couple of things that did niggle.....Antonio's father signing the second contract a little too easily. Also Mr Clarke.....where is he?? His stalkerish arse just dropped off the page.....*shudder* And the ending, seriously?? although it was a strong HFN, I felt it was an abrupt fade to black..... after that monumental struggle to be together??? Why???? Next to cliffhangers, this is my most disliked ending.....not even a sniff of an epilogue to help!!!

Overall, the first dip of the big toe in this new pool has been entertaining, enlightening and thoroughly enjoyable. I have just found out from the author's webpage that a second book is due out in the summer (Jake, Ethan's alpha brother), so hopefully there will be a catch up then.

Diane says

This was a fascinating look at alpha/omega dynamics and the bonding experience. Ethan is strong and personable while Antonio is caught in a situation he has been avoiding his entire life. Throw in some parents who have their own agendas and you run into some enjoyable and tension filled encounters. Of course there has to be other potential mates and dishonest alphas to make the story even more enjoyable. You'll love the scenes with the lawyer and the 'dates' Antonio endures. Chuckles, smiles and a HEA you'll totally enjoy!

Katrina Passick Lumsden says

So I get what Peters was *trying* to do with this story, but for me, it just fell flat. The outdated social conventions of marriage were a twist, but I don't think they were an entirely successful one. Antonio's father's reluctance to change the contract made very little sense, all things considered, and Antonio and Ethan's romance seemed more contrivance than actual affection. Ethan was a manipulative little shit, kind of a dumb one, at that, and the situation with Robert was confusing and unnecessary. If you're going to create an obstacle in the form of a former lover, have that obstacle make sense in some way. This was just manners, and I'm sorry, no amount of manners should make it okay to agree to let your child marry a sexual predator.

And that ending was profoundly unsatisfying.

Mike says

Arranged bonding of a sophisticated, Latino Alpha and a Jewish, country Omega runs into snags from a demanding patriarch and a rejected suitor

A quick read for a novel, this story has a nice range of sweet but intriguing, surprising, and entertaining scenes. The story centers on an arranged match between a city Alpha with a demanding, sophisticated, high-powered business family and a country omega with a loving, domestic family and a shadowy secret. The author starts with an intriguing and eventually dramatic introduction and then weaves scenes of past secrets

and yearning dreams into the story of two separated would-be mates. I especially appreciated the depth of the supporting characters, from competitively friendly lawyers, demanding and over-protective fathers, wise and doting mothers, to conflicted music teachers.

I don't think I've read any other omegaverse piece with such nuance and depth. The Alpha-Beta-Omega dynamics are central to the story and potential relationships, but they are not overstated or overly used as explicit sizzle. (Outside of dreams, an Alpha knotting with a potential impregnation of the male omega is saved for the end. This is more a "will they or won't they" end up together and "which Alpha is right for the omega" story rather than a book of repeated, hard-core knotting. It's nice piece for those readers who like focus on plot and character as much or more than the heated Alpha/omega mpreg breeding scenes.)

Omegaverse (aka where everyone is an Alpha, Beta, or Omega, often non-shifter): setting where dominant Alphas can mate with usually more submissive omegas (of either gender), often focused on male pregnancy (mpreg) and/or heat/knotting

Meggie says

What a melodrama, which circled around a mating contract.
This romance had a really silly plot.

Michelle says

****I was given a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review for the MMRG Don't Buy My Love Program****

3 stars

The Country Omega is the story of Ethan Downing, an omega looking for an alpha mate, for undisclosed reasons that have nothing to do with love, and Antonio Valdez, an alpha being threatened with being disowned if he does not settle down and produce an heir. When the two meet for the first time, there is an instant attraction that neither had been anticipating, but is curtailed by their fathers who come to disagree upon some particulars of the match. To be together, they must overcome their bullheaded parents and the alpha threatening to take Ethan as his own.

Overall, the book was entertaining and kept my attention, but it wasn't anything special. I am familiar with alpha/omega books and this one was slightly too archaic in its views for my taste. Omega's need to be accompanied by beta's or alphas at all times when in public for fear of getting attacked. It felt like victim blaming and the last thing that I want to do when losing myself in a book is having the sexism that is present in real life also manifest itself in the story's world. It was nice to see that Ethan was fighting against that mold, but it wasn't present enough; (view spoiler)

Even with these frustrations, I loved Ethan and Antonio. They had stereotypical omega and alpha personalities and traits, which I love. Also, from the beginning, the story felt a lot like some Sterek fanfictions that I have read so far anyone who is into that particular fandom, *The Country Omega* is a book they should check out.

By the end I found myself rooting for them to get together and appreciated that when they finally do have sex, it makes sense to the story and isn't just gratuitous for the reader. There aren't pages upon pages of overdone sex, something I have started to get annoyed by in books.

Overall, I did like this book. It wasn't spectacular, but in a pinch, it's cute and quick and different enough to keep the reader satisfied.

Final notes:

- It is in third person, with alternating perspectives
- There is a moment towards the end where Ethan is attacked (in terms of this book, he is sexually assaulted)

Jennifer Lavoie says

I really loved the first half of this book, but I slowly lost interest towards the second half, only to have it regained again by the end. Overall it was very enjoyable. I will write a more coherent review later when I review the book. I forgot to add a review after reading it!

E.A.B. E.A.B. says

I was given this book in exchange for an honest review.

The Country Omega is set in an alternate earth universe where humans are separated by status, omega, beta, alpha. Ethan is an omega who goes to the city with the hopes of starting at the conservatory, and also to find a bonding mate. He meets Antonio, a saucy and sexy alpha, and they're swept up into each other immediately. However, the contract Antonio's father has drawn up is refused, and Ethan and his father head back to the small town Ethan is from. Except Ethan and Antonio can't stop thinking about each other. And eventually they both decide that it's all or nothing. Now Antonio and Ethan have to figure out a way to make sure they find their way back to one another.

This book started out extremely slow. I have to admit, part one DRAGGED, and it shouldn't have, since that was supposed to be the part where we saw the blossoming attraction and hunger. But Ethan's journey to the city was written in painstaking detail, and I just found myself asking why and who cares? A lot. Don't get me wrong, I appreciate that the author wanted to show us this world. But this wasn't fantasy. It was supernatural at best. There were trains, and cellphones, and cars, and nothing that I haven't seen before. So I don't need Ethan to go on and on about the concrete, and the leather seats on the train, and on and on and on. Sometimes a little goes a long way, especially when I'm trying to be immersed in this world. Despite that, I stuck with it and finally Ethan and Antonio met. I don't know why, but their chemistry, other than physically, just never really worked for me. I felt like they were both playing the part, rather than actually interested in each other. At least for Ethan that's how I felt. (Later it's revealed that there is a reason for this.) Anyway, there IS an undeniable physical attraction, and it became my quest to see it manifest as quickly as possible. Unfortunately that didn't happen. There is a lot of kissing. A lot of touching, but not a whole lot of fucking. This book was 344 pages and about 20 of that is fucking. This wouldn't have been an issue if this was a slow burn, but it wasn't. The whole story takes place in like a week.

Part one and part two really dragged. Omg it was so long winded. There was like 10 pages of Antonio

running. FFS. The author has a really long winded way of writing. So much repetition. So many italics. At least three on every page. Like she was trying to convince us that Ethan and Antonio really-really-really felt this way. It was as if she wanted the words themselves to give more feeling than what the story was actually portraying. If that makes any sense.

Part three is where the story picks up. This is where we go in a flash back kind of deal and we meet Mr. Clark. All I can say about this relationship is: CREEPY.

I'll admit, at first I liked it. There was an age difference, which I love, and Ethan's innocence about the whole thing was endearing. But fucking fuck, it got creepy really fast. The whole relationship was based around them "scenting" each other, an intimate act that revolved around rubbing each other's necks and noses etc. Except there's more to it, and I won't spoil it, but Mr. Clark was a creep. But at least something interesting happened, which is more than I can say for the Antonio/Ethan situation, so I wasn't complaining. So moving right along. Ethan decides he doesn't want Mr. Clark, but oh, will Antonio be able to get his dad to sign the contract? This is basically a really dull will he won't he plot. And since we knew it would all work out in the end it became hard to sit and focus for 344 pages of nothing else but these two guys kissing and rubbing each other, with some overcharged pheromones and public displays of aggression. There was no climax. They never faced off with Mr. Clark. No one's feathers were more than ruffled.

Overall, this was just "meh" for me. I didn't hate it. The writing wasn't bad, but at no point was I invested in the characters or the plot. Therefore, this gets 2.5 stars from me, rounded to a 2.

Reflection says

Hmmm. Alphas, betas and omegas? I thought I was getting a shifters book, but no.

Instead, all the instincts are there (the search for a mate, the stimuli of scents, bonding with bites and knotting, coming into heat or 'estrus'). Particularly clever, is the gender aspects, titles are non gender specific although traditional pronouns are maintained. Mothers can be male or female and mpreg is a viable option.

Ethan is an omega with ambition and independent ideas, however his status means that his options are limited. In many ways, it reminded me of the Stepford Wives. If he wants to finish his education at a musical conservatory he must be bonded and seek his mate's permission first.

Ethan meets Antonio a potential suitor but much stands in their way and time is running out.

Because the story is set in an omegaverse where everyone has two genders, the male/female gender and the Alpha,Beta,Omega gender (with the latter determining fairly strict social roles) in a world that is otherwise very like our own, there's plenty of food for thought...

Full guest here Boy Meets Boy Reviews

A complimentary copy of the book was provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Amy says

I really enjoyed this. I'm really wanting to know Ben and Robert's story, as well as Dimitrov's.

Susana says

3.5 to 4 stars

Neither Omega Ethan Downing nor Alpha Antonio Valdez wanted a mate. But one look at each other and they agree to the bond. Too bad their parents who seemed so eager on the union fall out about the contract. Can the infatuated men find a way to stay together?

The Country Omega depicts a society where omegas are protected and subdued to the Alphas. Their main goal is to be at home and look after their children. But Ethan is a very talented pianist and wants to continue studying, and become a soloist. In order to do so, he needs to be bonded to an alpha, otherwise he won't be allowed into the conservatory. Besides, there is Alan, his sort of ex, who is decided to claim him as his own, regardless the fact that Ethan is not interested in him any more. When Ethan meets Antonio, he feels immediately attracted, and finds a similar response in the Alpha. But Ethan's overprotective father is decided to have his son treated fairly, and he disagrees with Antonio's father on the contract. From that moment, Antonio begins a race against time to convince both their parents to sign the contract, but that's not the only danger for the lovers, because Ethan's ex is willing to do whatever to claim him.

Told from a bouncing point of view, we move from Ethan's to Antonio's minds, which gives us a great insight of both characters and how they view their love story. The narrative is smooth and the story engaging, as it steadily unfolds the mystery surrounding Alan and Ethan's relationship, thus keeping the reader intrigued. Both Antonio and Ethan are likeable, but so are the secondary characters which provide a really endearing background for the love story, both Ethan's loving parents and siblings in their chaotic home, and Antonio's moody family with their explosive Latino blood. It was really easy to get emotionally invested with both characters, and feel sad the story ends. I would love to find out about Ethan and Antonio's life together. I hope to get a glimpse at them in the next book of this series.

Entertaining.

MzBond says

1.5* rounded up to 2

One of the things I liked about this book was that the gender roles were somewhat non traditional. I can't be sure but it seems to be set in this current decade in some sort of AU Earth. It is not as I thought, a typical werewolf/shifter story. However, the characters are setup as such, i.e. Alphas, Betas, Omegas, etc. So, here is what I liked...

1. Titles were not gender specific. All Omegas that bore children were mothers, (though traditional pronouns were maintained).
2. All alphas appeared to be at the very least bisexual - though not specifically expressed, no one cared one way or the other if an omega was male or female because their biology allowed them to bare children no matter the gender.

That's kinda where it ended for me...

The AU description is some strange mesh that my mind could not seem to reconcile. In the beginning there was talk of traveling on a train and reference to it being a steam engine; so steampunk, right? Then it went underground to pull into what sounded like a modern day Grand Central Station. I guess the first talk of the steam engine stuck in my mind and I just felt confused by the world that world that Peters was trying to build. Most everything else seemed like a modern 21st century world, including reference to power ballads and Adele, **EXCEPT** for..duh duh duh duh... archaic marital contracts. This aspect just turned this book into a historical romance, with a confusing backdrop, where omegas are chattel (women), or at least treated as such. It must SUCK royally to be a female omega in this world.

All of this would have been just ok except for this! I removed a whole star because (view spoiler)

(hide spoiler)]

Really? No decent mother would say something like that, and no decent person would sit by and watch it happen to another **CHILD** That seriously made me look at his mother like, WTF IS WRONG WITH YOU? Just one more example of this confusing and frustrating landscape. I mean, are we in 2016 or pre-1950s? This blasé approach to such a sensitive subject, was disturbing. There were other things I had a problem with, that I could mention but they all circle back to the same spot.

Not as problematic but definitely just as annoying, were the strange smell combinations that were supposed to describe some sort of heady, arousing pheromones, e.g. sour taffy (huh?), yeasty (gross).

And then this particular analogy left me needing a Benadryl, or Calamine lotion...

"...it was exactly like that moment of exquisite relief when Ethan scratched at a bug bite on his leg, pleasure and relief and ache all mixed together, and the intense desire to just keep scratching, even knowing he'd draw blood eventually." Uh uh, not sexy to constantly equate arousal with itching. I think there is medication for that.

I have my reasons why I avoid these kinds of stories. I should listen to myself more often.

Sharon says

The Country Omega is the first book in a three-part series set in the “Omegaverse”. It is a non-shifter, paranormal world in which mpreg is a possibility. A free copy of this book was given to me by the author in exchange for an honest review.

I opted to read and review this book because I was intrigued by the concept of a non-shifter world with the hierarchy and rules of shifters. I finished reading the book because I found myself in a constant flux as to whether the ending would be what I was hoping for the main characters.

Ethan is an Omega who lives in a suburban town where Omegas are free to go from place to place unescorted and without fear. Antoine, an Alpha, lives in the city and no Omega goes anywhere unescorted unless he or she is traveling in a group. Neither of these young men desire bonding as they each have career and life aspirations which are priority. Both have social obligations to conform to the social rules governing their stations in life. They are brought together as the perfect bond by their negotiating fathers. Then everyone changes their mind. Ethan and Antoine cannot wait to start their new life as a couple. The fathers, unable to reach a contractual agreement, refuse to compromise and terminate the decision to bond.

This is a well written story with a fully developed plot which gives you the detailed personal and social makeup of each main character. There is a lot of detail but nothing is extraneous. The supporting back stories enhance and provide support so there are no lost moments for the reader as Antoine and Ethan’s story unfolds and races to its dramatic ending.

There is a negative side to the way this book is written, however. In the instance where the Omega is male, he is called mother when he becomes a parent. I found it distasteful to feminize a male character and thought perhaps the author could take some cues from the shifter world where mpreg is possible. I was halfway through the book before I realized the “mothers” in this story were men. By contrast, there were female Alpha characters in this story and no one addressed them with masculine titles. Further, the abusive behavior of one of the Alphas in this universe had no consequence and that is so contrary to the paranormal (shifter) hierarchy of things.

Overall however, I did enjoy the book and I must admit, I was pleasantly surprised to the extent I fully intend to read the remainder of the series.

S says

I read an advance copy of The Country Omega, by Penelope Peters and found it to be a comfortable, very enjoyable romance.

Set in an alternative universe where the genders are not just male and female, but also separated into dominant alphas, neutral betas, and submissive omegas, the main character, Ethan Downing, is a talented pianist who is not planning on giving up his dreams of attending the music conservatory, or of performing in public. Unfortunately for Ethan, he is an omega. This means that he is legally and culturally unable to continue school unless he is bonded to an alpha. In the city omegas are not able to go out in public at all unless they are accompanied by a beta or alpha to protect them.

Antonio Valdez is an alpha, only child to a wealthy family, whose father wants an heir. Antonio is reluctant to tie himself down to an uninteresting family life. When he meets Ethan, he discovers perhaps the only (to him) interesting omega, and certainly the only one with whom he wishes to bond.

Ethan, of course, has a secret, and the conservatory is not the only reason why he needs to bond. But is Antonio right for him? Or is Ethan using Antonio to escape to the life he has always dreamed of? Is Antonio falling for Ethan as a person? Or is it biology taking center stage?

The characters are interesting and believable, if a touch standard for a romance. You will not find the "forced against their will into a rape fantasy" trope in this story, although there are explicit sex scenes. This is not a book for teen or young readers.

Because it is set in an Omegaverse AU, some items - males bearing children, for example, might be confusing at times, although I think the author does add those very well, giving explanations where necessary. Both leads are thoughtful characters, and well planned out, flaws and all. Supporting characters are also interesting, and leave the reader wanting to know their stories. The world building and description draw the reader further into the story. They create a wonderful, engaging texture, encouraging the reader to root for the young lovers to not only bond, but also for them to work toward everything they want in life.

I encourage anyone who enjoys a good romance to read *The Country Omega*.
