


## **Jenna's Cowboy**

*Sharon Gillenwater*

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**Can you ever get a second chance at your first love?**

Jenna Callahan Colby thought she was content. A partner on her father's successful ranch, she is surrounded by family and friends. But she never expected to see Nate Langley back in town—the first guy she ever noticed, the one her father sent away all those years ago.

And she never thought the attraction they felt would be as strong as ever.

Jenna's cowboy has some healing of his own to do, though, after two tours of duty in the armed forces. With the help of good friends, strong faith, and a loving family, he hopes to put the horrors of the past behind him—and become the man Jenna deserves.

## Jenna's Cowboy Details

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Author : Sharon Gillenwater

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## **From Reader Review Jenna's Cowboy for online ebook**

### **Babs says**

Jenna and her young son live on her parents ranch. After a bad divorce she needed to come home and regroup. She is now a partner running her father's ranch along with her brothers.

Nate Langley comes back home after 2 tours over in Iraq. He wasn't expecting to see Jenna so soon after coming home for good. He and Jenna were old friends from high school and at one time cared for each other. Of course Jenna would never have known how he felt then as he kept to himself.

The two meet up and the romance is still there after the years have gone by. They go out on a date to the homecoming football game. Nate had a flashback from a car backfiring and threw Jenna to the ground hurting her. With the help from Jenna, her family, Nate's parents and the preacher he starts to heal and the dream are there but not as frequent. If he can learn to deal with his dream and his PTSD they might have a future together unless the secret comes out from her father.

I enjoyed this read not just for the romance, but a great tribute to our armed forces. We get to go inside Nate's thoughts and see what he went through while in Iraq a glimpse of what was and is going on there. How hard it is on them and the families they come home to. Everyone pays the price, but things can work out in the end if you just have some faith.

The author did a wonderful job with the setting and the characters. It was nice to see Nate work on his fears throughout the story and Jenna realizing they can help t is not all a lost cause. A heart warming story.

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### **Aubrey Hansen says**

I didn't finish this novel, so I'm not giving it a star rating, but I wanted to review it and explain why I didn't finish reading it.

Why? Because there was no plot.

I'll confess that I usually don't read romance novels. Actually, I think this is my first legit one. So clearly I'm not the target audience for this book, and my perception is biased accordingly. But what turned me off from this book wasn't the romance--it was the fact that there wasn't anything else besides the romance.

3 chapters in and the sum of the plot is: Boy reunites with Girl, and Boy struggles with getting past her father and asking Girl out. There's some very light character drama, but besides that, there's no plot. No stakes. No complications. The only tension is the fact that both Boy and Girl are a little unsure of themselves. As I said, I'm not a romance reader, so maybe this is typical for romance novels. But for me, I need more plot, more tension, more drama. A love story isn't appealing to me simply because it's a romance, but because of the situation. To me, a love story should be used to add depth to a plot--or, if the romance is the focus, it needs plot and situational complications to make it engaging. Just watching Boy and Girl hesitate over going out isn't enough to keep my interest.

I really wanted to like this book, mostly because the cover is a work of art. But the lack of interest combined

with a very "on the nose" (info dump) writing style makes me wonder if my time would be better spent elsewhere. If I'm going to read a romance novel just to experience it, it should be one I at least find interesting.

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## **Mollie \*scoutrmom\* says**

First of all, I must reveal that I won this book in a drawing from Goodreads. I began reading it with the intention of not letting that fact influence me one way or the other, and I believe I was successful.

I have never before read any fiction with such a blatant Christian slant. It was disconcerting and distracting that so much praise and prayer were inserted into the characters' thoughts and dialogue. At times it seemed as if an editor had instructed the author to go back and add more. Many times the praise or prayer interfered with the flow of the story. At this point, I must explain that I am Jewish, but I read the book with a determination that I would not let this influence my opinion. I am certain that my opinion reflects that of any American who might read this.

I really enjoyed the protagonists, they seemed well-drawn and their challenges seemed much like those of real people. Many of the secondary characters were little more than cardboard cut-outs; except for the heroine's family, most seemed like a collection of cliches. Gillenwater needs to work a little on making these other characters come alive for us as the protagonists do. This book would also have benefitted from the inclusion of some characters whose character was not so sterling. Other than a selfish ex who does not appear, there are none to leaven the mix.

One thing that did not seem realistic to me was the use of so much explicit verbal Praise of the Lord in the dialogue, not just an occasional expression of gratitude but truly overkill. I am close to many devout Christians who are never heard talking like that. The overuse served to make some of the characters seem insincere when I can tell that this was not the author's intent.

Another thing that grated on me was the author's depiction of the hero's struggle with PTSD. During the major episode, where he is taking a 22 out of his truck's glove box so that he will not grab it during a flashback, he seems to be ruling out suicide in a dialogue with the Lord and Satan. In real life, people who are struggling with trouble seldom use such internal imagery. One can acknowledge the influence of the Lord without such melodramatic language as Gillenwater used. This is one of many scenes in which such references detracted from the flow of the story.

Something else that did not seem realistic to me was that the families involved in this book seem affluent, though they make their living through agriculture. (All I truly know about this I learned from other fictional accounts.) The author has the characters revealing worries about the uncertainty of the industry on one hand, while appearing to spend indiscriminately on the other. I am comfortably well off, and have some friends with wealth, but I don't know anyone who could feel comfortable just walking into a jewelry store and putting an engagement ring on their debit card like the hero did.

The plot was excellent, and the pacing of the events as they unfolded was very good. The depiction of the disaster that hit the community, and its aftermath, was the best part of the book. This author, with a little guidance, may have the talent it would take to become a writer as successful as Debbie Macomber, whose fiction features realistic characters with a lot of moral fiber without being preachy.

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## **Meredith says**

This book was so sweet...and innocent, and pretty well written too. I read this book because I just got a Kindle, and I could download it for free. I could have easily just read the first few pages and left it, but instead I read it all while on two long plane rides. So, while it might not earn any mainstream critical acclaim, I enjoyed it. I'd also read other books in the series.

This novel is set in Texas, and that was part of the appeal for me (having grown up in Texas). There was a whole chapter about the homecoming mum tradition, which I think anyone not from Texas would find totally bizarre. I am from Texas and I still find it bizarre, but it was still enjoyable to read about and say, "Oh yeah. That's really what it's like, crazy as it may seem." I actually got teary a couple different times while reading this because the male lead (Jenna's Cowboy) is a war veteran and dealing with the aftermath of PTSD. It's rough stuff, and the author did a really good job researching what that this disorder is all about.

I believe this book is classified as Christian Women's fiction. As a genre, I think it's getting bigger and stronger, and I look forward to reading more of it. These certainly aren't religious books, but there isn't anything illicit in the story (maybe one minor swear word in the whole thing; no sex; little/no drinking; etc.). I figure there's enough trash in my life, so I could stand some wholesome reading.

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## **Kit says**

I wasn't sure what to expect when I started reading this book. I assumed it was a romance. What I have to comment about this book is that it hit really hard at home for me. Nate was a Iraqi war veteran. He served two tours; one in Iraq and the other in Afganistan. He suffers from PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder). It goes into the struggles he faces every day from: nightmares, to jumping at every little sound and shadow, panic attacks, fear of fire, loss in memory, short temper and anger issues, cars parked off the side of the road, flashbacks, being in big crowds, driving in a lot of traffic, and just down right not sleeping and such. My husband served two tours in Iraq and deals with PTSD. I never fully understood why he behaved the way he did. Which he dealt with and sometimes still deals with: nightmares, jumps at every little sound, he can't be in crowded areas, or drive during times when a lot of traffic is out, panic attacks, loss of memory, temper and anger issues, and flashbacks.

After reading about Nate's experiences while in Iraq and Afganistan and how it was causing these issues to pop up; really shed some light on why my husband suffers the way he does.

For example: being in a crowded place, they are constantly checking every single person out to see if there is any one in the crowd that might be a suicide bomber or if any one might have a gun on them. All because that is how they were trained to handle those scenarios while on duty. It was a matter of life and death. I really enjoyed this book and I am grateful to be able to relate to it and that it opened my eyes to things I probably never would have understood if not through a book. Very cute story!

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## **Kellie Maddox-Ward says**

I should have realized this book was not for me waayyyy before I did.

What kind of Cowboy doesn't drink beer, talk sh\*t and mess around? A Christian cowboy that's who.

I didn't mind so much when I found out this was a Christian romance( note to self research books first, but it was free on amazon) I really wouldn't of minded if the praying and praising wasn't what made majority of the storyline!

I liked the idea of this story, a reunited love. Jenna a divorcee and Nate a war hero with PTSD, and their courtship upon his return and his battle with PTSD and the help he got along the way.

Don't get me wrong as a catholic I believe in God but I just find it hard to believe that people talk about him as much as they did in this story, I found at times I was skimming whole pages as they quoted the bible and praised him.

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### **Ursula Gorman says**

Jenna's Cowboy...is FANTASTIC!!! This is one of the best books I've read in a long time! It is heartwarming, touching, moving, sweet and tender!

Jenna is going through a trial; trying to adjust as a single mom after divorcing her cheating husband. She has built a wall around her heart.

Nate is goign through his own trial; trying to adjust to life after the military. He's afraid to get too close to anyone, afraid he'll hurt them during the flashbacks he has from his time in the military.

Both of them have returned to the home of thier childhood to heal and begin again. Jenna on her father's ranch, Nate just trying to get by and help his folks out.

Jenna and Nate had both liked each other in high school, but neither let the other one know it! Nate knew he could never say anything to her when Jenna's dad, Dub, told him he wasn't good enough for his little girl.

But now, after years of growth, mistakes and healing, they have found each other. It will take Nate's love to break through Jenna's defenses and will take all of Nate's friends, family, Jenna's love and God's grace to get past his PTSD and to be able to live again.

Wonderfully moving and touching story! Touches lightly on what our soldiers deal with when they return home and how God and good friends and family can help them come back from the horrors of war. It portrays some of the struggles, but doesn't delve too deeply into it.

This is a wonderful story of grace, love and forgiveness...beautifully written! I'll watch for more of this series! Hopefully we'll get to read about Chance and Will, Jenna's brothers!

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### **Sarita says**

Not your everyday cowboy story.

For the first 40% of the book I enjoyed the story and was glad that Jenna and Nate's Love story actually started in high school and not one of thoaat fast-see the person-fall in love-misunderstanding-reconciliation-happy-ending-love-story. I enjoyed the story but didn't have that can't-put-the-book-down feeling. It took me some time to get used to the Cowboy/Texas talk and phrases like: eating crow and squeezing the stuffing out of me.

That changed for the last 40% of the book where I needed to see what happens, mainly due to Nate's story.

Chapter 17 and 18 was filled with emotions. My heart broke for Nate and my admiration for Jenna tripled because of the way she handled certain events. Dub (who I first not liked) also stepped up to be the support Nate needed. PTSD is something I never really considered and this book opened my eyes to what vets and current soldiers are dealing with. I think we see them as this strong heroes and don't realise they can also be broken, which was also perfectly demonstrated through Nate who at first didn't want to get help.

Some key messages that came through for me in this book was: loving with acceptance, to be careful that pride does not determine your actions and to accept when you need help and acknowledging that you can only be completely healed by God

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### **Pamela(AllHoney) says**

The first book in *The Callahans of Texas* series by Sharon Gillenwater. Nate Langley returns to town after serving in the army over in the middle east. He gets a job working at Jenna Callahan Colby's family ranch. Nate has to deal with PTSD and Jenna has her own issues with her divorce and being a single mom.

This was a kindle freebie and it started slow for me but it turned out alright.

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### **Candace says**

Pretty good. There are a lot of references to Christianity/spirituality, etc. While I realize it is a Christian romance novel there seemed to be an almost excessive amount of Christian references. While I appreciate that the characters relied on God and their faith to see them through hard times, occasionally it seemed a bit unrealistic.

This book almost made it seem like it was easy to trust God in tough times and easy to pray through worries and they would just go away. I tend to prefer characters that are more realistic and don't just have quick fixes to their problems.

Another aspect of the book I thought was a bit unrealistic was the romantic relationship between Jenna and Nate. While I appreciate that this is a Christian romance, there didn't really seem to be very many romantic scenes. I think it's important to show that a man and woman be in love and choose not to have sex, I think it's unrealistic to not address the issue, even in a Christian book. I think it would be a much better example for readers (especially younger readers) to address the issue of sex and discuss that because of the couple's biblical beliefs they have set certain boundaries in their relationship. Just to hear that Jenna & Nate cuddled on the couch after Zach went to sleep and then Nate went home every night for months just doesn't seem very realistic for a couple who are 28 and 29 years old.

I think Christian authors have a responsibility to show that Christian relationships can be just as real and have chemistry and passion, but make a choice to put up some boundaries. This book just makes it seem like those issues never came up for Jenna & Nate, therefore making it feel a bit unrealistic to me.

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## **Lynne Stringer says**

I considered giving this book only two stars, but the ending just scraped it into three. It took forever to get going, and even when it did get going, there didn't seem to be a great deal happening. A lot of time was spent detailing life on a ranch and how to pick cotton, and while I don't have a problem with some of this, as it sets the scene and provides atmosphere, I felt it was overdone.

Also, while the subject of PTSD is an important one and worthy of attention, I felt the issues concerned were not focussed on enough and were resolved too quickly. Generally, this book was a nice, lightweight read that should have been heavier considering its subject matter, but it didn't seem to cut too far beneath the surface.

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## **Sara Cardon says**

Ms. Gillenwater nails West Texas in this contemporary romance. I'm so impressed with her ability to take me back to my roots and all the "good old boys" way of talking. Plus the environment from home decor to business to schools and community. Nicely done. And not overdone. The book starts from Nate's perspective and he has a strong, distinctive written voice. There is a LOT of Christian talk, but it reads authentic to me, since many 3rd generation+ Texans think and talk like that. A sweet, old fashioned style romance, jobs ranching and cotton farming, plus hometown football all made for a fun read. It brought out my dormant Texas twang.

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## **Jennifer says**

4.5 stars

What happens when you leave your kindle at home on a beach trip? You get the book your sister just finished.

Very sweet love story with God at the center, so you know this is G rated.

Jenna and Nate had been friends in high school, but Nate was too afraid to ask her out (plus her Dad scared him away). Nate comes back years later after being wounded in the military. Now he asks her out and they begin dating. Nate suffers from PTSD, but gets help from her Dad, their pastor and a doctor.

I look forward to reading about her brothers' HEAs whenever my sister gets done with them. Did I mention she a slow reader?

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## **Lorraine says**

I began reading this book and thought it was going to be the typical cowboy romance. I had to admit I was ultimately surprised when this novel had some real depth as it dealt with Nate's PTSD after returning from a couple of tours of duty in Afghanistan. The author obviously did her research and incorporated her knowledge re PTSD through the storyline very adeptly. I could readily understand both Nate's feelings and Jenna's reactions as my husband served in VietNam and had a few minor reactions similar to those Nate



experienced.

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### **Elizabeth says**

this is a simple straightforward love story, that for me started out strong, with characters that I immediately enjoyed reading about.

Towards the end, though the the story got bogged down. I'm not even sure what it was about the story that made it feel that way.

I felt as though the religious aspect of it was forced, thrown in at various times as though it was a prerequisite. That the author gave herself a goal to have so many references about God ,prayer, and religion in her book.

I greatly enjoyed the main character Nate, his backstory, his service in the military, and his struggles with coming home.

As the characters discussed his issues with PTSD I couldn't help but feel I was watching an after school special. the dialogue seemed forced and geared toward educating the reader on what PTSD was; instead of making the dialogue seem more natural in the course of the characters conversations.

Overall, I enjoyed ready a clean love story but this would not be a book I would pick up again.

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