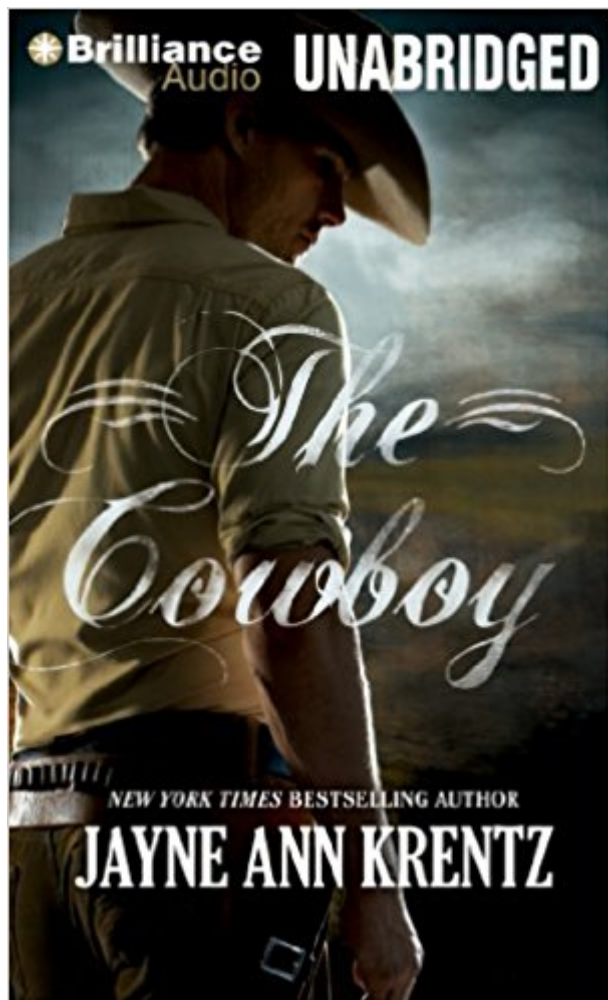


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# The Cowboy



## Synopsis

After their disastrous parting, Margaret Lark thought she was through with Rafe Cassidy. So when he shows up on her doorstep a year later with a shocking proposal, Margaret has no choice but to put her heart on the line again— even if it means winning back the cowboy who stole it in the first place.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Jayne Ann Krentz is the author of fifty New York Times bestsellers. She has written contemporary romantic suspense novels under that name, as well as futuristic and historical romance novels under the pseudonyms Jayne Castle and Amanda Quick, respectively. She lives in Seattle.

Some of my dislike was caused by Maggie's voice sounding like a child whining. The dialog was very "high school". There were a few good moments and chuckles. Near the end of the book, there started to be an interesting plot line, but it was too little too late. I think the author has potential but needs a good editor to give direction.

great

The Copyright on this book is 1990. It is a shame that book publishers try to fool readers by saying this is a new book. The book is one of a series that is not up to her usual standard. I hope her new one soon to be published is better.

This was a fairly average story. There was nothing especially offensive about it but nothing particularly compelling either. The back story tells us that Margret and Rafe were in a relationship a year ago that lasted two months. They were both in the corporate world and their romance apparently consisted of Rafe being very busy negotiating mergers and hostile takeovers while basically ignoring Maggie when they weren't in the bedroom. And the whole time he was harboring a secret that he was in direct competition with Maggie's company for some business deal. When Maggie finally learns of the situation, she feels that Rafe has been using her to gain inside information into her company so she runs to her boss and tips him off. Her tip-off allows her boss to adjust the timeline so as to beat Rafe to the deal. When Rafe finds out that she "betrayed" him, he's enraged and yells very hurtful things at her and tells her to get out of his life. Maggie does just that but even goes a step further and gets out of the corporate world altogether; choosing instead to pursue her dream of being a full-time writer. The book begins one year later when Maggie comes home to find Rafe in her apartment. He tells her that he wants her back and intends to have her. She tells him multiple times to go away and leave her alone but, with the help of her father, Rafe contrives to blackmail her into coming to his ranch in Arizona. I had some issues with the way this was handled. Even if Maggie's father thought that she should give Rafe another chance, participating in a blackmail scheme in order to force her to come out there was really underhanded. Especially for a man who supposedly loved his daughter more than anything in the world. A father should be in his daughter's corner no matter what. If he felt strongly that she and Rafe should work it out, then he could have come to her and spoke his piece. Forcing her to do something against her will is not how a father should operate. And, in any event, I thought the blackmail scheme was pretty weak to begin with. Rafe informs Maggie that her father, Connor, is planning to sell his company to him. Maggie worries that Rafe is somehow preying on her father as an act of revenge against her, but then Rafe tells her that Connor is staying at Rafe's family's ranch in Arizona because he's engaged to Rafe's mother. Maggie accuses Rafe of having some kind of ulterior motive for setting their parents up and Rafe calmly says that she should come out to the ranch and confront Connor herself - either to save him from the marriage or to rescue him from Rafe's business clutches. When Maggie says that she'll just call Connor, Rafe blithely informs her that Connor will refuse to take her calls because he's in on this scheme to force her to come to Arizona. And that turns out to be true. She calls Connor several times over the next few days but he's always "unavailable" and he never calls her back. Now, if it was me, at this point I'd have just said "fine then, Dad, you're on your own" and called it a day. Her father made it clear that he was acting of his own free will in this scenario so

I'd have left him to his wedding and business plans and gone on with my life. I certainly wouldn't have allowed their "blackmail" tactics to force me onto that plane. I mean, there isn't even any real blackmail here. Maggie claims to be going to the ranch to "save" her father, but it's clear he doesn't want to be saved. So why is she going? I know it's just a plot device to get things going but it doesn't make it any less ridiculous. Once she's at the ranch, things move fairly quickly. She's never really gotten over Rafe and, though it takes her a while to admit it to herself, she's still in love with him. He's giving it the full court press on getting her back. He tells her over and over that he's changed; business won't dominate his life this time. He'll make sure he gives her the proper attention. They also eventually sit down and hash out what happened a year ago; each actually listening to the other's side and seeing it from their perspective. They get back together in short order, though there are some bumps along the way. Most caused by Rafe's heavy-handed tactics. See, the ultimate reason the fiasco a year ago happened was because Rafe deliberately withheld information from Maggie. If, upon their first meeting, he'd told her that he and her company might be competitors in some business deals so she shouldn't tell him anything about her work, then she'd have been able to guard what she said and never feel like he was gaining the inside track from sleeping with her. All he had to do was be up front about it. Instead, he decides that she doesn't need to know this vital bit of information because she's just a little woman and he knows what's best for both of them. Thanks to that decision, when she finds out the truth she's got every reason to think he's been manipulating her for his own ends. But, despite Rafe claiming to have turned over a new leaf in the last year, while she's at his ranch and a tenuous trust is building between them, he is AGAIN keeping her in the dark about a business deal that he knows she wouldn't approve of. He makes a very conscious decision to keep the deal from her, and even straight up lies to her about it whenever she inquires, because he knows what's best. She's not even in the corporate world anymore so she shouldn't worry her pretty little head about it. Let the men worry about business. It's patronizing and deceitful and shows that he hasn't really changed after all. And thanks to this deceit, and a backstabbing corporate worm, their relationship is almost wrecked a second time. All in all it's a pretty standard story that revolves around Big Misunderstandings and hurt feelings. Not breaking any new ground in the genre but it's a fine story to pass the time. Oh but I will say that the ongoing theme of Rafe being a "cowboy" did NOT mesh well with the story. Practically every character we met made it a point to awkwardly shoehorn a cowboy or "modern gunslinger" reference into every conversation about Rafe and it just didn't work. Nobody talks or thinks that way in real life, so having literally every person in the story do it was just ridiculous and contrived.

I must say that Margaret Lark has nothing to recommend herself for a strong female character. She is ready to hop back into bed with Rafe Cassidy even though she does not trust him. What a bummer! Rafe Cassidy is the typical alpha male, arrogant, determined to have his way - but he learns to bend. He appears gracious in his emotional growth - but Maggie? This is not the best of the trilogy but is an easy read - has a bit of growth to the plot but why is it always assumed that love grows out of PMS [premarital sex]? Yup! she was still his mistress - what a come down for the modern woman - no guts to say no. Where is the strength of character not to give into temptation? Just weak, wishy-washy females. Revenge seems to motivate many people and injects a bit of tension with something to back down from - at their ages they should be more mature. Still a readable story as part of the trilogy.

This is a third in a trilogy - the Pirate, the Adventurer and the Cowboy. The heroines are romance writers and then end up finding their fictional hero in real life. In this one, Margaret Lark became involved with Rafe Cassidy, not knowing he was out to ruin her boss in a business deal. When she learns, she presumes he was only sleeping with her to gain information and so she admits her mistake to her bossy. It was a traumatic time, with her leaving her job, Rafe accusing her of betraying him. But she has pulled herself around, writing full time and loving it. The book takes up at the wedding on the second Heroine, where Margaret is a bridesmaid. So goes home thinking of Rafe and the disaster of a year ago, and is shocked to find Rafe waiting inside her apartment. He says he has come to ask her to marry him, but she makes it plain there is no chance of that. He informs her that his mother and her father were getting married and he was buying out her father's business. So she is forced to go to Rafe's ranch to find out what is going on. Plot is very simplistic, but JAK creates a lot of snappy nattering between the characters. A pleasant read, with a few giggles along the way.

As a Texas native who now lives in Oklahoma, I have seen my share of cowboys. I know this may seem picky, but I couldn't get past the fact that Rafe was constantly described as wearing boots with flower or star patterns. Note to Ms. Krentz: No self-respecting cowboy would allow himself to wear such prissy clothing! Other than this obvious faux pas, the story seemed pretty much like the standard Krentz romance. Arrogant man bent on revenge meets feisty heroine who convinces him revenge is not the answer. I sometimes think Ms. Krentz's characters are interchangeable. On the plus side, this is a light, breezy romance perfect for an easy read. If you aren't expecting an original plot and you can stomach a cowboy with purple flowers on his boots, then this is the book for you.

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