



Sunrise Over Texas

M.J. Fredrick

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Texas Frontier, 1826

Kit Barclay followed her husband into the wilds of Texas only to be widowed. Stranded with her mother- and sister-in-law to care for, with no hope of rescue before winter sets in, Kit has only one goal: survival. So when a lone horseman appears on the horizon, and then falls from his mount in fever, Kit must weigh the safety of her family against offering aid and shelter to the handsome stranger.

Trace Watson has lost everything that ever mattered to him. Trying to forget, he heads to the frontier colony of San Felipe, not caring if he lives or dies. But when he wakes to discover he's being nursed back to health by a brave young widow, he vows to repay her kindness by guiding the three women back to civilization, no matter what the cost.

Soon, Kit and Trace are fighting the elements, Indian attacks and outlaws—as well as feelings they both thought were long buried...

74,000 words

Sunrise Over Texas Details

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From Reader Review Sunrise Over Texas for online ebook

?Karlyn P? says

'Sunrise Over Texas' is one of those emotionally rich romance stories that will put a lump in your throat, if not a tear in your eye. Set in 1826 at an abandoned garrison military fort in the Texas wilderness during deep winter, the widow Katherine (Kit) Barclay, along with her mother-in-law and sister-in-law, are struggling to survive on meager rations in an abandoned cabin. The garrison walls are their only protection from the Indians, but the walls also keep them from obtaining more food and a passage to safety. Then one day a man riding a horse makes his way near the gates and collapses on the ground. Kit brings him into the fort to nurse him back to health, meanwhile working herself to the bone keeping everyone fed and safe. As Trace Watson heals, Kit becomes his lifeline to sanity. A recent widower himself, he left New Orleans months earlier to escape the memories of losing a wife and child. Slowly these two find comfort in each other's arms, and they form a deeply passionate relationship. But their journey to safety and a happy ending are far from easy. As their pasts meet up with the present, both Kit and Trace discover that life outside of the garrison may change everything between them.

I absolutely enjoyed this short ebook, and would recommend it to anyone who enjoys a good cabin romance or a heartfelt American historical. While it started a bit slow for me, once Trace began mending and his relationship with Kit started to build steam, the story just grabbed me. I love a good cabin romance too, and on that level this book delivered. The relationship between Kit and Trace was passionate – and at times steamy hot – but it was the tenderness between them that really stood out for me. I did feel the ending (at least the last few pages) may have been a bit rushed and the dialog a bit too sugary sweet, but it didn't take away from my enjoyment.

I got this book as an ARC copy from Netgalley, but it is a book I would have paid for and read regardless as it is the kind of romance book I enjoy.

Judith says

A delightful love story, complete with the emotional ups and downs that come when a relationship is forged in the midst of overwhelming difficulties and situational upsets. A widow is abandoned along with her dead husband's sister and mother, trying to survive in an abandoned fort, refusing to leave because it would mean leaving the grave of her only son. There is disappointment, hurt, wounding of the spirit, hope, good loving, genuine caring, and redemption in this story. It is a very nice read for those who like historical fiction set in the Old West.

Ronda Tutt says

Absolutely Beautiful!

Such a great heart felt adventure that involves love, death, heart ache, suffering, and new life while making it in the Texas great plains.

This story was neat as I read about my own home state in its beginning stages with Stephen F Austin in control over the new claims in Texas. I felt so many emotions as I read how life was back in the early days on how people looked upon others and chastised them with what was proper for a lady and a man and how they had to be chaperoned before they got married.

The connection between the characters was beautiful and I am so glad this western romance story had the erotic love scene in it, to me it brought the real meaning of how love/sex was displayed whether it was in private or in public.

Beautiful Story!

MBR says

This week's Tuesday started like any other day except for the fact that I had this sudden urge or should I say craving?, to read *Sunrise Over Texas* by MJ Fredrick. I don't know how or why, and I am not even going to question the urge to do so because *Sunrise Over Texas* turned out to be wonderful in all the ways that counts.

Taking place in the Texas frontier in 1826, *Sunrise Over Texas* tells the story of the remarkable Katherine Barclay (Kit) who fights for survival every minute of the day as the only one left behind along with her mother-in-law Agnes and sister-in-law Mary at the garrison standing guard between the Karankawa tribe and Stephen Austin's colony of San Felipe. With the food supply depleting with each meal, Kit struggles to keep things going, no mean feat when her in-laws have always lived in the lap of luxury and are not much of a help when it comes to practicalities. Mourning for the death of her husband followed by that of her young son Daniel, the last thing Kit wants is for a stranger to ride up to their "safe" haven and for her to take on the responsibility of nursing him back to health.

George Trace Watson left home to get away from the memories of his dead wife and his stillborn child. When he finds himself raging with fever and nursed back to health by Kit, the first thing he notices about her is her sheer determination to go on against all odds. Though Trace doesn't want to get involved, much less be responsible for the safety of three women, the honorable man inside of him refuses to turn his back on them, especially when Kit herself stirs up longings that he thought he had buried with his wife.

Though guilt-ridden by the fact that he feels things for Kit he should not, even that doesn't stop him from embracing the desire that unfurls between them right from the very start. Kit whose take-charge attitude in life also extends to the bedroom makes for very interesting and provocative scenes of passion with a much laid-back Trace who fits her quirks in the bedroom and out of it in every way.

Towards the end of the book, I had a knot the size of Texas in my throat from all the emotions that coursed through me as Kit faced one hurdle after the other and came out winning and stronger than ever only to nearly be turned away by the man who owns her heart because of the fear that rules over his emotions of ever being too vulnerable again.

For me, Kit is the best thing about this western romance. Although I loved Trace to bits, his gentle and giving nature making it hard not to, it is Kit whose inner strength that drew me like a moth to flame, because her character demands nothing less. Its not easy for an author to write a heroine who manages to outshine the hero when majority of readers like us swoon over the hero just because he merely breathes and I can't help but send high praise MJ Fredrick's way for being able to do just that without making me feel cheated out on

any aspect of the story.

Its hard to believe that this is her first historical because the story flows smoothly and the characters just tug at your heartstrings, making Sunrise Over Texas a wonderful western romance to sink into.

Highly recommended for fans of the genre and fans of MJ Fredrick.

As soon as I post this, I am scurrying off to acquire every available e-book by MJ Fredrick because I find myself with no will left to resist the lure of her books at this moment.

Rating=4.5/5

Original review posted on MBR's Realm of Romance

Joy says

Alone with her mother-in-law and sister-in-law in a Texas fort after a series of tragedies, a young widow rescues a lone rider who has fallen ill. After nursing the man back to health, they must battle harsh conditions in order to make it back to civilization and make peace with their pasts before they can be together. This is a story of frontier survival as well as a romance--the historical details seemed very well-done, and I enjoyed this book very much.

Ruth says

I really enjoyed this book. It's a great, well-written western with a number of different twists. The location is Texas but the protagonists are essentially city/rural Louisiana folks who have found themselves in the Texas wilderness in the middle of winter, although I don't want to suggest they are incapable of looking after themselves.

There is a great sense of reality with this book, which I particularly liked. The main secondary characters (MIL and SIL) are irritating beyond belief, and whereas in other books, the heroine may have followed through on the temptation to snap at them and put them in their place (and boy, more than once I really wished she had), she swallows her feelings and comments, in the much the way we all have to in life. The heroine is an extremely capable woman, in many respects much more capable than the hero, but he isn't weak or useless. Towards the end the hero does push the heroine away, but, for me, considering how the story is written, how the plot develops and the experiences of the hero and heroine, it feels a realistic reaction for him to have. Not "heroic" but realistic all the same. I don't have a problem with it.

However, the main reason why I gave this one 5 stars is that the story is about two people who find each other in desperate circumstances, but whom have both really loved before. Quite often the plot in HRs revolves around the hero/heroine *thinking* they were in love before they met, but then realising their previous experiences were not love at all. Well, that's not the case here. The hero really *did*, and still does, passionately love his wife, and the heroine really loved her husband. Their struggles revolve around their guilt at finding another chance, and at finding it so soon after terrible tragedy, something I can, if not relate to, then certainly understand.

Great book.

April says

SUNRISE OVER TEXAS by M.J. Fredrick is a delightful historical romance set in 1826 Texas Territory. It is well written with details, depth, twists and turns. It has romance, passion, love, hardship, death, survival, Indian attack, outlaws, betrayal, hurt, and traveling across the vast land of Texas. The characters are easy to follow, easy to win your heart, strong, determined to survive, and longing for love, safety and home. The heroine, Kit, is strong willed, hard working, beautiful, gutsy, determined for her family and herself to survive the hardship they have to endure. She is a widow who has just lost her son and her husband. The hero, Trace, is handsome, strong, just lost his wife and infant child, goes to the frontier to run away from his hurt and pain. He is sick and wanders into a abandoned fort, which is not abandoned but has three women left. Kit, brings him into the fort to help him. While both try to fight their feelings for each other, the attraction only grows. Trace, Kit, her sister-in-law and her mother-in-law set out to get to Austin. Along the way they encounter outlaws, Indians, fight the cold, harsh Texas weather, limited supplies and their feelings. This is a wonderful story of love, lost, finding love again in the midst of tragedy and hardships. I would recommend this book. This book was received for review from Net Galley and details can be found at Carina Press and My Book Addiction and More.

Leslie says

Historical westerns are not as common as they used to be but to have one set in Pre-Civil War America is even more rare. I loved the fact that this is set in 1826. This is a rustic frontier where people were scattered far and wide. Where women were few and the land was a harsh and dangerous place. Fredrick doesn't sugar coat the hardships that are faced on the frontier. Nor does she downplay the importance of the will to survive. It's that will to survive that gets Kit and Trace through some of the most difficult times of their lives.

Katherine "Kit" Barclay is barely surviving. She's stuck at Fort Dryden with only her mother-in-law and sister-in-law for company. The responsibility for their welfare has fallen to her. It's been a rough time since Kit left her home in Louisiana for the Texas frontier. Her husband is dead and now she and her in-laws are running out of food and in real danger of dying. I liked Kit right off. I liked her quiet strength, her intelligence and her compassion. When she rescues Trace, all she wants is to get him healthy and on his way. There are no others at the fort and Trace makes her nervous. Trace has other ideas. He can't leave the women alone at the fort and he knows their only chance of survival is to make it to San Felipe.

Oh, Trace. He is such a tortured hero. He's lost the people that meant the most to him and he's still grieving when he arrives at the remote fort. He's running from his memories and runs right into Kit. Trace is sick with a fever when he arrives at the fort. He barely makes it and needs Kit's help. Trace is what I'd like to think of as a frontier gentleman. He's kind, courteous but he's also alpha enough to take charge when he needs to. When it came to Kit, he knew he had to get her to leave the fort but he didn't just order her to go. He talked to her, yes, talked to her and by talking with Kit, Trace understood why Kit didn't want to leave. He treated her like the intelligent woman she was and used logic and reason to get her to go to San Felipe.

Kit and Trace's relationship wasn't rushed in that they began sharing little bits and pieces of themselves,

allowing each other to get to know them. Sunrise Over Texas isn't a long book, 194 pages, and still the way their relationship developed it felt solid - with both Trace and Kit having a say in the decisions. Neither is used to the frontier, they are both from New Orleans, but they learn how to survive together. There is one scene when they are under attack and it turns out that Kit is the better shot. I liked that Trace wasn't this perfect frontier man and Kit could teach him a thing or two. :)

The journey to the colony of San Felipe is a hard one and tests both Kit and Trace. It doesn't help that Kit's in-laws are even less accustomed to frontier life and have to be pushed to do their share. Agnes, Kit's mother-in-law disapproves of how close Kit and Trace have gotten and Mary, Kit's sister-in-law is a teenager who admires Kit but had very little survival instincts. Seriously, Kit put up with a lot of crap from these two. They tried Trace's patience too. Once they get to the settlement, they have to make some very tough decisions. This is where we see how loyal and compassionate Kit is. And how much Trace loves Kit. I was surprised at the turn the story took but think the author handled it well.

Towards the end, there is a misunderstanding that both Trace and Kit have to get past which seemed a little too contrived. After everything they had been through, trust shouldn't have been an issue. It was just a little bump in the story and didn't take away from the enjoyment of a romance about two people who overcome their suffering and find love again. If you're looking for a western romance with a frontier setting, this is it.

Ridley says

Great western romance with a fabulously capable, self-saving heroine who has enough flaws and vulnerability to avoid being a Mary Sue. She throws everyone around her on her back and carries them through illness, death and life in an abandoned fort in frontier Texas.

If it weren't for all the unnecessary twists and turns in the final quarter of the book, this would've been a really great book. Great characterization, strong sense of time and place and sizzling tension. A shame she couldn't stick the landing.

NovelReaction says

Kit follows her husband to the Texas frontier only to have him pass away. Sunrise Over Texas by M.J. Fredrick begins in 1826 with Kit having been left behind at a fort in Indian Country by the Texas military with few reserves and her mother and sister-in-law to care for. Kit does whatever it takes to keep the women alive, even going so far as to fire the cannon at the wall daily so the Indians will believe that the soldiers are still in the fort. As the food stores are getting depleted a stranger rides up to the gates and then collapses. Kit decides she has a duty to care for him but worries that it puts her family and herself at risk of starvation or even worse.

Trace Watson is a man haunted by the death of his beloved wife in childbirth. Not caring where he goes, Trace is surprised to wake up in a strange cabin with a beautiful woman taking care of him. As Trace recovers, he realizes the perilous position the women at the fort are in and how much he admires and is attracted to the determination and courage Kit displays. Despite having to traverse through Indian and outlaw territory, Trace decides to take the women to civilization.

Sunrise Over Texas is a fun read about the Texas frontier. The determination of Kit to do whatever is required to keep her family alive despite dealing with her grief. The author went a direction I totally didn't expect in the middle of the story. I don't like to give spoilers in my reviews, but if you are looking for a novel that goes somewhere unexpected but believable, this novel is it. I enjoyed Sunrise Over Texas by M.J. Fredrick, it was a nice quick read

Samantha says

This story was a great western/frontier story. I had a great time reading this. Kit Barclay is stranded at a fort with her mother and sister-in law after her husband dies. For three months, she has been breaking her back trying to take care of them but time is running out. She is at her wits end when she spots a stranger falling off his horse. Afraid and confused, she decides to help him recover in hopes that he could help her and her family.

The slow relationship between Trace and Kit was fantastic. She was leery of him but attracted to him at the same time. Trace was running from painful memories and he fought his attraction to Kit. But as he got stronger and was able to help out, he saw the strong and determine woman she was. I think Kit was the perfect heroine. She was strong when she needed to be and she didn't get too masculine with Trace. In fact, he appreciated all of her strengths.

I wanted Kit to get rid of Agnes. She didn't appreciate anything that Kit did. The end was a total surprise. I got very emotional because there is a twist and you really don't know how Kit should deal with the situation. I thought about it a couple of times and then I finally accepted her decision.

Good story!

Deborah says

I loved this book!! I was rather surprised to get so sucked into the story from the first page. I don't want to retell the story, but it begins with a widow (Kit) who is stranded at a deserted post with her mother-in-law and sister-in-law. Their provisions are low and they are in hostile indian territory with no hope for help. Wow, what a premise! I loved Kit. She is a woman, caught in a terrible situation, who must be strong to take care of her family. She's scared, but she stays strong. I loved the love story that develops between she and Trace. I read this book within a day. The biggest surprise I had with this book was that it was not predictable, when it easily could have been. I also felt that Ms. Fredrick did such a beautiful job of fleshing out the characters. I could truly identify with their fears and struggles. This book was so good, it was like watching a movie in my head. To give you an idea of how much I liked this book, I actually turned off the TV, which I always have on while I read! LOL! I have never read any of Ms. Fredrick's books before, but now I am anxious to read her next book, "Road Signs", which is a contemporary romance. :)

Carrie says

TBR Challenge 2012--June Category: Western. *Sunrise Over Texas* has been on my TBR list since 2010.

Grade B-/C+

Sunrise Over Texas is the story of three women left alone in a Texas fort in winter. Katherine "Kit" Barkley is a widow taking care of her late husband's mother and sister. They have no way to get to the nearest settlement, and don't have enough provisions to last the winter. Indians are also a concern. Into this scene rides Trace, a man running from a painful past and now too sick to ride further. Kit nurses him back to health and the two wary strangers find themselves drawn to each other.

I liked that Kit is portrayed as a woman with strong feeling and desires. Trace is more of a beta male, and it was a refreshing change. Although non-alpha, he was strong and sexy. I would like to read more books where the relationship is one of mutual strength, like Trace and Kit. I did get tired of Kit constantly being called "stubborn" because she made up her mind and had confidence in her decisions. Just because there was a man around didn't mean she couldn't think for herself.

Unfortunately, the writing lacked pizzazz. It wasn't bad, but it didn't sparkle, especially the dialogue. Still, it was a good story and I will read more by this author. My favorite book by Fredrick so far is *Hot Shot*.

Rane says

In recent years the historical western has become a dying breed, due to largely the boom of the regency romance and other genres. But slowly and surely the western romance is finally making it's come back.

In great style MJ Fredrick brings the reader a great western romance set in the untamed Texas frontier with two people whom have lost greatly but still cling to life. The fated meeting between Trace Waston and Katherine (Kit) Barclay, opens a lot of wounds between the two, but also heals with a love that takes with both for surprise.

Trace and Kit both lost their spouses and children, deal with the guilt of falling in love again. While they have a strong attraction to one another, they try to keep their hearts out of it. With Kit her sister-in-law and mother-in-law stuck alone in a fort. One day Kit sees a lone rider fall off his horse and finds him very sick. As Kit nurses Trace back to health, Trace decides to repay the kindness by getting them out of there. The journey before and during and even after isn't pretty, but on the side of realism. The journey had it surprises, but it's Kit and Trace's strength that keep everything together.

It did feel a little odd how quickly both seem to just fall into bed and love with one another, while the love scenes were romantic, I felt that only a few months of both their spouses being buried, but in truth, I felt it very sad, how they both long for the comfort of another, and in each other a sort of kindred spirit was seen. As they learn about one another you see more of "why" they have fallen in love with the other, not that they don't fight it and later embrace it, but much like the untamed west, there's also a surprise that tests the new love between Kit and Trace.

The surprise finally lays the ghosts of Kit's past to rest while raising old and new ones for Trace. I love both leads and their strengths, Kit was a strong woman whom while other would have broke, she just got stronger, and her strength shows in greater strength toward the end where Trace fears overcome his sense! Trace was kind and gentle and sometimes had to push Kit and little to get her moving, but it seemed the strong Trace took a small vacation toward the end of the book when Kit comes back into his life with a small surprise of her own. Instead of being the great man we came to knew in the story Trace became ~~chicken shit~~ an idiot

and started to run away from Kit instead of toward her to help fight his fears. This brought down my overall enjoyment of the story, but thankfully the author doesn't drag it out to the bitter end, and give the reader and nice little epilogue to tie up everything nicely, with Kit and Trace finally moving on with their life.

Overall: an enjoyable read with great leads and a setting that I think will appeal to many whom long for those old western romance, a new author to be on the look out for!

Shannon Stacey says

Sunrise Over Texas is a warm and richly emotional story. It opens with hard times and sorrow, but it's never depressing or melodramatic and it suits the setting and the characters very well. It's a quiet and sad story of survival, but I was immediately drawn to the heroine's hope and determination and enjoyed watching Kit and Trace's romance unfold against such a backdrop.

I do wish the secondary women (Kit's mother-in-law and sister-in-law) had experienced some character growth, especially the mother-in-law. I kept waiting for her to suck it up and wash a bowl or something, but she didn't. It's probably more realistic that women raised as they were would NOT change, but I was disappointed to still dislike them so much at the end.

I'm not one who reads with an eye toward historical fact, but her 1826 Texas felt very real and authentic to me. Enough details to frame a rich and interesting setting, which was important to the book, without overwhelming the story.

Most importantly, I loved Kit and Trace and when there was a heart-wrenching twist in the story, I didn't want to put the book down. I thought about it all through dinner and finished reading it during prime time television, which I rarely do.

If you like westerns, I definitely recommend Sunrise Over Texas and I hope MJ Fredrick returns to the Texas frontier again in the future.
