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Hildie McQueen

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Left to raise his infant son alone, a hardened Hank Cole is determined to make the best of it while prospering his ranch, but when a beautiful woman literally lands on his doorstep, he is helpless against the attraction between them.

Elizabeth Dawson is too outspoken for gentle society, but she may be the perfect match for a tough Montana cowboy.

A story of two very different people who belong together, proof that sometimes fate can have a sense of humor when it comes to love

Big Sky Blue Details

Date : Published December 1st 2013 by Pink Door Publishing

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Author : Hildie McQueen

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Genre : Romance, Westerns, Historical Romance, Historical, Western Romance, Novella

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From Reader Review Big Sky Blue for online ebook

The BookChick says

My Rating: ♥♥♥♥♥

VERY GOOD: The characteristics of a heart book include: a great story; I loved the characters; and there was an interesting plot and unique story elements; there may have been a few odd things kept the story from being amazing. I would read it again and I would recommend it to a friend.

This book was provided by the author for an honest review.

My Synopsis:

Hank Cole is a rancher who is left as the sole parent of his young son, Ashley, following the departure of his irresponsible and cheating mother. At a loss of what to do to manage his farm and take care of his child, Hank solicits the care of an **older** care giver to eliminate having any possible entanglements with a younger woman. Fortunately, Hank finds just what he is looking for in the form of Betty Dawson. Betty and Hank settle into a companionable life with her providing him help with his household and son while he takes care of his farm. On the other side of the country in Virginia, Betty's niece Elizabeth Dawson is entertaining a possible suitor. Elizabeth isn't exactly wowed by her suitor, Melvin Tuttle, but she supposes that he is would okay to marry since her prospects were nill. Following a disastrous first kiss, Elizabeth knows that Melvin isn't what she wants but to appease her society-oriented parents, she agrees to allow their courting to continue. But sadly, Elizabeth is ripped from the world she knows when a fire ravages the life she once knew. Fleeing her life in Virginia, Elizabeth goes to Montana to live with her aunt, Betty Dawson. Once there, Elizabeth discovers an irrevocable attraction for the handsome rancher and his adorable little son. But Hank's hangups and his past bid him to keep Elizabeth at a distance. But proximity and mutual desire force them together forcing Hank to make a life altering decision -- hang onto his dismal past or embrace a bright future with his son and Elizabeth at his side.

My Thoughts:

I am not typically a fan of historical romances but I was pleasantly surprised to discover an engaging story from the very first page of this sweet romantic novella. All the elements of this story just worked for me -- the characters, the story line, the plot. Ms. McQueen did a wonderful job creating a story that was light and sweet with elements that drew the reader into the story and kept them there. The only thing I would have liked to know more about was how Elizabeth "recognized" Hank. The trail was started but it seems to have been left open. I'm not sure if that trail will be picked up in the other books in the series or now but I would have liked a bit more explanation about it. But, even without it, the book was a solid and very enjoyable story.

This short novella was a very good introduction to a historical western romance series that promises to be a very good one.

Trina says

Hildie McQueen never disappoints when it comes to these historical romance stories. I am a fan for life. Big

Sky Blue was short and sweet. But it was also filled with the gorgeous background scenery of Alder's Gulch, Montana in 1838. I enjoyed reading the tale of cattle rancher, Hank Cole, and how he came to meet Virginia socialite, Elizabeth Dawson. Both are total opposites, yet are looking for the same things in life. But timing is everything right? Hank is once bitten twice shy but how can he resist the intelligent and beautiful Elizabeth? I recommend Big Sky Blue to any woman who loves western historical romances, you won't be disappointed. Big Sky Blue made me smile and left me with a warm fuzzy feeling, which is a GOOD thing!

Debra Parmley says

Big Sky Blue is the first book by Hildie McQueen that I have read and it left me wanting to read more.

Hank Cole is a hard working rancher left with an infant son to raise after the baby's selfish irresponsible mother runs off. He's a good man trying to do the right thing for his son but he can't do it all alone. Fortunately Mrs. Betty Dawson, an older woman who loves children, is more than willing to come help him with baby Ashley.

Elizabeth Dawson travels to Montana to live with her aunt Betty and to start a new life after losing her parents in a house fire in Virginia.

Fate may have put Hank and Elizabeth through some hard times, but joy may be just around the corner if they can give in to the urgings of their hearts.

A quick read, this is a sweet western romance novella.

Tracie R says

Sometimes you are right where you need to be!

After being betrayed by his wife Hank Cole was left to raise his infant son alone that was until Mrs. Dawson stepped in and offered to help care for his son allowing Hank to still maintain his farm.

Elisabeth Dawson is not your typical socialite daughter, she is far too opinionated and bossy. After Elisabeth is struck by a devastating tragedy she moves to Montana and start fresh with her aunt.

Mrs Dawson takes Elisabeth to Hank's with her while she take care of his son Ashley and it doesn't take Elisabeth long to settle in. Hank's determined not to let anyone get close to him again but he is stuck by the beautiful woman before him. He is also wary though never sure anymore if he is enough. Can Elisabeth really give up the life she was raised to live and settle in the farmlands of Montana and can Hank move forward allowing himself to be a part of that life?

I enjoyed Big Blue Sky and look forward to reading the next instalment

Reviewing with Book Monster Reviews

Theresa Scarangella says

This is a story about a rancher who's wife left him and his six month old son. Hank hires a woman to watch his son when he is working on the ranch. Her niece who lost her family comes to stay with her and stays at the ranch and is taken with Hank and his son.

This story is the first in the series and is a short story which is well written and you want to read more.

Having the pleasure to meet Hildie McQueen, she is a delight to talk with and loves talking to her readers.

You won't be disappointed with this book.

Viviana Izzo says

I had forgotten how much I enjoy a good historical, western romance! I missed my sexy cowboys! "Big Sky Blue" is a lovely novella that grabs a hold of you and doesn't let go! Hank Cole is a responsible, handsome and wonderful father who must now raise his son on his own. Elisabeth is an independent and smart woman who doesn't fit in well in her native Virginia high society, because, well, like I said, she's smart and independent.

This novella is beautifully written! A sweet romance between two individuals who are perfect for each other. Hildie (Author) does a fantastic job of setting up the story and gets you invested with the Hero and Heroine as well as all the other characters. You want to know what happens to them and go along with them on the journey. Good thing too, as this is a novella that kicks off the "Shades of Blue Trilogy" (see info below)!

The Shades of Blue Trilogy:

A Different Shade of Blue (Book 1)

The Darkest Blue (Book 2)

Every Blue Moon (Book 3)

You can find out more about the trilogy on *Hildie's website* .

I'm really looking forward to getting to know the Cole brothers in this new series!

NOTE: This book was provided by the author for an honest review.

You might also like:

This and other reviews available at *Viviana, Enchantress of Books*

Roz ~ My Written Romance says

The river of crazy flows all the way through this book and back. I am willing to tolerate a little inaccuracy or the occasional moment of creative timekeeping in my historical romance, but there were occasions where I just had to look up from my Kindle and shake my head.

What was it that drove me bonkers, you ask?

When the book is only 70 pages, it would help if we got to meet the heroine fairly early on.

The heroine wasn't introduced or even hinted at until my Kindle showed it was 26% of the way through the book. Over a quarter of the way through before we have any idea who she is. Way too late IMO.

For me, when I am reading a romance, I love the sense of anticipation, the building of romantic tension between the hero and heroine. Seeing two people fall in love throughout the course of a story is one of the great joys of reading romance. When they meet for the first time 40% of the way through, I couldn't help but wonder how a believable love story could develop.

I'm not sure if this was the reason why I didn't enjoy these two as a couple, but I just couldn't get it in my head that these two were meant to be together. There were a few furtive glances and one fairly tame roll in the grass, and then after a short to and fro, they're kissing in a house and engaged. I nearly would have preferred flaming balls of instalove to rain down upon the book than this.

The author should probably know whether their setting existed at the time their book is set.

Our hero is in his twenties or thirties, and he has lived in Montana his whole life. That in itself was fine. However this book is set in Montana in 1838. What is wrong with that?

Well.....Montana as a state didn't exist in 1838. It wasn't even a separate territory. Montana's first permanent white settlement was in 1841. Alder Gulch, the town in which the story takes place, was discovered as a gold source in 1863, 25 years after the story is set. The town has a mercantile in the story - where is it being stocked out of? Considering no one's settled the territory, we can only assume aliens.

For our old mate to have grown up in Montana, he must be doing a Benjamin Button and aging in reverse, because it's the only way (other than being a Native American - he isn't) that he could have grown up there.

A year here and there I could probably handle, but decades? Uh-uh!

◆◆◆

After reading this, I was sitting trying to make heads or tails of it. Not only did the historical inaccuracies and lack of chemistry get to me, but the glossing over of the heroine's past gave me a dose.

I will tell you right now, if I had witnessed what the heroine did and had been experiencing highly traumatic nightmares as a result, no single night sharing a bed with my aunt in a strange man's house (no matter how well he wore his Captain Sexypants) would cure my ills. I wasn't expecting psychoanalysis or art therapy, but I would have expected more than this. And also how did she get to Montana on her own? It's as if she has teleported there, Star-Trek style.

I'm going to have to stop now, as thinking about it makes me feel a little stabby. I am fully aware that there are people who loved the crap out of this book, and all power to you. However, it often felt as if it was once a longer book, and at some point, someone decided "I shall include page 3, 6, 10, 32 etc. and only these pages".

You can read the full review and others at [My Written Romance](#).

Janice Hoskins says

Make sure you don't start reading, *Big Sky Blue*, unless you have plenty of time. Once you start, it doesn't take long to lose yourself in the wonderful story. I didn't even take a break once I started. I literally could not stop reading! Such a great, refreshing, romantic story. I promise you will love it.

Kara says

Review posted at: <http://bookcrushbookreviews.com/2013/...>

Rating: 3.5 stars

This was my first read of Hildie McQueen's, and this is the prequel to her *Shades of Blue* trilogy. *Big Sky Blue* is a historical romance set on a ranch. We get the comfort of Hank as a hard-working man whom owns his own ranch and takes pride in getting his hands dirty. After an unfortunate and then tragic event takes place we're introduced to Elizabeth. It took some time for me to get into this book, which I understand as we needed to build a history and connection with the characters. But I found that once the angst and sexual tension was getting to an exploding level the book was nearly over. I enjoyed Hildie's writing as it intrigued me and kept me wanting more. I was also looking for more intense dialogue between Hank and Elizabeth as I could feel the intensity behind their actions, I was hoping they'd verbalize those thoughts with one another. If you're in the mood for some eye-candy cowboy action, and need a quick fix...Give this a try!!

Amanda says

Fluffy-fluffy-fluff. Yep, I know there are sticklers out there for historical accuracy, but they should know to avoid a book that's only 70 pages- and has tons of flufftastic reviews. I ask how many of you have read amazing short stories of under 75 pages, with no anachronisms? It's kind of an either or situation in my opinion. Anyways, suspend your anal tendencies and you'll get a nice fluffy start to a series.

Kimberly Rocha~ Book Obsessed Chicks says

Oh I loved this!!!! I want more!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

After Hank Cole's cheating woman leaves him high and dry with their infant son, Hank is left in a quandary with taking care of his beloved son and running his ranch. He simply can't do it all, as hard as he tries. With help from a few friends, Hank finds a lovely older lady to come out and stay at the ranch to take care of little Ashley while he does his business. With his son, the ranch and his head in ten different directions, Hank has sworn off women after his ill-fated relationship with Ashley's mother.

Elizabeth Dawson has been through the death of her parents in a house fire. Nightmares about the fire awaken her nightly. When Elizabeth's aunt invites her to stay with her in Montana. So Elizabeth leaves Virginia and travels to visit with her aunt, who during the week still cares for Hank Cole's son. When Aunt

Betty introduces her niece to Hank and Ashley, she finds herself attracted to the father and taken with his son.

While Hank becomes increasingly enamored of the Eastern beauty, he fights his attraction to her tooth and nail, inwardly comparing her to Ashley's mother. He fights a battle within himself to trust and open his heart again. Elizabeth knows what she feels for Hank, but she won't stoop to begging a man for anything. Will she wait for Hank to open his eyes and see the prize he has in front of him? Or will he allow Elizabeth to go back to her uncertain existence? Read Hildie McQueen's **BIG SKY BLUE** to find out!

Hildie McQueen is a brilliant writer. She sucks you in with her easy to love characters and her intense story-line. **Big Sky Blue** is one of those stories you don't want to end. For those readers who adore Western Romance, this is a great taste of what Ms. McQueen is really all about. For those who readers who haven't allowed themselves to be taken away to the West, **BIG SKY BLUE** is enough to whet your whistle with as fabulous hero and heroine and a beautiful story. I enjoyed Hildie McQueen's **BIG SKY BLUE** and I think you will as well...* Note to Hildie McQueen.... MORE PLEASE!

~KIMBERLY~

5 Stars (Hook Line and Sinker)

R.J. Groves says

A beautiful novella

Big Sky Blue was a beautiful light read. Hank and Elizabeth begin their romance in an insta-love kind of way and spend most of their time together trying to fight it. Of course, being in the same house looking after his son Ashley with her conniving Aunt Betty makes it difficult to avoid each other. As much as I enjoyed this sweet story, I would have loved to see their relationship develop more instead of skipping time, sometimes weeks at a time.

Lady Delacour says

Simple-Syrupy-Sweet
Love Story♥?

Jo-Anne says

Hank Cole is left to care for his infant son, Ashley, when his mother runs off. Hank wants to raise his son properly but knows he is spread too thin with his workload of being a rancher, so he finds an older woman to care for Ashley. Betty Dawson loves children but never had any of her own so she is thrilled to be helping

with the baby.

Elizabeth Dawson is a Virginia socialite who never fit into the society because she was too independent. When she loses her parents in a house fire her Aunt Betty invites her to stay with her in Montana. Once she is settled in, Elizabeth goes with Betty when she looks after Hank's son and she quickly comes to love the child as she helps with his care. She is immediately attracted to Hank as well. Hank has sworn off women because of the desertion of Ashley's mother so he fights his attraction to Elizabeth.

This was a well written and thought out novella that I enjoyed reading. It's a very emotional story that expresses the attraction between Elizabeth and Hank without the need for lots of sex scenes. The only problem I had with Big Sky Blue was that the ending was too abrupt.

If you like western romance, I highly recommend this story.

Katrina Passick Lumsden says

It certainly didn't take long to read.

Still, it was a bit too saccharin sweet for me. If you like that kind of thing, and are in the mood for a quick cowboy romance fix, by all means, have at it.
