



Fire and Ice

Mary Connealy

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Saddle up for mysteries and laughs with the Wilde sisters!

BAILEY WILDE IS THE OLDEST SISTER—and the one who takes care of everyone else in her family. But after her sisters marry and move away, her little homestead becomes bleak and lonely, especially during the long winter months. In a moment of weakness, Bailey agrees to a wild plan concocted by her neighbor, Gage Coulter.

Gage is an honest man, but he didn't make his fortune by being weak. He won't break the law, but he'll push as hard as he can within it. Five thousand acres of excellent grazing land is lost to him because Bailey's homestead is located right across the entrance to a canyon full of lush grass. Gage has to regain access to this land—and he's got to go through Bailey to do it. So he makes a proposal...

Can these two independent, life-toughened homesteaders finally loosen up enough to earn each other's respect—and maybe find love in the process?

Fire and Ice Details

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From Reader Review Fire and Ice for online ebook

Laura says

I read FIRE AND ICE through in one sitting (I was doing a lot of "hurry up and waiting" at the time) and found it hard to put this book down when I had to move from point A to point B... etc for my waiting. I didn't think I would like Bailey much from the other two books in the series (Now and Forever and Tried and True) because she was very much a manly woman. However, Bailey does have a feminine side and we got to see it as well as get to know her and Gage during this hair-raising historical romance. Someone is trying to kill Gage -- but who? And why? I greatly enjoyed this book and look forward to whatever is next in Ms. Connealy's writing career. Highly recommended.

Aerykah says

I actually finished this one back in May and only just now realized that I had never marked it finished or written a review... :/

It's not fresh in my mind anymore so I can't really do a thorough review like I had intended. I had a really hard time getting into and enjoying this story. It was pretty good, but not as good as the previous books in the series. I liked it okay, but I didn't love it.

Joan says

The Wild at Heart series comes to an end with this fun western romance.

This novel centers on Bailey, the only one of the Wilde sisters not yet married. Bailey is doing just fine on her ranch until Gage decides he wants to run his cattle in the canyon he owns but her ranch blocks access to. When she forbids him to cross her property, he literally blasts another path into the canyon.

The adversarial relationship between Bailey and Gage takes a sharp turn when he comes to her in the spring – needing a wife. His ma is coming and he had written her last fall that he was married and doing just fine. He never thought his mother would actually come to visit. Gage desperately assures her the marriage would be in name only. Bailey strikes a hard bargain but, tired and lonely after a hard winter, agrees.

The situation becomes potentially deadly when it is clear someone is trying to kill Gage. And Bailey is fit to be tied with Gage's ma being very jealous of the attention he shows his wife. Perhaps this “marriage” is over before it really got started.

Talk about an overbearing mother, Gage's ma takes the prize. And Gage, being a man, just does not see what it is doing to Bailey. And Bailey, being the independent woman she's been for years, has a hard time being controlled by someone else. It's a recipe for relationship disaster which can only be surmounted if love breaks through.

Bailey fought in the Civil War (you have to read the previous novels in this series). She saw some pretty

horrible things and took part in an act that haunts her even now. That results in a good lesson about God's forgiveness. Bailey is a strong female heroine I enjoyed.

This series has also contained a good lesson in parenting. The Wilde sisters' father is not a man whose example any should follow. It is amazing the women turned out as they did with such a terrible father.

This novel contains well drawn characters, frontier intrigue, a little romance, and a little humor. It was a pleasure to read.

I received a complimentary galley of this book from the publisher for the purpose of an independent and honest review.

Heidi Robbins (Heidi Reads...) says

The author's trademark humor and action are in full play in this novel, but what stood out to me was the layers and depth of Bailey's character. I've been looking forward to her story since in the previous two books she seemed like the toughest and hardest of the three Wilde sisters. Her father encouraged her to go to war dressed as a man, and the experiences she had not only strengthened her, but gave her vulnerabilities she struggles to overcome. We see both sides of her personality as her ranch is threatened and she endures a harsh lonely winter. Gage is also a contrast of strength and vulnerability and once they let their guard down, the two connect in ways that help heal their trauma from the past. I enjoyed reading the conflict Gage's mother brings into the mix with several chuckles, and was glad that the sisters' dysfunctional relationship with their father was finally put to rest. This book reads well as a stand alone but I recommend you read the whole Wild at Heart series for full enjoyment- they are all 5 stars in my book!

(Thank you to Bethany House Publishing for a copy of the book in exchange for my honest review)

Katrina Epperson says

Wow!!!

Mary Connealy takes us back to 1866 in the Dakota/Idaho Territories for the conclusion of the Wild at Heart series. A wonderful way to end a series with the oldest Wilde daughter, Bailey. She lost her mother at an early age and has been raised by her father. To say Cudgels Wilde is a hard man would be an understatement. He raised his daughters with the same expectations as his son, Jimmy. Bailey being the oldest had tried to take care of everything. Cudgels pushed all three daughters to join the fight during the Civil War when his son Jimmy was killed and now he's taken them out west to start a dynasty in Jimmy's honor.

Upon arriving each picked an area to homestead, Bailey picked one high in the mountains that butted up against a canyon with a beautiful valley. Of course someone had already claimed the valley, but Bailey situated her cabin at the mouth so the only way to reach it was through her land and she wasn't giving anyone permission. She would have use of the valley and be able to amass her herd with ease.

Of course there's always a glitch in everything. And Bailey's glitch comes in the form of a tough ranch

owner, Gage Coulter, who just happens to own the canyon. Gage sees Bailey as a worthy adversary, but plans to use the valley to winter his cattle one way or other. Bailey has come up against hard men in the past, shoot she even lived with one, so she feels she can handle anything he throws at her.

I truly liked both these characters. Both are highly independent with their own stubborn flaws, but when things become even more complicated than they ever imagined Bailey and Gage form a bond that's unbreakable. This story is one of Bailey actually finding her true self and learning that there's more to herself than she ever imagined. She has seen the worst side of man and expects it, but finds out that sometimes things aren't always as they appear. Gage is a complex character and has some real issues, but through it all he proves what an honorable man he truly is.

The one going theme of this story is one of trust. Trusting the Lord to see you through both the mountains and the valleys of life and learning to praise him through both. Trusting that if you lean on God he will lead you on the path you should go. Of course with trust also comes forgiveness. You must learn to let the past go and move on with the future.

This story has intrigue, suspense and romance interwoven with humor.

I would recommend it to anyone who loves history, romance or just a good, clean read.

**I was provided this book by the publisher for a honest opinion without bias or outside influence as stated above. **

Dawn says

Bailey Wilde is the oldest sister. She's the one who served in the war the longest and as a result has the fewest number of years to work off her homestead. She's built her house across the entrance to a canyon that is prime grazing land. The problem is that Gage Coulter owns the canyon. And she's cut off his only access to his land. That makes him mad. Over the past few months, the two have butted heads. Gage still doesn't know she's a woman, though the secret's out about both sisters. When he does find out, he's madder than ever. Both of these two don't speak for months due to the harsh winter. For Bailey, the long winter is longer than ever and she's the loneliest she's ever been with both sisters married and moved away. When the first thaws of spring arrive, the melting snow brings Gage to her doorstep. He's desperate. Sure he wants the land, but he really needs a wife and thinks Bailey would be perfect. In a moment of desperation, she agrees to his proposal. But these newlyweds soon discover that things aren't going to be all roses. Someone still is set on harming Bailey, and Gage realizes he will do anything to protect the woman he's coming to love. Can these two strong people manage to catch the culprit and fall in love in the process?

This book was a delight to read. I certainly recommend reading this series in order as there are hints of Gage and Bailey throughout. Their story though, was positively delightful.

The chemistry between the two is very strong. I loved how determined Gage was to get to his land. And Bailey was equally determined not to let him. Well at least to an extent. And when they did finally get married, I loved how understanding Gage was of Bailey's fears.

I really think that this book was the best in the series and my personal favorite of the series.

I received this book for free from Bethany House Publishers for the purpose of reviewing. My thoughts and opinions are my own.

Recommended to fans of Mary Connealy, Karen Witemeyer, romantic comedy, historical fiction

Rating - 4 stars

Susan Snodgrass says

Mary Connealy concludes her Wild at Heart series with Fire and Ice.

Bailey Wilde is the last Wilde sister who still lives as a man. She's perfectly content living that way, too. She doesn't need any help from anyone, and especially Gage Coulter. But Gage needs grazing land that he can only access from Bailey's property. Bailey has no desire to help Gage, so he makes a proposal.....

Mary Connealy has been a favorite of mine since I first read one of her books. She writes hilarious Cowboy Comedies with a good dose of spirituality thrown in.

Mayhem abounds in Fire and Ice, too. Somebody's out to get Gage Coulter and it doesn't matter if someone else goes down with him. Then you throw in an unexpected and mostly unwanted guest who drives everyone nuts and you have a book that you will most assuredly enjoy to the fullest!

Faith says

Alright, so I broke down and read a full-length Mary Connealy novel.

And it was really funny.

"Fire and Ice" is almost pure comedy, with a note of complex family relationship and some troubles that need to be overcome by hope.

The early interactions between Gage and Bailey had me snorting with laughter. First they do this whole "You're stealing my land/No you're stealing MY land" routine- complete with gunfire and dynamite- and then they settle into a truce. They'll work together on this one certain problem, but they won't promise to be happy about it.

From there, we see them getting rather attached to each other. They're stubborn mules, both of 'em. They deserve each other. And they're gonna need each other, because ranch life isn't simple. There's danger and deception and hysterical in-laws. And of course, there's cows in need of fresh grazing and mares having a hard time foaling.

Read this book if you want a Wild West comedy, the sort that would make a great film.

Thank you Bethany House Publishers for providing me with a copy in exchange for a review.

Karen R says

Great ending to this fun series! Loved the spunky heroine and tough-on-the-outside-marshmallow-soft-inside hero. Throw in a bunch of bad guys, one borderline personality mother, a herd of cows, plus a few rounds of dynamite, and boom! Glad that poor gal finally had something nice happen in her life after all the horror she faced from the war and her pa. Recommend for fans of western themed Christian fiction!

June Jacobs says

MY BOOK REVIEW: FOUR STARS * * * * "I really liked it!"

This is Book Three in the 'Wild at Heart' series set in Colorado beginning in October, 1866. The Civil War has left its scars, figuratively and literally, on the lives of many Americans--including the characters in this story.

I did not read the first two books in the series before reading this installment. The author did a fine job of getting me 'caught up' on the setting and cast of characters within the first two chapters, so I was immersed in this story quickly.

Oh, my goodness how I laughed while reading this book! The main characters, Bailey Wilde and Gage Coulter, are hilarious together. Their interactions start off being filled with angst and misunderstanding. For one thing, Bailey has attempted to pass herself off as a man. When Gage realizes she is a woman, everything changes from his point of view!

The surrounding cast of characters are likeable (except for some bad guys), and the relationship between Bailey and her sisters Shannon and Kylie is close. When Gage's mother arrives on the scene the dynamics of Bailey and Gage's relationship takes an interesting and distinct turn.

As the story progresses, Gage and Bailey get to know each other on a deeper level until they each finally reveal past wounds and burdens which have affected their relationships with each other and other people. The two learn to respect and trust each other. I won't spoil the story for you by telling too much, just trust me when I say this couple's journey will delight you.

This author has a way of getting to the heart of difficult issues, always giving her readers some humorous dialogue or event to chuckle about in the process. She's obviously done her research in regard to the historical aspects of the lasting effects of the Civil War, the settlement of Colorado, ranching, frontier living, etc., and this authenticity enriched my enjoyment of the book.

I highly recommend this book to fans of historical romance, historical fiction, clean fiction, and Western fiction. I will now be adding more of Mary Connealy's books on my TBR list.

I received a complimentary paperback copy of this book from Bethany House Publishers in exchange for an honest review of this book. The opinions expressed here are solely my own. I was not compensated for posting this review here or on any other sites.

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Carrie Schmidt (Reading is My SuperPower) says

This book had some fun moments too – I don't think it's possible to have a Mary Connealy book without some laughter :) Probably my favorite scenes involve Gage's reactions to his mother – both the idea of her pending arrival and the reality of it. Again, as in *Now & Forever*, these bits of the novel were made all the more hilarious because the narrator is inside the characters' heads.

You would expect a book with a title like *Fire & Ice* to have some romantic heat in it. You would not be wrong in this case. Gage and Bailey's ... banter?... I'm not sure that's the correct word for their early "courtship" as Gage calls it in later chapters but you can definitely sense some sizzle behind the irritation. And when Gage discovers an injury that Bailey has suffered, he morphs into ultra-protective mode and ... well, suffice it to say you may need a fan :)

Bottom Line: Besides the humor and heat, there's a lot of suspense, some agonizing turns of events, and overwhelming tenderness. While each of the three books in the series can be read as a stand-alone, they are better appreciated together. I highly recommend the *Wild at Heart* series to fans of Karen Witemeyer, Regina Jennings, or Melissa Jagears.

(I received a copy of this book in exchange for only my honest review.)

Sarah says

I finished this book with a big smile on my face, sighing with happiness. That should tell you that this is going to be another gushing review, because . . . I loved it! I freely admit that I am a huge fan of Ms. Connealy's, so this review may lean a bit toward bias, though I always try to give a thoroughly honest review. That being said, I did honestly love this book!

This book is the last in Mary Connealy's *Wild at Heart* series and is Bailey's book. I've been anticipating this one since reading the first, so I was super excited to receive it. It grabbed my attention from the very first page and I read quickly, finishing it within a day. I love that Mary's books always make me laugh and this one is no exception. I found myself in stitches more than once and just randomly grinning, probably causing a few people to question my sanity. She's doing something a bit different with this series, though. These books are a bit more serious and cut a little bit closer to the heart. I honestly adore this, because while I enjoy the fluff and laughter, if a book touches my heart, that's one I'm going to remember. Now, before I make it sound like a drag, it definitely isn't. I was kept on the edge of my seat for most of the story, wondering what might happen next and how everything would work out.

Mary's writing is, per usual, excellent. I love the details and descriptions, but also simply her writing style. It's unique in a way I can't really define, but that I know I enjoy. The dialogue is also a blast, both the verbal and internal. I love knowing her characters' thoughts, because they so crack me up with their bluntness and just the fact that they're thinking what most people would never say but definitely never admit. She paints lovely (and hysterical) pictures with her words, to the point that I could almost imagine I was right there with Bailey and Gage. I love being so thoroughly swept into a story and Mary's books do that.

I hate to play favorites, but I think Bailey Wilde has been my favorite sister from the start. She's the mysterious one that plays at being a man and is willing to fight toe-to-toe with anyone who would dare threaten her sisters. Even if I didn't love her before this book, I do now. I enjoyed getting to really know her

and see another side of her character. She comes to life within pages of her story. She isn't quite as tough as she's led everyone to believe, but she is fierce and a force to be reckoned with. Beyond that though, is a hurting woman who has faced war and lived to tell about it. One of my favorite parts of her story is when we finally get to know what haunts her and understand who she truly is behind her mask.

Gage Coulter . . . I'm not sure what to say about him. Stubborn fills in a lot of gaps. Thickheaded. Tenacious. But on the flip side, once you get past his cranky exterior he is very caring toward Bailey and her family. Even when they're driving him batty (though that was often mutual). Gage is one of those heroes that I loved, but also wanted to slap at the same time. So I sympathized with Bailey quite easily. Beyond his annoying qualities, he is actually quite likable and I had to laugh and agree with many of his observations. I also enjoyed the bit of mystery that's woven throughout, keeping me guessing as to what might happen next. It's actually downplayed a bit from the previous books, but with everything else going on, I understood that it didn't exactly take precedence. The ending was well done, with all of the loose ends neatly tied up. I was disappointed to see it come to an end, simply because I didn't want to say "goodbye." There's something bittersweet about reading the final book in a series and realizing that my time with these particular characters is coming to a close. That being said, I'm also very excited to find out what Mary has up her sleeve, next!

I received a complimentary copy of this book from the publisher for my honest review, which I have given. I was not required to write a positive review and have not been compensated for it in anyway. All opinions expressed are my own.

Cheryl Baranski says

Fire & Ice, By: Mary Connealy

Fire & Ice is book three in the Wild at Heart series by Mary Connealy. This is the best book yet in the series. I couldn't put the book down I was so captivated by this delightful story. The story of two very headstrong people. Both determined to have their own way. This story is filled with so much love, heartache, pain, laughter and tears. There is never a dull moment in this wonderful story. The story flows so smoothly from one scene to the next. These are characters that will surely capture your heart. If you haven't read the first two books in this series be sure to pick those up.

Be sure to order your copy of Fire & Ice by Mary Connealy today. 5 stars!

Amanda says

I guessed who the author was setting up to be the villain in this story, and at first I didn't think it was going to sit well with me. But the way it played out as increasing desperation rather than cold-heartedness was thoroughly convincing. The love story, that was believable, too. I enjoyed that the relationship between Baily and Gage started as contentious yet mostly respectful. I felt as though they both spent the first part of the book thinking, "I am so mad at him/her for doing that and more mad that I probably would have done the same thing."

The only reason I didn't rate this five stars was the fire and ice thing. It seemed that every single time Gage was mentioned, the author commented on his cold stare or his icy gaze or his frigid expression or the cool steel color of his eyes or... I get it! He's ice, she's fire. I get it. I think that horse died in the first few

chapters, but the author kept beating it until the very last paragraph.

Thankfully, there was enough humor and action and generally fun characters to overshadow that overdone theme. I'm still a fan and still planning to read more from Mary Connealy when I get a chance.

Anna Hurtt says

I read the first two books of the "Wild at Heart" series and I've been dying to see how Bailey Wilde, the rough and tumble tomboy of the family, and Gage Coulter, the rugged cattle baron are going to end up together. All I can say is I was in for a wild ride!

I loved the chemistry between Bailey and Gage. They are both such passionate characters that the sparks just fly between them. I found their slow journey from enemies to friends to husband and wife to be completely captivating and well-paced. I also loved the "marriage of convenience" twist and couldn't wait for the love simmering under the surface to bloom into something beautiful and strong.

The couple deals with many obstacles in the path to happiness, including deadly storms, an over-bearing mother in law, and death traps set by an unseen and unknown enemy. This book is full of action and adventure, making it hard to put down to go back to real life sometimes.

There are some hilarious moments sprinkled throughout the book. One of my favorite lines is from page 162: "Hang on tight, Mrs. Coulter. We've got to make a run for it." Bailey slapped the old nag on the rear - the old nag meaning the horse, not Ma Coulter, although Bailey was sore tempted."

However, there were also some deep, intensely emotional moments. Some of the exchanges between Gage and Bailey run really deep, opening up feelings that neither of them had ever shared with anyone else. Bailey and her sisters share a beautiful, loving connection, too. Without giving away the ending, there is a moment between Bailey and her father that brought tears to my eyes.

All in all, this is an excellent conclusion to the "Wild at Heart" series and I cannot wait to see what Mary has for us next. 5 stars!

Disclosure: I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review, which I have given.
