



## Cowboy Tough

*Joanne Kennedy*

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## **Cowboy Tough** Joanne Kennedy

She's hardly a cowgirl...

Cat Crendall left a successful advertising job in New York to teach art workshops in the wild west. The Boyd Ranch is hardly her dream destination, but if the outing's a success, the company will send her to more exotic locations.

But once a cowboy...

Mack Boyd was in the middle of the best bronc-riding season of his life when his mother asked for help with an artists' retreat at the ranch. Mack might be able to ride a wild stallion to a standstill but he can't say no to his family.

Cat and Mack are complete opposites...but when the ranch is threatened financially, can they set aside their differences and work together?

## **Cowboy Tough Details**

Date : Published February 5th 2013 by Sourcebooks Casablanca (first published January 1st 2013)

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Author : Joanne Kennedy

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Genre : Romance, Western Romance, Contemporary Romance, Westerns, Contemporary, Fiction

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# From Reader Review Cowboy Tough for online ebook

## Jenn Scranton says

I was so disappointed by this book. :( It was exactly the same story as the last book I read by this author! Basically replace PhD student with an aloof artist and Voila! Damn.

The last book was written better though. I could relate more. This one was just... frustrating.

The girl was in a word: SELFISH! Scratch that, she was a selfish bitch.

There, I'm through.

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## Desere says

I have always had a strong fascination with cowboys, there is this certain something about the way they will always fight for what is theirs and for which ever lady is fortunate enough to make them feel like their being thrown from a bull ride from hell.

In Cowboy Tough I got a sexy as sin cowboy who not only is strong, sexy and fights for what he wants but also a sassy and fun heroine, that indeed brings the sizzling hot cowboy Mack to his knees and knocks his chaps right off! Leaving him not so tough any more.

The book centred around Mack who has to leave the best bronco riding season of his life to go and help out on the ranch after his mother asks he needs to go and help with a artist who is at the ranch for a retreat.

But once Cat arrives at the ranch she does not find what she was expecting and nor is she up to dealing with it, but when she sees Mack in tight as can be jeans with a bottle of Windex in one hand and a dirty rag in the other, her mouth not only goes all dry but she loses the ability to think straight. So she decides to stay and see what the handsome cowboy and his chaps can deliver.

Then the ranch gets into some financial trouble and the two need to pull together to make it or break it. The book was one of real honest to goodness red hot passion between two opposites, intrigue and some marvellous twists and turns that created that down to earth, home town , and love found at the foot of your bed story.

I loved the whole opposites attract and get to kind of go at each other's throat in a western setting. The author really did a amazing job at brining a city girl up close and personal with a hotter than the Texas sun cowboy.

For me as reader this book was very well written and took on a life of it's own as the author drew me into the western setting and her characters bit by bit, page by page.

I not only recommend this for lovers of romance but for the ladies out there that like a sexy, viral I'll lay my life down for you cowboy.

5/5 star review

" Getting down and dirty with the cow folk gets sexy"

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### **A.R. Von says**

A very touching, vivid, entertaining and fun read of how two people from different worlds can have a lot in common, learn from one another, yet be so different and even fall in love. Any contemporary romance readers will enjoy reading Cowboy Tough!

Cat has a lot of pressures in her life. Most she puts upon herself. She's a very independent, smart, beautiful and talented woman that has big dreams and always wants to do what is right. When she finally gets a chance to do what she enjoys and is faced with (what she thinks of as) a disaster, she does her best to work with it and make the best out of what she has to work with. But she finds herself constantly distracted by a HOT cowboy that makes her want to be a better person and want to be his.

Mack is back home on his family ranch after spending years away in the rodeo. He is now making up for lost time and trying to help his mother save their ranch. The range is left to rot and penniless due to his stepfather basically robbing his mother blind. Due to the love he carries for his mother and the family ranch he does his best to put on his prize winning charm to win over the clients that are now staying on their land for an experience of a life time. The last thing he expects is to fall for the artsy type woman he's just trying to help for comfortable in the new and unfamiliar surroundings.

You will find yourself needing a tissue, holding your sides from huge bouts of laughter, your jaw dropping from a surprise (or two) and sighing in contentment from the bonds of love and friendship that grow to an amazing level.

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### **Anne Blyth says**

I've listened to the audio book twice now and enjoyed it both times. It's an interesting story that deals with several real life issues and has some fun characters. Definitely worth a read (or listen).

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### **Wendy says**

Couldn't get interested in it. Realized at Chapter 5 that I wasn't curious at all about what would happen. :(

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## **Nikki says**

Not the typical genre of book that I read, so I was pleasantly surprised that this book kept me engaged. The characters are well developed-I felt as if I really knew each one. Not as steamy as I expected, but steamy enough. I think the book was a little on the long side-there probably could have been a few things trimmed. Descriptive, engaging, full of romance - left me wanting more! I would love to see this book develop into a series & see what happens next to the characters.

\*I received this book free of charge through a giveaway here on Goodreads.

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## **Book Reading Gals says**

Title: Cowboy Tough

Series: Freestanding

Author: Joanne Kennedy

Genre: Western

When Cat Crandall ditches her career in advertising to take a job teaching painting workshops in exotic locations, she's hoping to be sent to Tuscany, or maybe France. Instead, she's assigned to lead a group of aspiring artists through the backcountry of the isolated Boyd Dude Ranch in Wyoming.

He's looking for a way out.

Mack Boyd is in the middle of the best bronc-riding season of his life when his mother asks him to help lead an artists' retreat at the ranch. Mack might be able to ride a wild stallion to a standstill, but he can't say no to his family.

Together, they just might find what they both need.

It doesn't take long for Mack to figure out that artists are a lot harder to herd than cattle—especially when they're led by a spitfire of a city girl who doesn't like to be bossed around. Cat Crandall is nothing but trouble—so why is he so drawn to her?

Cowboy Tough is a fantastic read. The City girl goes to the country has been done over and over again, Joanne still kept me engaged and the storyline was fresh and new.

I felt bad for Cat when she arrives to find the accommodations for herself and her students less than she had anticipated. They are to stay in the "Heifer House". As if that's not bad enough she gets a motley crew of students, from an elderly couple to a man claiming to be in the fashion industry.

Through the story you learn more about Cat like how she's trying to help her niece get past her mother's death but everything she does to help seems to backfire. Cat tries to hide her attraction to Mack, it's a bit understandable why the usually in-control woman is thrown off by her intense attraction to Mack.

Mack Boyd would rather be on the rodeo circuit than helping his mother run a dude ranch. But circumstances make it impossible for him not to assist her. This cowboy is sexy and has a great way about him. I liked the character and could actually feel his frustrations when he is faced with situations out of his control.

This story keeps you with descriptions of the beautiful sights of Wyoming, the sexual tension between the protagonists and the colorful secondary characters. When everyone is faced with a dangerous situation, you will applaud the responses of this interesting group of people.

Cowboy Tough is funny, touching and and it's a story you'll want to keep reading.

Grade A

Review by: Helen

<http://www.thebookreadinggals.com>

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### **Blodeuedd Finland says**

Cowboys, if you had missed it, I like them. Why, well do you really need a why?

Cat is a big city girl with dreams. Sure she has her problems, but it's tough trying to bond with your niece, when that niece is mourning. I get that.

The hero is a cowboy, like you did not see that coming, lol. Mack is nice and works hard to keep the ranch going. He used to be a bronc rider and came home to help his mum. Gotta love a good guy.

The story is about Cat trying to bond with her niece. Cat and Mack falling in love, being passionate, messing things up cos of spoilers spoilers. There is also the story of wanting the ranch to thrive and..well other things I can't mention either. But all good things to read about as they brought excitement.

A nice cowboy romance. Boy meets girl, and after a few fights things start to happen.

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### **Donna Porter says**

Great western romance. Cat Crendall is an art instructor who is taking some of her students on an real west

experience. They are going to paint some real western countryside. They reserve their experience for the Boyd Ranch. This is where Cat meets Mack. Mack is a bareback horse rider who has come home to help his mom save their property. During their two week stay there Cat is attracted to Mack. This is a good romance story

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## **Lisa Jo says**

COWBOY TOUGH by Joan Kennedy is a fun, entertaining novel with a modern western flare. Complicated family matters overwhelm the story, but overall, COWBOY TOUGH is a sassy contemporary romance.

Cat Crendall needs a miracle...and quick. Leading a western art retreat is her last shot at a big break and she has to make it work, no matter what. If she ever wants to fulfill her dream of traveling the world to paint, she has to make the journey a success. She soon finds out the family behind the ranch they are staying at needs this to work just as badly. Meanwhile, one particular cowboy has really caught her attention.

Macy Boyd has a successful career bronc riding, but one phone call from his mother had him heading back home. Now that his family is on the verge of losing everything, he's come back to help make their ranch a retreat for budding artists. Yet it's the leader of their group that's got him all tied up in knots. Cat is everything Mack isn't, but that doesn't stop Mack from trying to seduce this sassy artist. They may be different, but their passionate attraction may lead to something more emotional than either of them could have ever planned for.

What I loved about COWBOY TOUGH was the romance between Mack and Cat. These two protagonists were complete opposites yet seeing their personalities combine was thrilling. Mack has the smooth western charm and a gentle heart whereas Cat was the sophisticated city girl with an old soul. There was no obvious reason to think they would make a great couple, but Ms Kennedy crafts a beautiful courtship that displays a perfect match. They share absolutely scorching chemistry that is impossible to ignore. It makes COWBOY TOUGH a very sexy and spicy romance that is not for the faint of heart.

Probably my least favorite aspect of the novel would have to be Cat's relationship with her niece. It was very uncomfortable and hard to understand. You learn that Cat's niece is working through the grief accompanied from the recent loss of her mother, but it just wasn't developed enough to understand. You jump right into their family drama and it isn't pretty. One minute you feel sympathetic for one character and pages later you experience how ridiculous they were acting. It related well to the overall bond between Mack and Cat, but too many minor details fell apart and it just became awkward. It added drama in all the wrong places.

You can't have a western romance without the sparkling secondary characters. Kennedy does add a wild bunch to COWBOY TOUGH, both city born and down home bred. While you won't love them all, they all have a purpose. Whether they make you laugh out loud or sneer in disgust, they all add fun and drama to the story. What stands out the most and what makes the story, is that despite their different backgrounds, Ms Kennedy creates the perfect makeshift family. All the characters learn to care for each other and grow because of their shared experiences.

If you're looking for a light-hearted contemporary romance with a charming western flare, COWBOY TOUGH is a great pick. Joanne Kennedy always delivers a striking romance with captivating characters. This novel throws you into a beautiful world and lets you fall in love with the Wild West again. Some of the family dynamic was a bit too much for me, but looking at the overall picture, this novel was an engaging

read. This classic tale of opposites attract was well written with great characters and scorching passion. Plus, it's hard not to fall in love with a sexy, rugged cowboy.

Lisa Jo @ The Romance Reviews

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## **Lisa says**

I won a copy of this book through First Reads.

It's been a really long time since I've read a romance paperback, so I don't really have any similar books in mind to compare it to. This could be a good or bad thing in terms of writing a useful review (in other words, I may be too harsh in my criticism, given the conventions of the paperback romance genre - but I do think my criticisms are justified, nevertheless.)

Strengths:

- The point-of-view alternates between Cat (the female protagonist) and Mack (the male). Taking in events from multiple viewpoints is always interesting.
- Creates a comfy, down-home country atmosphere with sometimes goofy characters.
- Makes for a quick, light feel-good read (could be a strength or weakness, depending on your tastes.)
- The "art treks" concept (where you basically take an "art vacation") described in this book is very interesting. Has anyone actually done this in real-life? Seems like a really good idea!

Weaknesses:

- A tad over-long (could probably lose about 60 pages)
- The romance between Cat and Mack develops EXTREMELY quickly and unrealistically (I know this is a romance novel but still...)
- Cat is not all that likeable - she seems self-centered and slightly neurotic
- Mack is likeable, but comes across as weak at times (probably due to the sometimes incredibly cheesy sentiments that characterize some of his thoughts and words!)
- Events and descriptions seem repetitive (for example, Cat's niece Dora's depressed emotional state is described over and over)

Overall, it is an OK read. I can imagine lovers of westerns will really enjoy the Wyoming setting.

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## **Romancing the Book says**

Reviewed by: Aubrey

Book provided by: NetGalley

Review originally posted at Romancing the Book

I adore Joanne Kennedy's cowboy novels. They are so fun and refreshing to read. You never feel like you have read the storyline else where. She may use a tried and true storyline of a cowboy and city girl but she makes it new and her own. In Cowboy Tough, she brings Cat to a Dude Ranch where she has to bring beauty where Cat does not see any.



Cat left her high powered job to do what she loves. She's feisty, sassy, creative and can hold her own with what life throws her. I loved Cat and all she had to give. She's tough and needs an even tougher cowboy to fall in love with. Mack comes to the rescue for his mother. A man full of integrity and true cowboy grit he needs a woman who is soft and a lot city to soften him up.

The secondary characters are a riot. I loved Mack's mother. She reminds me of my grandmother. Cat's niece is endearing and you want her to thrive. The writing and storyline were fantastic. Kennedy is definitely on my auto-buy after reading Cowboy Tough. The only thing that I wish she did was write series. I will recommend this novel to all my cowboy book lovers.

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## **Ellen says**

This review also available on my blog: <http://neverkissandblog.blogspot.com/...>

Cowboy Tough is the sixth book by Joanne Kennedy, all of them contemporary westerns thus far. There has been some character cross over in the later books, but only in a cameo style role, and with a different setting each book, they aren't a series.

I was left angry and upset with how much I disliked this book. The set-up is practically the same as One Fine Cowboy, an earlier Kennedy book which is worth a read, except Cat also has a daughter/niece to take care of.

The teenagers act ridiculously, Dora making references to Cat and Mack sleeping together and actively pushing for in a way that makes me cringe because that would just be awkward in reality. Dora and Viv are dangerously unprepared for life. Mack has no idea about safety when it comes to being online, something my own parents are still getting information on and trying to keep me safe over.

Mack's ex-wife is both a negligent parent and a cardboard stereotype to prove that all women are bad, giving the whole book misogynistic undertones as Cat and her not caring just about shopping ways is special among women. First, why is shopping bad? Second, when are women the only ones who like shopping? Sure, men don't like to clothes shop (or not many of them) but shopping in itself depends on what you're looking for.

There are so many antagonists in this book it basically ends up with ending fatigue. First there's Trevor the epebophile, facebook stalker who is a threat and then disappears taking the suspense in his subplot with him before reappearing as a false lead for Dora's disappearance and attempting to poison the horses and being found immediately to have this part wrapped up basically as an afterthought.

Then there's Ollie, Mack's stepfather who has deliberately worked to bankrupt the ranch appearing to threaten the it and set up the final antagonist. Sullivan who has been sold cattle by Ollie that Ollie didn't own, so he tries to steal the Hanover's cattle.

Then there's Dora, first she's self-hating, then she's matchmaking (in a odd adult way), next she hates horses and her mother and she runs away and all of this means nothing because from the beginning she was a hateful character and I didn't ever have a reason to give a shit.

I will not be reading anything more by this author, because the last two books have disappointed me so badly. I would give this one a pass if I were you.

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## **Guilty Pleasures Book Reviews says**

Amanda

4 Stars

I'm pretty lucky as a reviewer to be given a chance to read advance copies of books by authors I love and Joanne Kennedy happens to be one of them. Cowboy Tough is her latest western romance and she is one of those authors who know how to create that feel of a setting that you want to go there and live it for yourself. Each one of her stories is unique and they stand alone which makes it interesting to me because you never know what you are in for.

Cat Crandall is a graphic artist who is suffering a bit of burnout from her Chicago advertising job and needs a change. She accepts a temporary job with Art Treks to teach water coloring at a dude ranch in Wyoming and hopes that this will become permanent and allow her to travel and pursue her art. She is also using this excursion to reconnect with her niece Dora, who recently lost her mother, Cat's sister. She wants to live life to the fullest in search of life's fulfillment and a chance to reconnect with her grief-stricken and troubled niece. She's putting all her hopes into this 2 week class to give her what she wants and isn't going to let one good-looking wrangler of a cowboy derail those plans no matter how much she feels an attraction.

Mack Boyd has returned home because the family ranch is in financial straits. His mother has resorted to turning their cattle ranch into an art destination in order to make money after her second husband took the ranch's money and ran out on her. Mack has put his bronc riding career on hold in order to help out his mom and will do whatever it takes to make the art instructor happy. Mack came across as a smart individual and let his past experience with his ex-wife and teen daughter help him with both Cat and Dora. He may not think he knows what he is doing but it is exactly what Cat needs. Sometimes it takes a third party to show when to back off or make an effort, and Mack cared for Cat very much. He figured this is one way he can show how much he cares.

I love opposite attract stories because you wonder how they could ever make it work and what kind of compromise they each have to make to be with the other. The author takes a city girl and puts her out in the West and watches her adapt to her surroundings one day at a time. Cat may see a rundown ranch when she arrives but soon it grows on her and she wonders if she can return to her life in Chicago. She's a bit of an independent hippie in my opinion and doesn't react like I thought she would but could use the support of a man once in a while. I like that about her. She has the best intentions of taking this time to reconnect with her niece Dora but I wonder if she really is doing it for Dora or for herself. Over time you see her priorities change and with that you see her grow as a person. And when she finally gives into the attraction for Mack there are some beautiful love scenes aren't too explicit but definitely you can feel the intense heat between the two lovers. Mack falls for this woman who is so unlike anyone else he's known and somehow has to make Cat see that they belong together and has to make her see it too.

Cowboy Tough is a story with an emotional journey of moving past grief and trying to find what truly can make one happy.

Relationships are complicated and getting answers to life's questions aren't always easy ones to face and Cat and Dora have to face some hard ones. There are other colorful characters and subplots to go along with the main plot that add to the story and move it along. I truly like Ms. Kennedy's writing style because she writes real people with real life situations and I begin to care for them. She writes great western stories that shouldn't be missed so go check them out.

Review copy provided for an honest review.

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## **Judy & Marianne from Long and Short Reviews says**

Originally posted at: <http://www.longandshortreviews.com/bo...>

She's what he never saw coming. He's just what she needs.

I love a good opposites attract story. Cat dreams of so much more than the country. It's not in her blood. She wants Paris, elegance...something not dirty and grubby. Except her dreams haven't led her to Paris. Nope. She's in Wyoming.

Then there's Mack. He's at home on a bronc. He'll run the ranch if it means helping his family, but his heart lies elsewhere. Until he meets Cat. Suddenly, roots aren't so bad.

I like how these two are polar opposites. Dirt doesn't bother him and she's not so sure she wants to be there. Then again, she's got an elegance he's not totally convinced he knows what to do with.

Ms. Kennedy's writing succeeds in two major places. One, I felt like I was right there in the Wyoming landscape with these characters. I could see the vastness and wanted to go there. I've never been out west that far, but yeah, I want to go there. Ms. Kennedy also succeeds in the fish out of water story. Cat doesn't feel she belongs in Wyoming. She's not thrilled to be on a ranch. I felt what Cat felt and cheered for her to get her HEA. I mean, with Mack as the prize, yeah, I'd want to figure out how to stick around, too.

If you want a book that flows, one that immerses you in the action, then this is the book for you!

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