



Craving

Helen Hardt

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After being left at the altar, Jade Roberts seeks solace at her best friend's ranch on the Colorado western slope. Her humiliation still ripe, she doesn't expect to be attracted to her friend's reticent brother, but when the gorgeous cowboy kisses her, all bets are off.

Talon Steel is broken. Having never fully healed from a horrific childhood trauma, he simply exists, taking from women what is offered and giving nothing in return...until Jade Roberts catapults into his life. She is beautiful, sweet, and giving, and his desire for her becomes a craving he fears he'll never be able to satisfy. Passion sizzles between the two lovers...but long-buried secrets haunt them both and may eventually tear them apart.

Craving Details

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Author : Helen Hardt

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Genre : Romance, Adult Fiction, Erotica, Contemporary Romance, Contemporary, Sociology, Abuse

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The BookChick says

This is my first book by Helen Hardt, and sadly I didn't love it. Don't get me wrong, I did not hate it either. I'm just...neutral about it. I never felt an emotional connection between Talon and Jade beyond their fiery physical connection. The story certainly did not make me lose myself in it. Im not sure why exactly but I will attribute specifically to the pacing of the story. I felt as if parts of it lagged; but, that could be because Craving is first book in the series and a good deal of world building has to occur in the first book which sometimes creates a disconnect between reader and story. Unfortunately, that is what happened to me in this story. I listened to the story in audio format and I enjoyed the narration which helped to bridge some of the story disconnect. All that said, I'm intrigued about the Marge story angle and curious to uncover what really happened to Talon; therefore, I'll be on the look out for the next installment in the series.

Sissy's Romance Book Review says

Craving 'Craving' by Helen Hardt is book One in the "Steel Brothers" Saga. This is the story of Talon and Jade. There is a cliffhanger to this book so please make note of that. I will say that even though I am not a fan of cliffhangers I understand how much another book was needed when dealing with Talon and Jade's story. In addition, please note I thought this was shadowing on a Dark Romance type theme. Not so much heart and flowers of traditional romances. Jade is uprooting herself from her hometown after being left at the alter. Her best friend Marjorie talks her into coming to stay with her and look for a job there. So Jade heads out to make a new start!Marjorie's brother Talon picks her up at the airport. This is the first time Jade has met Talon and she is shocked by her reaction. Jade is quickly hot for him but he is not a talkative person and seems distant. Not like his brothers and sister. Talon too can't believe how much he wants Jade but he has a mind set not to get close to any women...and just take what they willing give. But that is hard to stick to around Jade...but he does tries to keep a distance. It didn't take long to fall in love with this story! "My honest review is for a special copy I voluntarily read."<https://www.goodreads.com/user/show/1...>
<https://www.amazon.com/gp/profile/A2H...> <https://romancebookreviewforyou.wordpress...>
<https://www.tumblr.com/blog/romancebo...>

Rebecca Whaley says

I can honestly say I didn't like it. I didn't care for the characters who just seemed focused on sex and not much else. There was no depth to them. The mystery of what happened when the hero was 10 was intriguing but not enough for it to save the story.
I've been hearing about this book for quite some time so I decided to try it but it just didn't live up to expectations.

Erin Daniels says

How do I describe how bad a book is without sounding like I'm exaggerating? I haven't figured that one out so screw it - here's my review.

This book was hands down one of the worst books I've ever downloaded from Audible in my life. So many of the passages were so horribly written that cringing became a game of diminishing returns and I had to start flinching. I seldom talk back to a recording but this seven hour tour was peppered with so many "wth's" and "are you kidding me's" that it might as well have been a duet.

First of all Talon Steel? Talon Steel? The nice, down to earth, sane brothers have names like Ryan and Jonas so of course dark and stormy bro has to be named Talon. Because all of this was clear at birth. And of course Broody McDanger was a marine who served in Iraq because troubled. And let's not leave Jade out of the line of fire. Jade has the emotional intelligence of a pack of ramen and is about as deep as the mugs of tea she is constantly making in the microwave. She is only slightly annoyed at being left at the altar after a seven year relationship and she lets her best friend's brother degrade her every chance he gets yet use her for sex after getting something that passes for consent and we're supposed to see her as someone capable of making good choices?

And Marjorie can't think her way out of a paper bag. You can't pick your bff up from the airport so who do you send to get her instead? One of your considerate, polite, charming brothers? Lol, where's the fun in that? No, let's send the misanthropic, sexual opportunist with anger management problems instead. Let's send the character who, if this were Jane Eyre, would have been locked away in Rochester's attic instead of Bertha. The author clearly didn't know what to do with her so she sleeps a lot. And in case you miss that she and everyone else will repeat it. A lot. But if I had to spend time with Talon and Jade I might stay curled up in my room in the fetal position too.

And speaking of repetition you will never be allowed to forget that Talon doesn't want anyone to get close to him because he has walls and no one can break down those walls because those walls are never coming down because walls are meant to keep people out and stuff because walls. It's not that you don't sympathize with him as a reader it's just that you get so few chances to do so because Talon is a first class jerk. I don't mind damaged or troubled but all he's giving me is Blue Steel. By chapter five I'd settle for his Le Tigre look. And Talon constantly lets us know that the countless chicks he's had sex with were so hot for it and he is not rape-y. He is not rape-y nor does he have boundary or permission issues. Are we clear?

The kitchen encounters were creepy - even as the reader I wanted to take out a restraining order on Talon. The sex scenes were creepy - this is the first romance I've ever read where I thought both partners needed a ball gag. The post-coital head-tripping wasn't interesting enough to be creepy: If I have sex with her I can finally get her out of my head. Okay, we just had sex and she's, like, totally still in my head and there's the whole walls situation so we better have sex once more and this time it is so going to work. Rinse and repeat...

The plot was paper-thin, the characters were unlikable, the dialogue was fifth grade book report hilarious, the setting apparently consisted of the kitchen table, the shower and the echo chamber that was Talon's head-space and the ending was only shocking because I didn't think the book could get any worse. The author threw in a cheap-ass cliffhanger just to remind me that it doesn't pay to dream.

I'll never get back those seven hours of my life but if I can save another reader from the fresh hell that was this book then it was worth it.

Jen says

I found this read through an ad on FB, and it basically stated that this was a series to read after Fifty Shades. I'll admit, I am one of those people that really enjoyed the Fifty Shades trilogy (I won't even discuss the book that came after the trilogy..cough...cough..."Grey") Anyway, I was excited to see that maybe this would be

just as good; if not better...I have to be honest and say that this was just an ok read for me. It had great potential, and I am going to remain positive and hope that as the story progresses, it might fall into place...but as for book one...I was disappointed, yet intrigued to the point where I will carry on. My biggest complaint was that it was hard to connect to the main characters. Considering Talon was dealing with a crap ton of trauma from his childhood, I had a hard time empathising with him. He was an ass for the most part, and I would have liked to have seen him have a soft side to him somewhere. Maybe that will still come in the second book...I sure hope so. Then there is Jade, I found her to be a bit of a door mat at times, then she would change to a bitch...she had quite a bipolar feel to her at times!!! The sex between these two was hot...but forewarning....there is a ton of it! In fact, I'd say they spent most of their times in the sack or shower, rather than discussing what their relationship meant...Again, let's hope there is more communication in book two~!

The story starts with Jade making a move to her friends ranch in Colorado after she has been left at the altar by her husband to be. Her friend lives on a huge ranch with her brothers, and has welcomed Jade to come stay. The Steel siblings are very rich, and have split ownership of the Ranch. Talon Steel is the middle brother, and he is the mysterious and dark one. He has a ton of trauma and secrets, and is not the type to open up to anyone. When he gets a look at his sister's friend, he knows there is something different about his attraction to her. He doesn't like it, and immediately he erects his walls up very high. During their many midnight meetings in the kitchen when Jade and Talon can't sleep, sparks begin to fly, and both their lives will never be the same when the walls start crumbling down.

I am very hopeful for this series. I think it has a ton of potential, and because of this I will continue on for now. My fingers are crossed that things will pick up. It isn't the most original book out there, but it still has the sexy brooding heroes that we come to love in our romances!! Let's hope Talon will get through his many issues, and become the hero I swoon for!!!!

Ramona says

The story is great. The writing not so much. Author used such repetitive phrasing I became annoyed halfway through. It's like she didn't know any other way to describe anything.

What I disliked most is that there seemed to be no buildup. I know this is a story but everything just happened so fast it was just ridiculous.

Jade is left at the altar, literally, and it was like she hardly cared. Oh yeah, she knew that maybe she wasn't as in love as she thought but she hardly gives the whole thing a second thought. Then she's sleeping with Talon. That's actually a little believable. Stranger things have happened, I guess.

But she's on the ranch two days and already digging into his brothers on his background. The one brother never even saw the two interact and he's like, "there's something special," but the sister who has seen them together doesn't have anything to say. In fact, I think the book ends without her having any clue her best friend and brother are sleeping together.

Talon is mentally distraught from a childhood tragedy, and I like the tortured hero angle, but it all seemed contrived. I'm supposed to feel sorry for him and want to heal all his wounds but I was a little confused as to why I should care. Jade seemed whiny at times. There was very little depth to the characters.

I did very much enjoy the undercurrent of the family drama. I'd like to know more but I doubt I will seek out the rest of the series. I didn't like how the book ended on a total cliffhanger. I expected Jade and Talon to

fairly resolve their issues, then book two would move on to one of the other brothers or Marj. Guess not.

This is decent enough for a long flight or the long wait at the dentist office. It wasn't completely horrible but it's certainly not something I'm anxious for the next instalment.

Brenna says

2.5 stars. This book felt like it was all over the place. On the one hand I kept thinking to myself, why am I still listening to this? But on the other hand I felt like I couldn't stop. I'm bummed that I didn't realize until more than half way through that this is an ongoing series. We'll see if I pick the next ones up or not... I am somewhat curious what happens.

Lissa says

Have you ever agreed to buddy read a trilogy (which I just discovered has now morphed into at least a six book series) with a friend who swears up and down that you will absolutely *love* a book, and then you get halfway through said book and you are about to beat your head against the wall and wonder why in the hell you ever agreed to buddy read this?

Please tell me I'm not the only one to make this mistake.

And I can't really blame my friend, because she does know that I love messed up books (the more messed up, the better - usually), and the book is set on the western slope of Colorado, an area of the state for which I will always hold a fondness. So my friend really did think that I would love these books.

First off, the author gets several things wrong about the setting. Granted, I know that "Snow Creek" is a made-up town, so I can't fault her for anything there. But she does use Grand Junction as a backdrop for the first few chapters, and it pops up every so often, and there are just things *wrong* about Junction. Spoiler cut just because I'm probably about to go on a rant here.(view spoiler)

But, okay, let's give the author a little leeway here. And let's judge the story on its merits and not the glaring factual errors that bug the ever living shit out of me and my OCD.

Talon is all sorts of messed up, which I usually like, but he is such a fucking asshole to Jade that I can't handle him. He totally dismisses any pain she feels about being stood up at the altar in front of all of her friends and family because it doesn't match his ~*~pain~*~ that she doesn't even know about and is a total ass about the whole thing. And, granted, his past is horrible, but that doesn't make the fact that she was humiliated any less painful to her, especially since she doesn't know anything about Talon's past except that he was in the Marines for the while.

Talon was abused; that much is made pretty clear, and the extent of his abuse is revealed as the book progresses. But he pushes hard against Jade's boundaries and does not take no for an answer. There is more than one instance in this book where Jade is not exactly into having sex with Talon, but he doesn't listen to her protests and eventually "convinces" her to go along with him, which she does in almost every instance. No. That's rapey as hell and incredibly not kosher, not heroic, and not acceptable. (view spoiler)

Also, the sex scenes are just...so awful. The description of Jade's anatomy is hilariously bad, to the point that

I was attempting not to laugh when the author went on and on about Jade's "red" labia (sounds like there's some serious chafing going on, which I wouldn't be surprised about, considering how much "shoving" organs into orifices occurs in this book). And Talon was "abrading the anterior of [her] pussy [with his fingers]" at one point (that is a direct quote). Let me say as a lesbian - fucking OUCH, use some lube or do some foreplay to get her wet or something! Someone abrading any part of my anatomy does *not* sound like a good time.

There's quite a bit of instalove - they have a lot of (horribly written) sex, but there doesn't seem to be anything between them except some chemistry. And Talon waxes hot and cold when it comes to Jade - he can't stop craving her, and then he's pushing her away. Once again, I can understand this as a sexual assault victim, but Jesus, it got so fucking annoying watching him whipsaw back and forth like that.

Some of the descriptions seemed just...odd, as well (besides Jade's "red" labia). Talon compares her gray eyes to "tanzanite," which seems way left field to me. That's a deep blue, by the way, because I had no idea what the fuck it was - and definitely nowhere close to Jade's self-described "gray" eyes. And listening to Talon talk to his brothers comes across as very odd, stilted, and not realistic at all.

Well, the one thing I can say is that I totally agree with the author - there's no better peaches in the world than western slope peaches.

The thing is, I think that this book really had some potential, because there is an intriguing mystery going on with the Steel family. But it takes a backseat to all of the awkward sex and ridiculous drama. It's disappointing, but apparently unless I find an excellent excuse, I am stuck reading the next two books in the series. Sigh.

Janet Robel says

I received a free copy of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

An erotic romance featuring the tortured hero seems to be a common theme among many books nowadays. Talon Steel is emotionally broken beyond what Jade Roberts can heal. The sex is explosive but the storyline not so much. I feel that Jade should walk away even though she enjoys being an emotional punching bag and isn't very strong-willed. The part I'm intrigued about is Talon's past and why the brothers are all keeping a huge secret from their sister when she has a right to know about it. There is a cliffhanger ending so I probably read the others to see it through to the end.

Celina Summers says

This isn't your everyday erotic romance. Helen Hardt has created deeply flawed characters with recognizable demons, and turned them into masterpieces of character development. Although the erotic elements are...well...uber HOT, they are not the heart and soul of this story. What this book lives and dies on is the relationship between Jade, who just suffered the humiliation of being left at the altar, and Talon, a man whose tortured past exceeds anything you could possibly imagine. What makes the story--and the relationship--work is the incredible development of these two characters who do not resemble any I've seen in erotic romance--and as I've been an editor for over a decade and have worked with some of the top erotic romance authors in the world, that's saying a lot. You may buy this book for the sexual elements, but you'll fall in love with this book for the story. Hardt treats sensitive emotional issues with compassion--and that

compassion is ultimately what fuels the plot. This is the most original, most gut-wrenching, and most incredible erotic romance I've ever put my hands on. When you read this book, you'll fall in love with it too--and rejoice that there are eight more books in the Steel Brothers Saga. Craving is a must-read novel for 2016. Bravo.

Chris C - A Midlife Wife says

OMG so hot! AND ends on a cliffhanger... UGH

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Sometimes you pick up a book that you know is going to be a winner from the very first page. This book is one of those.

Where to even start? The character of Talon is a deep conflicted hurting man who is desperate for release from his anguish. We get hints along the way of the depths of his issues and the only one that seems to be able to take the edge off is Jade.

Talon is afraid of hurting her and does everything he can to push her away. But emotions and feelings run deep.

The author crafted a book that gives you a major feels. You hurt when he hurts and your emotions are high and low, just like his.

As I got towards the end I kept hoping that we would get an HEA and not a cliffhanger. But I was wrong. Now that I think about it, the author could never of done justice to this man and any kind of relationship without an in-depth story that I just know will rip out guts out.

This author has created a masterpiece with her emotionally charged story and series. High sexual tension and amazing scenes of passion are off the charts. I cannot wait to dive into book two and three. This author has completely sucked me in.

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### **Alice-Elizabeth (marriedtobooks) says**

DNF @ 52%

Craving is the first book in the Steel Brothers Saga and follows a woman called Jade who ends up being dumped at the alter on her wedding day and moving to a ranch which is owned by her best friend. There, she meets the Steel brothers with one of them called Talon becoming instantly attracted towards her. The novel follows their relationship as well as their struggles with personal issues and feelings that they've kept hidden away from others. I purchased this on a whim during a free Kindle Books search but didn't realise how erotic the plot would be. It was a struggle to keep my interest strong and after the halfway mark, I simply decided that Craving was not for me. The sex scenes were graphic and the insta-love I found uncomfortable. I will not be continuing with the series.

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## Elle's Book Blog says

**Genre:** Contemporary Romance

**Release Date:** May 3, 2016

**Cliffhanger:** Yes. But book 2 is available now!

### :: 5 Pretty Little Stars ::

WOAH. I didn't expect to love this book as much as I did. After all, it does end in the dreaded cliffhanger that many readers are opposed to. And in all honesty, I wasn't sure what to expect because I haven't read any of the authors previous books. However, this one totally ignited a flame inside me and tore me to SHREDS. It's emotional (there are hints of sexual abuse), it's angsty, and it downright pulls at every inch of your heart. It didn't matter to me that it ended in a cliffy because it was that good. Plus, it helps that book two is not available! Anyway, I would certainly recommend this one. It's pretty heartbreaking when you take in the whole story but I am hoping that once the story is finished (in book 3) that we will find that just because someone is broken doesn't mean they can't be fixed. I am totally crossing my fingers for Talon because I fell head over heels in love with him...

So, this book is about a broken man and a woman that would do anything to fix him. The problem though is that Talon (the stories hero) doesn't want someone to fix him. He is seemingly content to stay on his own and live his existence in solitude. This is what his initial reaction is anyway. But for some reason, he can't seem to stay away from Jade...

Jade is Talon's sisters best friend. And after being left at the alter by her (now) ex fiancé, she needs and escape and going to friends small town home seems like the best option for her. When she first meets Talon she knows she is in for trouble. This man is the quiet and brooding kind, and getting close to him is difficult at best. But the two have a lot of chemistry even though they both deny it, at first...

Both Jade and Talon will quickly steal reader's hearts. The connection, the angst, and the overall vulnerability of the characters is quite beautiful. But buried secrets and harsh realities that test this couple will leave readers gripping the edge of their books and hoping and praying for a miracle for these two. So, if you love a book that will take you on a tough journey with the characters than I strongly suggest picking this one up. Right when I was finished I bought book 2 and book 3 will be out in September (I can't wait). With all this being said, I will seriously be looking into more of the authors work.

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## MadLoveBookBlog says

My apologies in advance.

I have found this book on my Facebook page. A PR company promoting this book as the best thing after Fifty Shades of Grey.

First of, I would like marketing/PR/publicist and small promotion companies to stop trying to get attention through FSoG. It is just not right in so many levels....especially, if you are trying to market this book appropriately. It doesn't feel right to me when others want to take advantage. It is like "Really, is this the best marketing strategy you can come up with?" If you don't know, then this is the result....an unsatisfied potential reader, and i say potential, because i could have been reading book two right now.

The core Of this story, theme, tone, among others, fully detoured me in a geometrical shape, due to the perception that was created and implanted in me, just for merely mentioned and also comparing this book with FDoS, which by the way, it is far to be even remotely similar to Fifty.

Unfortunately, it didn't live up to my expectations, and i should've known better.

In one word: DECEIVED.

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### **Jessica Ann says**

An seat gripping, emotional masterpiece!

Helen has stolen my heart with this epic story of 2 broken souls. I opened this ARC with the intention of it lasting a couple of evenings of after work reading. Wow was I wrong, I started and finished this book in 4 hours. I didn't even stop for a break, I couldn't. I was drawn in from the very first chapter. I can not wait for more of the Steel Brothers.

I was blown away with the story that is Talon and Jade. They both have walls built, they both have been hurt and humiliated, one much more than the other, but they have protected their hearts to not fall in love. But will their emotions get the best of them?

Jade has just been left at the alter and decided to move in with her best friend on the Steel ranch, when she gets to the airport Marj (Jade's best friend) was not able to pick her up so she sent her brother Talon. The one Steel brother she hasn't meet. And the chemistry she felt was instant, but she was determined to not let him get to her.

Talon has served in the military and seen things he wish he hadn't. He also suffers from what appears to be a childhood trauma. He has been severely hurt and doesn't know how to show any emotion other than he is a master in the bedroom (His words, not mine.) He is the perfect Alpha Male; tall, dark, and extremely sexy. But his emotional walls are taller than the wall in China. He knows he has feelings for Jade, or at least he thinks he does. Will the 2 ever really be able to open up to one another? Oh I wish I knew.

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