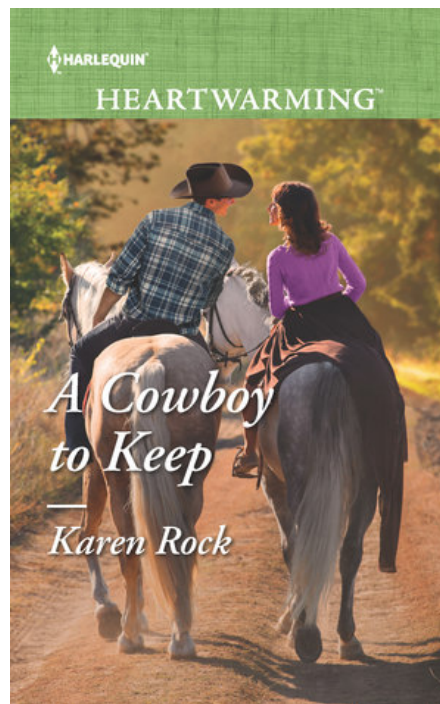




A Cowboy to Keep

Karen Rock

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A Cowboy to Keep Karen Rock
Can't stop running from the past

Dani Crawford has a secret...and if bounty hunter Jackson Cade finds out, he could ruin everything. The scarred yet handsome cowboy has tracked a dangerous criminal to the dude ranch Dani manages, and to get rid of Jack she'll have to help him catch his man. But the closer they get to cornering their quarry the more Dani wants Jack to stay. Spending time with him is making her long for things she can never have thanks to a past mistake. And if the truth comes out she may be spending her future behind bars rather than safe in her cowboy's arms...

A Cowboy to Keep Details

Date : Published February 7th 2017 by Harlequin

ISBN : 9780373368235

Author : Karen Rock

Format : Paperback 384 pages

Genre : Contemporary, Romance, Harlequin, Harlequin Heartwarming, Contemporary Romance,
Suspense, Westerns, Thriller, Mystery Thriller, Mystery

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From Reader Review A Cowboy to Keep for online ebook

Brooke Showalter (Brooke Blogs) says

Review originally posted on Brooke Blogs.

A Cowboy to Keep by Karen Rock is a Harlequin Heartwarming book that combines sweet romance with light suspense. This book is a prequel to Ms. Rock's upcoming Rocky Mountain Cowboys series, coming this November. There was a lot of action packed into this book.

Jackson Cade, Bounty Hunter, finds himself at Mountain Sky Dude Ranch, chasing down Bill Reno, better known as "Smiley". Jack is being chased by his own demons. He feels guilty and has dedicated his life to finding his younger brother's killers. Jesse was killed related to his drug use, and Jack has never forgiven himself for not protecting him. Though Jack is supposed to be heading up his family's ranch, he refuses to allow himself anything good in his life...since his brother cannot experience anything anymore. Jack received a slash to the face, causing a large scar, and he uses that to keep the world away.

Dani Crawford is the manager of Mountain Sky Dude Ranch. She has secrets of her own. Following the death of her mother many years before, she found herself acting out and got caught up with the wrong people. Though she didn't intend to do anything wrong, she found herself right in the middle of some major trouble. When Jackson Cade shows up, she worries he is going to find out her secret. But she finds her secret harder and harder to keep as she begins to fall for Jack.

A Cowboy to Keep was such an enjoyable book. Between Dani's past catching up to her, the chase for Smiley, and even more twists and turns, you will find yourself staying up late to finish this one. I liked the suspense and I really liked the romance. It was tender, sweet, and believable. If you like sweet, wholesome romance plus suspense, then you will enjoy A Cowboy to Keep by Karen Rock.¹

I received a free copy of this book from the author. My review is voluntary and is not influenced in any way.

Carrie Schmidt (Reading is My SuperPower) says

A Cowboy to Keep by Karen Rock is full of fantastic romantic chemistry between the two main characters and some fan-inducing kisses between them as well! Dani and Jack are characters with complicated pasts and this only adds to the romantic tension between them, heightening the emotions and sizzle.

Also adding to the tension? The suspense!! I am loving this recent trend in the Heartwarming books toward romantic suspense. Kate James, Carol Ross, now Karen Rock. These are such well-written edge-of-your-seat, high-stakes action, fast-paced suspense novels as well as being excellent clean-romance reads.

Jack, our hero, is all kinds of swoony. A little brooding, a little grouchy, yes. But whew! Once he has his sights set on Dani, keep those fans handy. His backstory is emotional and layered, but he hasn't lost his soft side or his sense of humor. And Dani makes a perfect match for his gruff tenderness. She's feisty and tenderhearted with a strong spirit that's hiding a pretty emotional backstory of her own. Watching them give each other the strength to deal with their respective pasts adds even more dimension to their romance. Jack's work with the horse is a beautiful parallel to the redemption that Dani helps work in Jack's own life, and vice versa.

Bottom Line: A Cowboy to Keep by Karen Rock is most definitely a book to keep! From the gorgeous Rocky Mountain setting to the action-packed suspense to the sweet-but-still-smokin romance, this is a story that entertains in every way. Vivid characters help the story come alive against a breathtaking mountain backdrop, and the theme of unconditional love rings sweet and true. You won't want to stop reading once you start! I am very much looking forward to more in this series!

Reviewer's Note: Readers may want to be aware that there are a very few instances of mild cursing in this book.

(I voluntarily reviewed a complimentary copy of this book.)

See my full review at [Reading Is My SuperPower](#)

Jess Lawson says

Dani has a past better left hidden. How is she supposed to maintain that with the Cowboy Bounty Hunter running loose on the Texas Ranch in which she manages. Having Jack around is a good thing when it comes to protecting her guest, but a bad thing when it comes to her past. Jack sees things in simple black and white. He sees no shades of gray.

Jack is hiding things as well so what could that possibly be? Who is he?

Jack trust no one until the prove to be innocent. He will find his criminal at all cost and any others that get in his way. He can't get involved with Dani because he has nothing to offer her. His quest for his brother's killer takes up his entire life. Once he catches them he MAY be able to move forward with his life and allow other people into his world.

Everyone makes mistakes judging someone when your own path isn't so clean is hypocritical.

Danielle Urban says

A Cowboy to Keep by Karen Rock is a romantic tale of redemption, letting go of the past, and moving forward. Dani Crawford has been hiding a secret forever. Her life soon becomes complicated when the sexy blunter hunter enters into her life. He is someone that is good but Dani needs him to leave before her past comes out...However, as time passes, something strong develops between the two. Jack can't ignore it and neither can Dani. The book was intense. Sweet, hot, and intriguing. I couldn't stop reading it. Karen Rock has created two characters that will never be forgotten. An emotional attachment occurs once the book is read. Once, one reads this, it will be hard to let go. Addictive, well-written, and highly engaging. Overall, I highly recommend this romance to readers worldwide.

Karen Rock says

A COWBOY TO KEEP is the prequel to my exciting new series, ROCKY MOUNTAIN COWBOYS! I loved writing my very first romantic suspense novel and recommend it to all of my friends and fans who adore this genre as much as I do. The western setting was an especially rich place for this story to take place given the unique history and topography of this breathtaking Rocky Mountain spot. I hope you'll fall hard for

Dani and Jack, a heroine on the run from her past and a tormented cowboy bounty hunter hunting down outlaws to atone for one unforgivable mistake. The many twists and turns in this nonstop, action-packed love story made it an engrossing tale to tell!

Kaylee Nizza says

FANTASTIC!!! Another fantastic read by Karen Rock. This story not only had the chemistry between Dani and Jackson but had tons of twists and turns some that I didn't see coming. You won't be able to put the book down because you get so engrossed in the story on what is going to happen next. This book is a must read.

Kay Garrett says

If you want a truly heartwarming, can't put down book to read - one that has all sort of twists and turns, excitement and intrigue - then you NEED to read A COWBOY TO KEEP by Karen Rock!

I won a copy in a recent contest and was excited to both have won it and to read it - sooner than I probably would have gotten to otherwise. However, no amount of excitement I had could have prepared me for the thrill of reading it. I just didn't want to put it down. With the day to day of life it wasn't possible for me to read it all in one sitting. However, it never was far away so when I had that extra 5 minutes, I'd grab it and read some more.

It's a book that holds your interest and makes you wanting more. I just hope there's another book to continue the story because no good story - as in life - is smooth or just ends because there's tomorrow. :)

Pick up or order a copy - you won't be disappointed!

Kate Vale says

Dani Crawford has yet to come clean with WHY she chose not to go home, but instead secured a position at a guest ranch. When bounty hunter Jackson Cade shows up chasing a criminal, they meet when she pulls a gun on him for sneaking into the horse barn. With such a surprising start, this story had a high bar to meet to keep this reader interested. But the author succeeds very nicely as Dani insists on joining Jackson in his quest to find the guy he's after and perhaps even the men who killed his younger brother.

In the process, problems start occurring at the ranch, but who is behind them? Tanya, Dani's best friend? Her ex-boyfriend, now out of jail and suddenly appearing at the ranch? Someone else? Surprises abound in this story, even as the relationship between Dani and Jackson takes THEM by surprise, too.

Katie W says

There's something very intriguing about a cowboy, especially one who is associated with danger, mystery, and suspense. And believe me, there's plenty of action--on the ranch, on the trail, and in the heart.

Jack is a bounty hunter and is posing as a wrangler on a dude ranch to try and catch his prey. With his jagged scar, handsome and rugged good looks, and swagger, he's a force to be reckoned with. Dani has a past that must stay hidden at all costs, yet she can't stop the growing attraction she feels towards Jack.

I love the way that Jack and Dani first meet--the sass, confidence, and stubbornness shines through and had me smiling and immediately crossing my fingers that they would get together. They are both super tough on the outside but marshmallows on the inside, and that combination sets up a fantastic romantic tension. There are events that occur as the story progresses that would have me in a melted puddle on the floor from all the stress, but these characters jump right in with their bravery and determination to figure things out. I love the way they learn to work together to solve the mysteries on the ranch and to resolve their pasts. The underlying chemistry is undeniable and so swoony--the harder they try to deny themselves the pleasures of love, the more the flames ignite. It's like trying to put out a grease fire with water.

This is a great story for those who enjoy contemporary Westerns with a good dose of mystery and suspense. I was engaged throughout the entire book and I was literally prying my eyelids open to finish the thing before falling asleep because I absolutely could not wait until morning. The story also gave me a nostalgic feeling--back to a time when men were tough but sweet gentlemen and made me long to live on a ranch in Colorado because of the vivid setting. This is the start to what's sure to be a fabulous new series!

Content: mild language (a handful of cuss words); mild violence (some danger, talk of death and drugs, etc); mild romance (kissing).

I received an ARC, which in no way affected my thoughts and opinions, which are all my own.

Kelley says

Novel received courtesy of Goodreads.com First Reads Giveaway

This is the first in a new series by Karen Rock that will feature the Cade family. In this novel, we met Jackson Cade, bounty-hunter and broken man. Jack comes to the dude ranch where Dani works as manager. He is looking for the killers of a couple in Denver who may also be the same killers who murdered his brother. Until Jack can catch his brother's killers, he cannot forgive himself for not protecting his brother.

This is an enjoyable story with well formed characters. The setting becomes like another character. I'll look forward to reading more in the Cade series.

Michelle says

Another great book from Karen Rock. Moving, emotional romance and action-packed suspense! I loved the Rocky Mountain setting and Jack and Dani were awesome characters. Jack is scarred - inside and out- after losing his brother. Dani has been trying to outrun her past mistakes, but all comes to a head as they search for outlaws hiding out near the dude ranch. The characters help each other heal and and capture each other's hearts. I love horses and how the author featured them so much and I fell in love with Milly, a horse that'd been traumatized and might need to be put down. Jack is such a great cowboy hero because he's strong, loyal, principled and tenacious - The scenes where he works to rehabilitate Milly made me cry and the romantic scenes between him and Dani melted my heart. I read this book so fast and was sad to reach the end until I saw that this is the prequel to a series. Can't wait to read more in this series!

Suze Lavender says

Jackson is a scary bounty hunter. He brings in criminals while he's also looking for his brother's killers. Jackson used to live on his family's ranch, so when he needs to go undercover and work with horses to catch his next prey he knows exactly what to do. The job has one perk and that is working with Dani. However, Dani has a past and Jackson shouldn't come too close or her future can look very bleak all of a sudden.

Dani helps Jackson with his search. They know there's a dangerous criminal on the ranch and they have to find him. Jackson wants to keep Dani safe, but it's better for her if he doesn't stay too long and won't find the time to look into her past, so she's doing what she can for him. Working together closely means that they do get to know each other though and soon Dani doesn't want Jackson to go at all. Will she be able to prevent him from finding out about her or is what happened to her many years ago once more going to ruin everything for Dani?

Dani and Jackson are both tough people. They've made mistakes and feel incredibly guilty about them, much more than they actually should. They have an instant connection based on mutual admiration. Both of them are used to working with horses and their shared love for animals makes them feel even closer. Dani can never be open with Jackson though, because she doesn't want him to know what happened to her. Jackson is a good guy. He's strong and stubborn and he has a black and white idea of what's right and what's wrong. Dani needs understanding, but I had no idea if Jackson could give her that. My heart ached for her and I kept hoping she'd be able to find a way out. Because this was so gripping I couldn't put A Cowboy to Keep down and read it in one sitting.

Karen Rock writes about a beautiful ranch with stunning horses situated in a former mining area. There are many places for a criminal to hide, both on and close to the premises, and while Jackson and Dani visit them because they're looking for someone, I could still enjoy the vivid descriptions of the amazing countryside, a combination I liked a lot. A Cowboy to Keep is an original love story. It's filled with suspense and at the same time it's really romantic. I loved this fabulous story with many unexpected twists and turns.

Kathy * Bookworm Nation says

I really enjoyed this one. I thought the plot and setting were a lot of fun. I also really enjoyed the characters of Dani and Jack. Both have troubling pasts that they're trying to get over and neither are looking for romance. They have great chemistry together, I enjoyed their playful teasing. I also loved how Dani was able to see past Jack's gruffness to the good man underneath. I really enjoy contemporary westerns and this had an added mystery that kept things interesting. Overall, I thought this was a fun contemporary romance. I hear it's the start of a new series and I can't wait to read more!

Content: Mild romance, swoony kisses. Mild language - a few mild curse words. Mild violence and talk of drug abuse

Harlie Williams says

I have to tell on Ms. Rock. For some reason when she contacted me to review her latest release, she was a bit

timid (I'd say) in regards to whether I'd review it or not. Really? If anyone knows, I'm in love with Harlequin Heartwarming line. Like I told her, it's better than the Harlequin Romance line. Heartwarming stories have more depth to them, the romance is slower to build and when you are finished, you have the satisfaction that you have just read an awesome contemporary romance. It's clean, emotional and deals with real life situations that anyone can relate to.

Dani and Jack are two flawed characters (at least in their eyes) that meet in the funniest way. Guns are involved and it's actually funny. You get to see what Dani is made of from the get-go and Jack is just out of his league when it comes to Dani. Just not in the way you think. Dani is hiding from her past but has built a better life for herself. Jack is still beating himself up for something that happened to him over two years ago and he has the physical scar to prove it.

What really got me about their story was the mystery/suspense element that I really, really enjoyed. This is something that Ms. Rock doesn't write enough of this sub-genre but after reading this, she definitely has a future. I loved how the cast of characters involved were real players in the mystery and how the present collided with Jack's past. Beautifully written, even when it became painful for Jack and Dani. The climax of the book is just great. It made Jack realize that Dani is the woman for him but does it push her further away?

Their romance is slow to build but once they realize that it's there, Ms. Rock writes it sweet but with some hot kisses. It is Heartwarming, after all. I can't wait to see how their relationship continues for the remainder of the series. Oh yes, this is a prequel to the series featuring the rest of Jack's family and his ranch.

If you have never read a Heartwarming book, you are missing out. If you haven't read Ms. Rock...SHAME on you. I've been reading her for years and she is one of my favorite authors to read. *drops mic*

Aimee (Getting Your Read On) says

It's no secret that I'm a fan of the Harlequin Heartwarming line and Karen Rock's books in this line. I'm always so happy to see a new book coming out and I'm especially happy when I get to read and review it!

In addition to romance, this book has a bit of danger, mystery and suspense to liven things up. Jack and Dani are both a little rough around the edges but for different reasons. Dani is desperately trying to hide a secret from her past that could change her whole life if found out. Jack has hardened himself in order to find redemption for himself and his brother.

I liked Dani's spunk. She doesn't back down from tough situations. She's loyal and trustworthy despite the great secret. Jack's interest is peaked from his very first encounter with Dani. She's really not like most girls and Jack likes that. I liked it too. I think I'd like Dani as my friend.

This story was good. I don't think I loved it as much as some of Karen's other books but I did like it. Especially the ending. It's hard to resist a good cowboy story!
