



Hard Pressed

Kate Canterbury

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Dear Jackson,

I'm leaving you this note because I know you're very busy and I don't want to waste the town sheriff's time. Lord knows I've already wasted enough of it.

Thank you for taking me home last night and...everything else. I made you a basket of wild blueberry muffins for your trouble. That seemed like the appropriate baked good for getting naked in your living room.

I wasn't myself last night. I didn't mean to kiss you or fondle your backside or ask all those intimate questions. Thank you for pretending to enjoy it.

It was very noble of you to sleep on the couch while I was starfished on your bed. I couldn't help but notice it's quite large. The bed, that is. I swear, I didn't notice anything else when I let myself out this morning.

As you know, Talbott's Cove is a ridiculously small town and there's no chance we can avoid each other. Not that I'd want to avoid you, of course, but I'm not sure I can look at you without thinking of the forty different ways I made a fool of myself.

Instead of avoidance, let's try to be friends. We'll forget all about last night...if that's what you want.

Please burn this note after you read it—

Annette

p.s. I whipped up some cinnamon buns, too. Please enjoy them. I'm not sure why, but I couldn't get buns out of my mind today.

Hard Pressed Details

Date : Published June 29th 2018

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Author : Kate Canterbury

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Genre : Romance, Contemporary Romance, Contemporary

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From Reader Review Hard Pressed for online ebook

NMmomof4 says

3 Stars

Overall Opinion: This felt...meh. I didn't hate it, but I just thought it was okay. I struggled with the h and her pushing the H away. I also didn't quite understand their feelings. Their lust? Yeah, I got that. Just the other stuff I didn't, because it felt like all their relationship was sex and the h pushing the H away. Pretty low angst too. So, anyone looking for a small town, easy, and sexy read -- this very well might work for you!

Brief Summary of the Storyline: This is Annette and Jackson's story. Annette just found out that the man she was holding out for is gay, and finds herself drunk and being taken home by the new sheriff in town. Jackson has been lusting over Annette from afar because he needs to focus on his new position, but he finds himself unable to resist her and starts his strong pursuit. Annette is damaged from her last crush as well as her family that has always made her feel like she was never good enough, so she doesn't understand Jackson's interest in her. There is a lot of cat-and-mouse activity going on, some sexy times, and some sweet moments...and they get a HFN ending.

POV: This alternated between Annette and Jackson's POV.

Overall Pace of Story: Okay. I felt like it was slow at times, but I never got to the point that I skimmed -- I just was easily distracted and it took me a while to read.

Instalove: Kind of. Other than sexual connection, I didn't get their progression into deeper feelings.

H rating: 4 stars. Jackson. I liked him! I wanted more for him than the h at times tbh.

h rating: 2.5 stars. Annette. I struggled with her. While I understood her hang-ups, I felt like they caused her to push away too much.

Sadness level: Low, no tissues needed

Push/Pull: Yes! (view spoiler)

Heat level: Good. They have some good tension, chemistry, and scenes -- but not so much it takes away from the story.

Descriptive sex: Yes

OW/OM drama: No

Sex scene with OW or OM: No

Cheating: No

Separation: Yes (view spoiler)

Possible Triggers: Not really

Closure: This had alright closure with what I would call a HFN ending (view spoiler), though some readers might be just fine in calling it a HEA. I just thought that we needed more of them as an actually outed couple!

Safety: This one should be Safe for most safety gang readers
(view spoiler)

Beneath The Covers Blog says

Full review can be found **HERE** --> <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

**ARC provided for a voluntary honest review.* ~Sonal*

Lisa says

Review to come

Bonnie-Anne Carmichael (Love Triangles Are Fucking Stupid.) says

Jackson was a babe. He deserves songs to be written about him. Annette on the other hand I wanted to strangle with my bare hands.

The ONLY set up I enjoy reading in books is extremely stubborn women who make heroes chase them to a totally unreasonable degree. I fucking eat it up. I love seeing the hero work for it. So in theory this should have worked for me BUT her reasons for pushing him away were so fucking annoying. She's getting over the most pathetic ten year old crush on a lad that was very obviously never into her and it was so cringey I wanted to die. The crush was mentioned one billion times. Literally half this book was probably just the name Owen repeated over and over again. Owen Owen Owen Owen Owen. I'm going to see that name in my nightmares. It was just pathetic. Pathetic. Then the whole letting her parents and sisters say shitty things to her because it's easier than standing up for herself or some pish? Get a fucking spine lassie. The worst part is that I actually agreed with some of the awful things her family said. The Owen thing was desperate and embarrassing. I hate that I feel that way about a female character but that's how much I hate her. What did the hero, who was literally perfect, see in this lassie?

Anne OK says

I loved the cover on this one and the blurb responded to my need for something light and romantic without all the angst and darkness of what I've settled on for several weeks now. Although I found a lot to like, I just never felt this story was fully developed. There were so many unanswered questions and dangling ends. The big case the sheriff and FBI were working on together was so inadequately covered and who the heck did they arrest? What's the deal with Brooke keeping her father's situation so quiet? And speaking of Brooke -- Loved her! That girl could definitely preach it! I know readers will most likely get answers to that conundrum since Brooke appears to be getting a book of her own. And then there's all this "Cinderella-type" relationship between Annette (by the way love that name -- I share it!) and her bitchy mom and sisters! There seemed to be so much missing from what could be drawn from the book. I just never fully understood what their problems were with Annette. It wasn't like she was a total zero. And the Owen/Cole deal -- well, sorry he broke Annette's heart, but it happens. Let it go and move on from what little past they had and improve the here and now with more development. And last, but certainly not least, I totally was head-over-heels for Jackson. I would have liked to have had a little more info on his past. And I was thrilled with the way he supported Annette. But their relationship was either baking or having sex. Okay, that's not all bad - but it certainly felt like maybe there should have been a little more actual relationship building. Too much repetitiveness in the sex and dialogue.

The ending was sweet and what I expected it to be. However, once again, it wrapped up quickly and without readers actually sharing the experience. It was just hurriedly wham-bam and over. Not my favorite kind of happily-ever-after. Overall, what was there to read was well-written -- it just felt incomplete.

AJ says

4.5 stars!

OMG, I loved this book! Sweet, sexy, laugh-out-loud hilarious, swoony and heartfelt, this is a fantastically fun read, one of Kate's best, and I couldn't put it down.

This is the second book in the *Talbott's Cove* series, but it can easily be read as a standalone. Annette was introduced in the first book of this series, *Fresh Catch* as the owner of the local bookstore, and a woman with a mad crush on lobsterman Owen Bartlett (who in fact turned out to be gay). Heartbroken -- more over the loss of what she dreamed may have been possible than the actual loss of Owen -- she heads to a bar to drown her sorrows.

Sheriff Jackson Lau used to be a NYPD police officer, but he left life in the city behind to move to a small town where he could get to know the people he served and make a difference. He has only been in town for a year and he loves his job, but every day he is distracted by the sight of Annette in her bookstore over the road. He wants her, but for many reasons, he's been keeping his distance.

I couldn't get Annette messy and dirty. I couldn't make her scream my name. Not unless I was also ready to wife her up, and I wasn't sure about that. I couldn't casually date her with the entire town watching -- and they would watch -- and chances were good I couldn't casually fuck

her either. She looked altogether too by-the-book for fuck buddies, and there was no room for a tomcat sheriff around here.

When Jackson is called to remove a drunken Annette from the bar, he ends up taking her to his home to let her sleep it off, where she proceeds to strip naked and attempt to seduce him. There's only so much a man can take, and while he managed to be a gentleman, there is a brief moment of hotness. Annette runs off with embarrassment the next morning, but how's a girl to thank a man for something like that – with a muffin basket of course!

I wanted him to have this, something I'd made all by myself, and I wanted it to say a million different things.

Thank you for giving me a soft place to land. Sorry about rubbing my ass all over your house. I hope we can be friends even though I attacked you. Thank you for shutting down all of my attempts at seduction. Have a muffin; now please forget all the things I said when I was drunk. Did you mean to kiss me back? Would you do it again?

And when she shows up to deliver it, Jackson decides that he's tired of keeping his distance.

“I understand that you’re not ready,” he replied. “But know this: I’m not going anywhere. I’m right here, waiting for you.”

Oh my God, I love this relationship!! Teasing, banter, flirting and absolutely epic chemistry! I could feel the attraction between them, and watching it all unfold was awesome! Despite her mad attraction, Annette is scared of diving into anything with Jackson, and given her past and what she's been through, I could understand where she was at.

“Where’s your head at today?” he asked, his voice low.

“Right here,” I replied. That was the best I could do. I couldn’t hand anything serious. I was fresh off a long-term, one-sided, mostly imaginary relationship and I couldn’t dive into the dating game and its associated bullshit right now. But I could be here, with this man who made swallowing sexy, and I could want him. I didn’t have all the answers yet but I could want him and it could be as simple as that.

And Jackson! Holy damn, the man is pure, swoony hotness! Sweet, loyal and funny, he doesn't hold anything back, and I love how determined he is to get his girl.

“I have enough patience to wait for what I want and enough sense to know when it’s worth waiting for.”

And together they are combustible! The sexy time is freaking hot, and there's an intensity to it which makes it so much better as they give in to everything they are feeling and just go with it.

I was a goner for this girl. Was gone when I started lusting over her ankles but this was some higher-level cosmic soul mate shit.

They have their ups and downs, and there are things they need to deal with, but the ride is beautifully written with lots of emotion to go with all of that chemistry and hotness, and I completely fell for these two and their love story.

And we need a special shout-out to Annette's best friend, the absolutely fabulous, Brooke. The woman is completely bold, sassy, and completely filterless and I freaking love her! She stole every scene she was in and had me laughing out loud as she helped Annette and Jackson along the way.

"I don't care about Jackson, I said.

"You know what's awesome?" she murmured. "How you're so bad at lying. Say that again – about how you don't care for him. Maybe this time you'll be able to look at me while you do it. Oh, and also? Try to say it as if you believe it, too, and you're not asking me a damn question."

I shot a sharp glance across the table. "Okay, fine," I said. "I care about Jackson. He's my neighbour and I see him around town but--"

"Oh my fucking god," Brooke said, groaning. She pushed her sunnies to the top of her head and rubbed the bridge of her nose. "I love you but I also want to slap you. Really hard. Not some quick tap but a full slap, the kind that leaves a handprint on your face and knocks this bullshit out of your head."

"I'd slap you back," I muttered.

"I'd fucking hope so," she replied.

This is SUCH a fun read! I laughed so many times, and I got completely swept up with these fantastic characters and their gorgeous love story.

4.5 stars!

An Advanced Review Copy was generously provided by the author in exchange for an honest review.

Sarah - Musings of the Modern Belle says

***AVAILABLE NOW - FULL REVIEW ***

4 Dessert CROWNS

Talbot Cove has become one my favorite small towns. I fell in love with it during Fresh Catch, and became even more enamored with this little seaside town during Hardpressed.

Jackson and Annette are such a fun couple. She was just utterly adorable from the moment you meet her, and she has your sympathy from page one. I loved this little indie business woman. Jackson, who is he sherif is

this small town, is just fabulous with his alpha dominance and the way he wants to take care of Annette. I loved these two together.

The story is entertaining. I was engaged by their relationship, the physical chemistry, and the sex ensues (Kate never disappoints in this regard). I enjoyed the conflict and resolution choices as well. So why the 4 CROWNS? I was captivated. I could put the book down and walk away, and at the end of the day, I want to be swept away in a fictional world.

Because Kate Canterbury has created a town full of characters, who I ADORE. I hope she plans to stay in this world for just a bit longer.

ARC received in exchange for an honest review

Diana says

2.5 stars

After reading and loving Fresh Catch, I was really looking forward to Hard Pressed. Sadly, I was disappointed.

We first met Annette in Fresh Catch, and she is heart broken when she finds out the man she has been in love with, is in love with another man. This irked me because she has been crushing on Owen for years, yet he never showed any interest in more than a friendship. Didn't she get the message? It just all seemed a little like high school drama to me. Her inner dialogue plucked my nerves, definitely putting her in the TSTL category.

Jackson Lau is the new hot, sexy sheriff in town, and is crazy about Annette. He is waiting for the right time, but Annette doesn't know how to handle him. In my opinion, Jackson definitely deserved better.

I think the final straw for me was the relationship Annette had with her family. I almost lost it when they visited Annette. I don't want to tell you what happened, but I really had to put my kindle down and walk away for a while.

Like I mentioned, I did like a previous book by this author, and I would try another book by her. Please read other reviews before you decide to read this one, because it is just my cranky opinion.

Stephanie Rose says

This is my first Kate Canterbury book and I freaking loved it! I loved Annette, I LOVED Jackson, and together they were amazing. Annette was so relatable, the perpetual family underdog and town sweetheart who captured the attention of the new sheriff and couldn't understand why. And the way Jackson pursued her in all his sweet, hot alpha glory, sigh...I read this book in a day and see myself rereading in the future. 5+ stars!

Ivy Deluca says

UPDATED 6/29:

I did a joint review with my friend Michelle, which you can find on After Dark Book Lovers at <http://www.afterdarkbooklovers.com/20...>

There's a fair bit of GIF-gushing there, so I'll try and keep it to a minimum here.

blinks

Ok, fine. Let's pretend I'm not about to word-vomit all up in here, shall we?

Jackson is the swoony hero I didn't know I wanted, but I absolutely needed right now. His love for Annette, all of her, exactly as she is, well ...ok I'm ALWAYS a sucker for that, but his care and attention and straight up chivalry is my kryptonite.

He wants her, he adores her and it shines through every page AND yet, you don't miss out on any beats. You get to enjoy the whole journey, you still feel like you're falling in love with her alongside him. Now Jackson, I fell for him from page 1, Chapter 1. Swept off my feet, and if you knew me, you'd know that's no mean feat, because I'm not about that life.

Annette is as complicated a heroine as any other Canterbury, and I mean that in the best way possible. Can she frustrate (me and) herself? All the time. But I understood her and sympathized with her plight and once you get to see her family, you will too.

As for secondary characters, Canterbury populates this little town with oodles of them, helping to make this 'verse a place I want to visit again and again. (Fair warning: Brooke is my BFF, and we will be drinking wine and taking names, hopefully in a future book).

Plus, another signature move by Canterbury is her ability to take scenes that have played out in another story, and shift the reader's perspective without making you feel dizzy from that *deja vu*. It truly feels new and fresh. Every time. I'm always impressed at that level of attention to detail and the straight-up storytelling skill it takes to make it work.

Is this perfect? No. The main conflict is all internal, there's no big source of tension to give that sense of urgency to the plot, but that's my speed. Is it slanted to one side? Perhaps. But frankly, it's the type of imbalance that I enjoy, so I'm not mad at it.

So since there is no longer anything quick about this review, and if you've stuck around this long, to you (and Ms. Canterbury) I say

If you love character-driven contemporary romance with humor, heart, sweet treats, and plenty of smut to make a pervy girl squirm, I would not hesitate to recommend this. Off to finish my re-read....

ARC provided by author for review

For more reviews, visit

maggieandteddy says

I loved Jackson. Annette was cute and sweet. At times, she was a little too wacky for me.

Brooke was the typical crazy bff.

I love this author's writing. Cute small town RomCom.

3.5 stars

Laurie says

First of all, I cannot even believe Hard Pressed is the very first Kate Canterbury book I have ever read. I feel like a prize idiot for not listening to my friends who said, "read Kate, you will love her." Hard Pressed was the perfect Kate gateway book for me, because it checked all manner of boxes - sexy af, swoony, smart and brilliantly funny. So damn funny.

I honestly don't think that I was prepared for just how much I was going to love Hard Pressed. But yeah, this book stole my heart. From the moment I read that blurb, I should have known it was going to happen. And did I say "stole my heart"? More like kicked down a door and taken up residency. I've read this book more times than I can count in the last week and each time it gets better and better and better.

Annette Cortassi and Sheriff Jackson Lau are sure to become your favorite couple. They have potent chemistry that crackles and pops off the page. I loved how it all played out with a heat that requires (much) fanning and a nice cold beverage to take the edge off.

Annette Cortassi is a like a ripple and while she may not always know it, she makes a difference in so many ways. When we meet her, she is a bit off kilter and she begins to right herself with inspiration from The Great British Baking Show. Baking and cooking are perhaps the greatest forms of therapy and their output, gifts to other hungry souls. What pours out of Annette's kitchen are yummy professions of courage and love, for herself, her community and a certain sheriff.

And speaking of that sheriff and being off kilter. Jackson Lau knocked back on his heels by the lovely Ms. Cortassi is the most gloriously sexy thing. He is cool, calm and observant, unless there are baked goods or a

certain book mistress involved and then two of those things fly out the window. He will more than make you swoon with his patience and all about consent self.

Then there is Annette and Brooke Markham. These two women are meant for each other in all the best ways. They have a friendship that is the gold standard — It is blunt-force honest, tempered with moments that will have you literally laughing out loud, as well as tearing up. If this Canterbury newbie gets a vote, I am a resolute YES to a Brooke book.

Make this book yours TODAY. Fall in love with these characters, the community of Talbott's Cove and their creator. I'll be over here dreaming of all the blueberry baked goods and one-clicking all the Kate Canterbury goodness. Enjoy!!!

Happy reading!!

Laurie's Rating: ?????????????????????????????????

PS - I need to include an addendum to my review. Over the course of a 12 day period that at times felt impossible, Hard Pressed was my life raft, security blanket and comfort food. These characters and their story were exactly what I needed when I felt despair and for that I am eternally grateful to Kate Canterbury.

Jill says

3.5 Stars

Bookgasms Book Blog says

Gah!!! You guys!!! Reading a Kate Canterbury novel is legit like coming home for me. And revisiting Talbott's Cove? Pure heaven! This story hit me right in the feels and was pure comfort for me. I LOVE this little world this genius author(lady) created and can not get enough of her words. Annette and Jackson were amazing. I loved their banter, chemistry and laugh out loud moments. This was a pure joy to read.

If you read Fresh Catch, you will know all about gorgeous bookstore owner Annette Cortassi and the reason for her heartbreak over lobsterman Owen Bartlett. But we could never have expected Sheriff Jackson Lau and everything he would do to convince his dreamgirl she was meant for him. HELLO Fireworks!!!! This story was an absolute delight! It was so charming, swoony and sexy and I loved everything about it!

What else can I say that I haven't already said about this brilliant author? Kate Canterbury is so incredibly gifted and insanely talented that I just want to scream it from the rafters. Her words can transport you to a small town on the Maine coast or right to a conference table in Boston where you fit right alongside a crazy family of Architects during their Monday morning meetings. I am so in love with everything she writes and feel so blessed that we all benefit from her words. Each of her stories is a gift and everytime a new one releases it feels just like Christmas. Hard Pressed was outstanding and amazing and ALL of the things and I seriously can't wait for her next one. Bravo! 5 stars! ~Ratula

Okay, seriously, *Hard Pressed* is one of my favorite reads so far this year! It's got a bit of everything I love: amazing characters; compelling story line; smart, fun, witty banter; swoony, sexy moments; and, just an overall "feel good" feeling.

I knew I'd love Annette and her craziness when introduced to her in *Fresh Catch* and I did nearly pee my pants with her POV of the bookstore scene with Owen and Cole. God, I died a thousand embarrassing deaths right along with her. She's someone who wears her heart on her sleeve, and would do anything for anyone at anytime. She just doesn't realize that the whole town of Talbott's Cove would do anything for her too. Especially the sheriff. One Jackson Lau who's been paying close attention to Annette and her sexy ankles for months.

God, I loved how the romance bloomed between Annette and Jackson. That it was fresh and smart and swoony. That Jackson knew just how hard to push Annette and when to back off. I loved how he gave her the space she needed to work through her feelings. But not too much.

I loved how Jackson helped Annette to realize that she's enough. That their love is worthy of every risk, every chance, every step they take. Swoon. ~ Missy, 5 stars

Lorena says

A light and fun book.

I loved the H !! Very much. He was lovely and sweet and nice.

Didn't like the h that much, I know it was because of her issues but she got on my nerves with her attitude for more than half the book...

Great chemistry and good steamy moments.

I wish the prologue had looked further into the future though!

All in all though, it was quite a nice and enjoyable read.

POV: dual

Enjoyment: 3/5

Writing style: 3/5

Storyline: 3/5

Hero: 4/5

Heroine: 2/5

Secondary characters: 3/5

Romance/chemistry: 3/5

Hotness/Sex scenes: 3/5

Angst: 0/5

Drama level: 0/5

Humor level: 3/5

Depth of the book: 0/5

Closure: HFN
