



## Slow Burn Cowboy

*Maisey Yates*

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*In Copper Ridge, Oregon, a cowboy's best friend might turn out to be the woman of his dreams...*

If Finn Donnelly makes a plan, he sticks to it. After his brothers left Copper Ridge, Finn stayed behind, determined to keep their ranch going by himself. And when he realized his feelings for Lane Jensen were more than platonic, he shoved that inconvenient desire away. It was easy...until it wasn't. Suddenly his brothers are coming home to claim their share of the property. And Lane is no longer just in his fantasies. She's in his arms, and their friendship is on the line...

He's been her buddy, her handyman, her rock. But until that one breathtaking kiss, Lane somehow overlooked the most important thing about Finn Donnelly—he's all man. They're right together, no matter how much his volatile past has bruised him. Finn wants to hold Lane's body, but he doesn't want to hold her heart. But Lane is falling fast and now she's got a plan of her own...to show Finn there's nothing hotter than friendship turned to slow-burning love.

## Slow Burn Cowboy Details

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Author : Maisey Yates

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## From Reader Review Slow Burn Cowboy for online ebook

### Julie says

Slow Burn Cowboy by Maisey Yates is a 2017 HQN publication.

Will Finn and Lane be able to meet halfway to make their relationship work or will one have to move on without the other?

I enjoyed watching Finn and Lane work through their thorny issues and realize the depth of their feelings for each other and the full potential of their relationship. The emotional level is deep, but the banter is mostly light, which made the book well rounded and balanced.

If you are looking for a mature, but fun and sensual contemporary western romance, 'Slow Burn Cowboy' should satisfy your craving.

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<https://www.nightowlreviews.com/v5/Re...>

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### Stacee says

3.5 stars

I always enjoy books in this series, so I just request when I see Maisey's name.

I liked Lane and Finn. She's snarky and he's stoic and their friendship works. Everything was a bit more complicated with Finn's brothers showing up, but I liked the dynamic. Oh and their chemistry is palpable.

I did enjoy the BFF to more; honestly, it's one of my favorite tropes. In this instance, the drama and the arguments did get a bit repetitive. Thankfully, the time between the inevitable break up and grand gesture didn't last too long.

As always, it was another enjoyable piece of sorbet. I just wish it would have been a bit more fluffy.

\*\*Huge thanks to Harlequin Books and NetGalley for providing the arc free of charge\*\*

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### Mandi Schreiner says

I just love the town of Copper Ridge and with this book we meet the entire Donnelly family, or at least the brothers. Finn is our hero, but his three half-brothers come back to his ranch after their grandfather dies and leaves each man a quarter interest. Finn has put his entire life into this ranch and hasn't seen his brothers for many years. He assumes his brothers will want to be bought out, and be back on their way, which is totally fine with him as he wants the ranch all to himself.

*His blood, sweat and tears were there. Soaked into the ground, the wood and basically every other damn surface in the place. Like the rest of his brothers he had spent summers here as a kid. Unlike them, when he was sixteen he had decided that he was here to stay. Finn had never felt anything quite like the peace that came from working his body boneless out in the field.*

But his brothers have other plans. One is fresh out of the army, one has a troubled teenage daughter, and one just wants to cause trouble - and they all want to move in and live at the ranch. I could spend the entire review talking about them because I enjoyed them so much but I'll save it for each of their own books.

Finn is a rancher, a very sexy rancher who has a best friend named Lane. They complete one another on so many levels. He helps her around her house if she has a problem, and she gives him food (she has a passion for cooking) and generally keeps him happy on a daily basis. They are besties and that is the way it has always been.

Lane owns a specialty grocery store in the town and really wants to expand it to include more local items. She starts to put the pressure on Finn and his dairy ranch to start producing organic cheese and milk, knowing she has the clientele for it - but he won't hear of it. He thinks his money is better spent in big dairy contracts. When his brothers all come back to the ranch, they seem to each have an opinion, giving Finn an extended headache. As they invade his house and his quiet, Finn finds himself spending more time at Lane's to get away from the chaos. And one night their friendship turns into more. But then there is resentment, and questions, and doubt and basically they are both scared about losing their friendship should their romance turn sour. It's well done and realistic.

Finn is so sexy with his scruffy face and hard abs. He wears a Stetson and is grumpy - just how I like my romance hero. His banter with Lane is fun - they are both grumpy at times and they know each other so well they know just how to push each other's buttons.

*"It's probably just a fuse, and it's probably just going to take me a minute."*

*"I told you I flipped the switches," she said, sounding grumpy.*

*"I know you did," he said.*

*"You think I flipped the switches wrong," she said accusatory.*

*"I'm sure you're a great switch flipper," he responded, deadpan, as he continued to the fuse box.*

Finn is the one to push for the relationship to start, and Lane is the one to fight for it in the end. They both had crappy childhoods and some drama, and once they get it all in the open and are there to support each other, their relationship gets stronger.

As I said above, Finn's brothers really add a lot to this story, as well as Lane's girlfriends. I really enjoyed their inclusion and I can't wait to get more from this family. A super sexy, best friends to lovers story that worked very well for me.

Grade: B+

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## ♥?elody says

I skimmed the last 15% of this. I **never** skim endings so that's how little I cared for this. Honestly this was such a chore to get through, I just wanted it over with.

3 for 3 now. I don't know what's going on but this is the third consecutive *Copper Ridge* (full length) book I didn't enjoy. I love Maisey Yates's writing. I love her work. Her writing is so fluid and smart. She writes realistic flawed characters with depth and grit. But maybe because the couple and story wasn't working for me here the flaws stood out more. Same issues I had with *Tough Luck Hero* and *Last Chance Rebel* happened here. This was too overwrought and dramatic.

But there was always the chance that what she had to say would break things even more. All that thinking about rebuilding. And now here she was. **But then, it was entirely possible that this was new construction. That the old building, the one that housed their friendship, was condemned.** Had nothing to do with what they had now. What they would have in the future. Suddenly, it all seemed black, blank. She couldn't see back; she couldn't see forward. She was far too different from whom she'd been. And so was he. Well, no. He wasn't different. That was the problem.

And also so contradictory and confusing:

That whole thing with Rebecca and Finn—as much nothing as it was—was suddenly at the forefront of her mind. But, more than that was the discussion they'd had after. When Rebecca had grilled her on whether or not she and Finn were just friends and Lane had insisted they were. It made her feel horrifically transparent, and also a little bit like a liar. Even though at the time, even under cruel and unusual forms of torture, she would have sworn that she and Finn were only friends. She hadn't meant to lie to Rebecca. She really hadn't. Or maybe she had. Because she had certainly been lying to herself. So all the lies were certainly born of self-protection. And were maybe not entirely unintentional as far as her subconscious went.

This reminded me a lot of Jill Shalvis's *Always on My Mind*. Same plot, same pattern, best friends attracted to each other but for reasons that aren't well grounded for why they can't be together both parties dig their heels in, deny deny deny and go back and forth and in circles (and reverse) for 90% of the story.

I was totally expecting to come on here and rip the heroine Lane to shreds. With her melodramatic manic "how can you do this to meeeee! I'm emotionally vulnerable" meltdowns you are tempted repeatedly to throw this book out a window. But surprisingly she got her act together at the halfway mark. I still didn't care for her but she no longer made my lip curl. As for the hero Finn, same can't be said for him unfortunately. This was such a replica of Rebecca's book, where the first half the heroine is so dramatic and up in her own head and in extreme denial mode then the second half it's the hero's turn to be the bullheaded drama queen.

That role reversal happened here too and I'm beginning to suspect is a Maisey Yates staple. And of course the quick jump from "*I won't ever get married. Everyone I love leaves. I don't understand what love is*" bullshit to "*Omegawd I love you. Let's get married*" is so clunky and unrealistic. There is no natural progression. And a lot of that had to do with the heavy handed repetitive dialogue. When you constantly have your characters going in circles and contradicting themselves and in their own heads 90% of the time there is little room for actual growth and movement forward. At least that's what it felt like here. Both hero and heroine are always talking in circles and repeating themselves nonstop and mentally working themselves up to such an extreme degree it makes the story feel like a soggy wet towel. Or an overly frothy beverage where all you get is foam. Sorry....it seems I can't stop today with the awful analogies. ?? Or is it similes? Whatevs.

The thing that really tripped me up is I read this on my kindle and it includes a novella at the end which I totally forgot about, so when you have your leads blurting out ILYs and your kindle says you are at the 60% mark, you are expecting to get more or something big to happen next, right? Wrong. Nothing happened but a rushed resolution cause tada!....a novella awaits you. Which made the ending fall very short. It just capped everything off as unsatisfying as a whole.

And as for the leads, everything about Lane and Finn felt incredibly forced and just *off*. It felt very hamfisted. Nothing felt real about these two, individually and together as a couple. From their flat chemistry to their 10 year long friendship (that we are reminded about on every page) to Finn being attracted to her, to Lane not realizing her BFF is a hot man until 10 years later and acting weird about it. Also the whole "weird" factor was so overdone and gave the heroine an obnoxious immature tone I didn't care for. Lane to me kept coming off like an awkward hormonal teenager discovering her first crush. You are attracted to your hot best friend. OMG!? So WEIRD. Oh nooos! *How could this have happened?* The sky is falling!

Grow the fuck up and deal with it. Jesus.

And Finn was in permanent state of asshole mode through majority of the story which did him no favors. I mean...what's the point? There's being an asshole and being sorry and there's being an asshole and not doing shit about it. Finn is the latter. He's very self-aware of being a moody jerk, that's a typical Yates character trait, but he does nothing to change it. Which is the same issue I had with Gage. The no follow through made him such a one-note weak hero IMO. Yates did a very poor job of fleshing this character out or letting him grow. And I'm sorry but if you got handed an unfair inheritance deal, you have your couple of days of kicking rocks and raging then you man up and try dealing with it. Finn's grandfather left the ranch to all 4 of his grandsons, Finn being the only one who has worked and lived on the ranch for the past 10 years, so he resents this surprising move and wants ownership of the ranch. I understood his sense of feeling wronged. But him constantly thinking the worst of his estranged 3 brothers who so clearly just want a stable home base made him come off like the worst kind of immature douchehole. Having to sit through him constantly throwing petty sneering jabs at them, stomping around and growling cause grandpa is *so unfair!* and referring to his brothers as "terminal illnesses" was insufferable to say the least. Ugh. Grow up Finn.

See that's the second time I've said grow up in this review. See the pattern here?

So overall this clearly didn't work for me. My original rating was 2 stars but as I sat down to review this I realized there was literally \*nothing\* I enjoyed about this. I think my gut instinct was to give the extra star since it's an author I love and her writing is very strong, but here even the writing didn't really draw me in unfortunately. So 1 sad star it is. ? And I just bought Alex's book and I'll be honest I'm not rushing to pick it up right now, I'm having serious buyers remorse. At this point I hate to say this but the redundancy of that

last 3 books makes me hold off buying any Copper Ridge books in the future. I'd much rather wait on library copies right now. ?

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### **Melanie says**

*Slow Burn Cowboy* was an excellent friends to lovers romance that perfectly sets up the Donnelly family portion of the *Copper Ridge* series.

When his brothers left Copper Ridge, Finn Donnelly stayed and kept the family ranch going. Now, the remaining Donnellys are coming home to claim their share in the ranch. Finn wants nothing to do with their sudden return or the resurgence of his desire for Lane Jensen. Finn and Lane have been best friends for a long time and they would do anything for one another. After one breathtaking kiss, everything changes but Finn is determined to keep his heart safe. Lane, however, is falling quickly and wants to show Finn just how good they could be together.

After arriving in Copper Ridge, Lane built a life for herself despite the difficulties that led to her escaping to Copper Ridge. She's incredibly dedicated to her store and comes up with some great ideas on how to keep her business from becoming more of the same. Lane's love of food and cooking had me constantly wanting to snack while reading. Also, she's quite the sarcastic person which is one of my favorite personality traits for my heroines.

Finn had a difficult childhood and really found a purpose in life on his grandfather's ranch in Copper Ridge. He's incredibly dedicated to making the ranch succeed and feels a deep connection to the place that saved him as a teenager. Finn harbors a lot of anger and resentment towards his family and to an extent, he feels betrayed that the land he's worked for is being partially handed over to virtual strangers. In part because of the way he was raised and his current situation, Finn also comes off as a bit of an ass and is quick to take his anger out on the person closest to him, Lane.

Lane and Finn had a great friendship that provided a good foundation for when their relationship was taken to the next level. Their conversations are filled with excellent banter and some hilarious double entendre. There is obviously some hesitation on both sides to get involved with each other due to their friendship, so that does lead to a lot of repetitive back and forth. However, once they do get involved, it's incredibly sexy and very enjoyable. Both Lane and Finn had some serious issues to work through and I liked that their relationship wasn't overly easy.

The situation with Finn and his brothers was definitely one that kept me interested. I understood Finn's anger at the situation and it was great watching him work through that as he got to know his brothers. All four of the Donnellys are very different from one another, so I liked watching them interact and seeing the different ways they would react to situations.

Overall, *Slow Burn Cowboy* did the friends to lovers aspect very well and I'm excited for the rest of the Donnelly romances as this family may be my favorite in the *Copper Ridge* series.

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### **Marlene says**

Originally published at Reading Reality

I loved Last Chance Rebel, and my friend Amy loved Hold Me, Cowboy, so I expected to love Slow Burn Cowboy. But that's not what happened.

Instead I have very much of a mixed feelings review on tap. Very mixed.

The friends-to-lovers trope is one of my favorites, so again, I was expecting to like the story line in this book. But something, actually multiple somethings, don't quite work.

The set up is excellent, Lane and Finn have been best friends for ten years, ever since Lane left her parents' home back East and moved to Copper Ridge to live with her brother Matt. At the time, Lane was sixteen and obviously just a bit fragile. Finn was 23 or 24 and more than a bit too old for her.

But that 8 or 9 year gap closes pretty quickly after a few years. Now Lane is in her late 20s and Finn is in his mid-30s. They're both adults. But they are both still awfully fragile.

They are best friends. Really, truly. They spend time together and they care for each other and they need each other. But they are filling the gaps in each other's lives that would normally be filled by a spouse or significant other. Not that their relationship isn't significant, but they have fallen into a situation where they are friends with a different set of benefits. She cooks and buys his clothes, he kills spiders, changes lightbulbs and fixes the porch steps. It works for them.

Until it doesn't.

Finn's grandfather has just died. Instead of leaving his ranch to Finn, who has been working with him for that same last bunch of years, the old man left it to Finn and his three half-brothers equally. The Donnelly Brothers are all at crossroads in their lives, and they all move back to the ranch, into the house and the land that Finn expected would be his.

All of their relationships are strained and distant, and no one seems to be happy about any of it. So Finn, in a crazed need to re-establish control over something, anything, in his suddenly chaotic life, decides that he wants more from Lane than he's ever asked for. He wants to push past their carefully maintained boundaries and turn their relationship into that of friends with the usual benefits.

He thinks it's possible to make love and not feel at least a little love. And he's an idiot.

Finn's perfectly happy to tear down all of Lane's defenses and push for whatever he wants. But when Lane turns the tables on him and starts pushing him for what she wants out of a relationship, he pushes her away as hard and as fast as he can.

The question of whether Finn can get his head out of his ass long enough to figure himself out is an open one. Finn needs to open his eyes, and his heart, before he throws away his best chance at happiness. And he needs to grovel.

Escape Rating C+: There was so much potential in Slow Burn Cowboy, but it never quite gels into the book that I was looking forward to.

Both Lane and Finn are damaged people, and neither of them thinks that they are worthy of happiness or

love. They protect themselves in different ways. Lane by walling off what hurts her, and Finn by pushing away anyone who might get close enough to hurt him.

It's amazing that they have managed to sustain a friendship, but they definitely have.

While Finn is a bit of an arsehole about it, his trauma is understandable. His dad seems to have been a serial philanderer, leaving a string of exes with his sons all across the country. Dad left everyone. But his mom also abandoned him. And he's just sure everyone else will too.

Lane's trauma just isn't one that was easy for this reader to identify with. Her sense of loss at giving a baby up for adoption when she was sixteen is understandable, but she's been wearing the past like a hair shirt ever since, to the point where the hair felt like it had been woven from a drama llama rather than anything real. Her story felt like angst for angst's sake.

Also, these are two people who live inside their heads an awful lot, which also doesn't feel right for Finn's character. It felt like there was much more internal dialog than actual dialog. And Lane tended to think and talk in circles a lot of the time. That's a habit that drives this reader crazy in real life, not just fictional life.

There are a lot of moments when the reader wants them to just stop talking inside their heads and let those words out where they might do some good!

But, and this is where the good stuff comes in, Copper Ridge just feels like a wonderful place. I like the people a lot. One of the great things in this story is all about the enduring power of women's friendships. Lane, along with her best female friends, have a terrific, supportive and caring friendship. One of the ways in which Lane comes out of this story stronger than she went in is the realization that she is so much better off than she was when she arrived in Copper Ridge because those friendships will always see her through. She's not alone, with or without Finn.

Finn's supporting cast is his family, his three half-brothers and his niece Violet. They have all moved into the ranch and are now part of his life, where they have all been separate and alone up til now. Finn is really, really bad at letting people in, but having them be part of his life, whether he originally wanted it or not, is terrific. They bite and snap and growl at each other all the time, but they are all great characters and I'm looking forward to their stories in future books in the series.

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## **Maria Rose says**

This review can also be found at All About Romance: <http://allaboutromance.com/book-review/>...

The Copper Ridge series by Maisey Yates is at book seven now, but it's been kept fresh by featuring different families who live in this rural area of Oregon. Slow Burn Cowboy is the first of four stories about the Donnelly brothers. Unfortunately the title turns out to be a little too apt – it's not just a slow burn romance, it's a slow moving story, with excessive dialogue and internal musings; the author could easily have cut about a third of those musings and ramblings and ended up with essentially the same book. While the complications involved in transitioning from a friends to lovers relationship are approached realistically, a heavier hand at the editing table would have made the story more enjoyable.

Finn Donnelly has worked for several years on his grandfather's dairy farm, the Laughing Irish. Coming

from a fractured family, with a father whose infidelities resulted in three half-brothers with whom he is not close, the farm has been Finn's bedrock. The death of his grandfather, and subsequent revelation that he and his brothers are now equal partners in the farm is a blow to his ego, as he had assumed he'd have sole responsibility for the Laughing Irish and its future. Even worse, his three brothers – Cain, Alex and Liam – have returned to Copper Ridge for their own reasons and don't appear to be interested in Finn's plans to buy them out. They want to claim their heritage and work the farm, too. The saving grace to Finn's sanity is his best friend Lane.

Lane moved to Copper Ridge with her brother Mark when she was seventeen, for reasons she's never shared with anyone. When Mark became friends with Finn, she did as well, though the difference in their ages made a romantic relationship out of the question at the time. In fact, they both got very good at ignoring any possible development in that regard and have stuck to being platonic best friends for the past ten years. Finn has wanted Lane for a long time, but he's also carefully kept those feelings to himself, unsure of what Lane would do if he made his interest clear. Although lately, he's sensed that Lane has started looking at him differently. The stress of his family situation combined with his frustration over the feelings he's buried for her finally push him to act. Lane is shocked at Finn's advances, mostly because she is also undergoing some personal turmoil of her own. Once the desire is out there though, there is no going back. They both have hesitations when it comes to committed relationships, and a friends with benefits arrangement at first seems to work for them both. But will it lead to a real future together or shatter the friendship they've relied on for so long?

I love a good slow burn romance, where the sexual tension is thick and the heated glances, and innocent (but sizzling!) touches eventually lead to more. But I didn't feel that here. Finn may have been secretly lusting after his best friend for years but he's kept it so hidden that Lane never noticed a thing. Lane's feelings about men are complicated by a failed teenaged relationship. It's definitely not helped that her boyfriend from high school is now a successful politician, married with children, whom she sees on television. It makes her feel rather unsuccessful as the owner of a small specialty foods shop with dreams that aren't getting off the ground. She carries a lot of guilt and resentment with her that has made it difficult to engage in any kind of meaningful relationship with another man – except for Finn. But even then, she's always kept him at arm's length, relying on him for practical things but not emotional and physical intimacy.

Finn forces her hand and makes her confront the past head on. Even now, as she's starting to see him in a new light, her reaction is more annoyance and concern than desire. She actively avoids situations that make her uncomfortable, and now that she's feeling that way around Finn, she literally runs away from him on more than one occasion. Eventually they do end up in bed together, and the love scenes are very sexy, but it sure takes a lot of effort to get there. They both have a constant internal monologue of circular arguments for why they should or shouldn't change the status quo that gets wearing on the reader. Neither character takes the transition from friends to lovers lightly. A good portion of the story feels repetitive and this has the effect of dragging the reader along, with a sense of relief when Lane and Finn finally get to their happy ending.

Romance aside, the more interesting aspect of this story is Finn's relationship with his three brothers. There are several scenes with them either all together or one on one with Finn where they confront the reality of how distanced they are from their separate childhood experiences. This is their chance to make up for the past, to forge new sibling bonds and build a common future. Used to having no one to rely on but himself for the farm, it's a difficult adjustment for Finn to make. Watching their bonds grow is quite enjoyable and there is definitely enough of a tease here for Cain, Alex and Liam's characters to make me want to read their stories, too. While Slow Burn Cowboy won't go on my reread shelf, I found enough to like (editing issues notwithstanding) to want to continue the series.

A copy of this story was provided by the publisher via NetGalley for review.

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## **Anna's Herding Cats says**

Reviewed for herding cats & burning soup.

Amazon: <http://amzn.to/2pEcT4R>

Oh.My.Word. These two were a handful! Best friends to lovers and one helluva awkward growly leap to get from just hanging out to naked fun. Whew! Slow Burn Cowboy was quite the ride.

### **The Gist**

Alright so Lane and Finn have been best friends since ever. They've totally got a flow going where he takes care of all her handyman issues and she feeds him-- but life has a way of fucking with ya and both of them are feeling that pretty damn hard--a secret from Lane's past is sending her in a tailspin and Finn's not doing much better after his granddad died and divided up the farm between Finn and his estranged brothers. So things are spiraling and Finn's control kinda snaps. He's been wanting Lane something fierce for a decade and apparently that's the bit he just can't keep under control anymore. He's ready jump in cock first...consequences be damned.

### **Things I Loved**

Okay. So. Yes. Finn and Lane. I enjoyed them. I wanted to hug away their pain. And wanted to shake them, too. They were head strong and stubborn but sweet and endearing, as well.

Changing the dynamic in their friendship really sent them both for one helluva loop and they didn't always handle it well. It was pretty hilarious sometimes and man real frustrating other times. For them, too.

I loved their shared history. How they were together, that they knew what the other needed most of the time, took care of each other, teased, etc. They're best friends and it showed. But at the same time there were new revelations and they were realizing that they'd both kept some things private all these years. Their journey was definitely rocky. But so worth it.

They're both hard workers, too. He works a dairy farm and she runs a town specialty store. Made for some funny moments.

"When I said yes, it's because I wanted you. Really. It wasn't because I wanted your help, it wasn't because I wanted your milk in my store--which right about now sounds like an inescapable euphemism."

"That's disgusting," he said.

"Yeah, you knew what you were getting into." She tried to keep her tone light, but she felt like she couldn't breathe.

## What Made Me Growl

Oh yes. I had a growl. I was really ticked at Finn's brothers and Lane over something. And on Finn's side at being pissed at his granddad for willing the dairy farm Finn had spent his whole life helping build to his estranged brothers and Finn equally. What a slap in the face. Everything he's worked for suddenly now belongs to three other people who haven't been around for a decade or cared at all about the farm. Who now live in his house, expect to take part in the business, and never acknowledge that he got the shaft over it. It's going to be hard for me when it comes to their books, I think. If they could have just once acknowledged that he had a right to be hurt over it. Grr! But no they were all 'eh we're here and you can't do anything about it so get the fuck over it'. Yeah. It got my back up. lol

But, overall, I had a good time with Slow Burn Cowboy and watching Lane and Finn finally figure out that they were meant to be more than simply best friends. Yates has a way of twisting you up in the best way and really making you feel for her characters.

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## Amanda says

I broke one of my rules to read this book--I jumped ahead in a series! I read the first three and really liked them but none of the following books really interested me, so this series fell off my radar. When I read a review and learned this was a best friends-to-lovers story (MY FAVE), I pushed the other books on my TBR back, got over the horrible anxiety I feel when I don't read a series in order, and got this one right away.

This book is not only friends-to-lovers but also a twist on the best friend's sibling trope because Finn and Lane met over a decade ago through her brother Mark when she moved to town (for reasons we learn later in the book) at age 17. But Mark has since moved away and now Lane and Finn are best friends in their own right.

Their road to romance isn't smooth by any means. Actually, it was a bit of a mess. This book has way more angst than I was anticipating and while I love a dash of angst in my romance, this felt so overwrought. There are pages and pages of internal agonizing and then circular arguments. I mean, it basically goes like this:

Finn: The sky is purple

Lane: NO, it's blue. It has to be blue. You're my rock. How can you do this to me?

\*10 pages of thoughts, often coming to one conclusion and then 5 seconds later, changing her mind\*

L: You're right. The sky is purple...I was just scared. Here's my pain.

F: No. You said the sky was blue and that's how it had to be. You changed the rules. I don't want this.

L: Are you kidding me? THIS WAS YOUR IDEA.

\*Lane leaves\*

F: Oh so you're just going to give up?!

\*10 pages of Finn admitting to himself he's a massive hypocrite and being unfair and he's going to change yet never does\*

Lather. Rinse. Repeat.

Obviously I'm being a bit of a smartass but that's what I felt like reading this book. I never understood what the purpose of half their conversations were because they don't say what they mean or they DO say what they mean but then argue about it. And that's when they even bother to talk because it felt like 85% of this was all internal. So frustrating and melodramatic.

The only things that save this:

- The self-awareness. Like, Finn knows he's a jerk--too bad this doesn't result in him acting any differently. I was hoping at first he'd be one of those lovable grumpy heroes, but nope, he's really just a dick. And Lane knows when she's maybe overreacting (yet continues to do so...anyway).

-Due to ^^ I sometimes felt like the characters poked fun at themselves, and there are some funny parts that I enjoyed.

-Secondary characters, in particular Cain (one of Finn's brothers) and his teen daughter, Violet. (I could tell Cain was being set up to have a romance with Alison before I even saw the sneak peek at the end.) Oh, that's another thing--this book was shorter than I expected. It ended around the 64% mark in my Kindle.

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### **Lisa Richards says**

I loved that this is a friends to lovers romance. I hate the inst-love that seems to pop up so often in romance novels but this romance was simply awesome. I thoroughly enjoyed seeing the backstory that led up to this romance. Finn's family is so dysfunctional, but I loved every one of them. I can't wait to read the upcoming books on the rest of the family.

ARC provided by the publisher via Netgalley

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### **Kay (aka) Miss Bates says**

2018 will prove to be yet another Maisey Yates year for Miss Bates, as she can't seem to quit Yates's romances. Last year, she read seven ... let's see how many MissB manages to read in 2018?! If Slow Burn Cowboy is any indication, then MissB's love affair with the Yates romance isn't over. Every time she reads one, Miss Bates ponders what draws her to Yates's romances and every time, her understanding of what makes Yates a great romance writer grows. Not every book is perfect, or memorable, especially after you read so many, you're no longer reading for individual storylines, but for those writer "tells" that make the books so attractive to a reader-fan. Miss Bates finds in Yates a combination of an upholding of love and fidelity with a healthy dose of raw sexuality. This is not a new observation to Miss B.'s readers. This time around, however, Miss Bates noticed yet one more thing that she loves about Yates: she puts wit and sophistication into her banter/dialogue for characters who'd normally not be associated with wit and banter: cowboys and uneducated, albeit successful, nonprofessional, carpenters, builders, and small-business-owners, or as the hero of Slow Burn Cowboy identifies, a "laborer". Her characters are wonderful combinations of earthiness and clever wordplay. Does Slow Burn Cowboy hold any surprises for the Yates reader? Not really. Does it satisfy? Absolutely.

At last count, thanks to Miss Bates handy referencing of Fantastic Fiction, there are eighteen novels making up the Copper Ridge, Oregon, and environs series. Some to come and already in Miss Bates's TBR, some already read and reviewed, and this isn't counting the novellas. A Maisey Yates romance has graced every year's Miss Bates favourites, from 2013 to 2017.

Slow Burn Cowboy has long left the world of the Garrett brothers that introduced Copper Ridge to romance readers. But "brother" trilogies are one of Yates's "tells" and Slow Burn tells the story of Finn Donnelly, brother to Liam Donnelly, Chrismastime Cowboy's hero. (In the meanwhile, Slow Burn's heroine, Lane Jensen, is one of Rebecca Bear's best friends, heroine of *Seduce Me, Cowboy*, the Yates romance that made Miss Bates's 2017 favourites list.) Finn and Lane's journey to the HEA is a friends-to-lovers romance, with Yates's signature sharp humor and plenty of angst. Like all of Yates's couples, Finn and Lane rib each other, growl at each other, fight, make love, regret, confess, and heal their way to admitting their love and joining in a love, fidelity, and babies marriage. As perfect an unapologetic romance as a romance reader can find.

When the novel opens, Finn's and Lane's pasts have returned with a vengeance. Finn's grandfather died and left the ranch he's worked his whole life to him – and, not surprisingly causing resentment and anger – Finn's four half-brothers. Half-brothers who scream sequel-bait, but if you know and love Yates, not a bothersome idea. As Lane hangs with her friends at the local watering-hole, she espies an aspiring senator, Cord McCaffrey, who brings on unwanted feelings and memories, painful ones. About the only steady thing in each other's lives is each other, their ten-year-old friendship. But Yates is not a great believer in men and women being able to be friends, and neither is Miss Bates. Finn has always desired Lane and Lane has buried her own lust for Finn, but it's still there. Separate but simultaneous personal pressures see Finn and Lane unravelling. Typical to Yates is the idea that this kind of personal confrontation with long-buried hurt also leads to cracking open relationships that have been held "in check" as tightly ignored, suppressed feelings and desires.

Yates sets the Finn and Lane scene beautifully, succinctly showing the reader how well they've integrated into each other's lives, how well they fit, how well they get along, how important they are to each other, and how much they're lying to themselves:

He took care of everything in her house that she considered to be man's work. Any kind of plumbing or wiring issue, arachnid-related concerns and the extermination of the odd errant vole in her yard. In return, she often took care of things like feeding him, or buying him clothes when she went into Portland or Eugene. He never even had to ask. She just appeared with things. ... Basically, Lane was his wife.

... he was gruff and he didn't share his feelings easily. He was the kind of guy who led with angry, then made up for it with grand gestures. Finn was more hammer and nails than hearts and flowers. He had a soul of gold beneath his general cranky exterior.

The above passages show you, dear reader, if you haven't read Yates, that her prose is sharp, funny, easy, but packs an emotional wallop. Finn and Lane know each other, love each other. It's so obvious to everyone around them and the reader, as obvious as it is hidden to them. Which is why Yates loves to crack them open, "unravel" them as her characters refer to the experience of letting go of the holds on their feelings.

And, for Yates, the most important way they do so is by revealing whatever it was that: a. makes them vulnerable to the other and b. whatever has caused them to resist the call of the heart, usually nicely foiled by the call of the body, which also cracks things open. Sexual intimacy is bound up with emotional intimacy and emotional intimacy has its being in confession to the beloved. That may lead to more resistance and emotional betrayal, running away, denying the other, denying the desire for marriage and children. It takes a

variety of forms, but the latter is the crux of the matter. Integrity and honesty are often some of Yates's characters most important qualities because being honest about your past, your feelings, your vulnerabilities and desires is the only way to being open to loving and being loved. Yates proves this in every romance and no less in another Copper Ridge addition, in the story of deserving, maddening, volatile, sexy Finn and Lane. With Miss Austen's gimlet romance eye, Miss Bates says of Slow Burn Cowboy "a mind lively and at ease," Emma.

Maisey Yates's Slow Burn Cowboy is published by Harlequin Books (HQN). It was released in April 2017 and may be procured from your preferred vendor. Miss Bates received an e-ARC from Harlequin, via Netgalley.

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### **Georgie says**

Something just off about the pacing and balance of this. It's Maisey Yates, so it's fluently written, but I had problems with both the plot strands.

Finn has worked his fingers to the bone on his grandfather's farm, but on his death, Finn inherits only a quarter of it, and needs to accommodate himself to his three absent brothers returning and demanding their share. I burned with rage on Finn's behalf: his brothers had no sympathy or understanding of his position, and the whole plot point eventually dissipated in a mushy "oh, but we are all family: we can all work together" gooiness. Didn't work for me - I wanted the fundamental unfairness to be righted and it wasn't.

The other main strand is Finn& Lane moving from besties to lovers. I've never been a big fan of "I mustn't touch her, for she is my best friend's little sister", and Finn's holding back for ten years wasn't really convincing me of his undying love. Lane (who has, OK, a sad back-story, which isn't revealed for a bit) comes across as a prissy bitch a bit too much as they renegotiate their relationship.

Altogether, I felt depressed more than anything else reading this. Not a lot of fun, romance or wit. There were some interesting passages about cheese, though, which definitely made me want to go to Oregon. So that was nice.

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### **Ami says**

#### **3.25 stars**

**Slow Burn Cowboy** is the latest book in Maisey Yates' *Copper Ridge* universe; it is the first of The Donnellys -- four half brothers: Cain, Finn, Alex, and Liam, who get together again after their grandfather died and left equal share the ranch to all of them. Even though Finn is the only one staying and taking care of the ranch while the rest of the brothers build their lives somewhere else.

Lane is Finn's best friend for the past decade. He has been pressing his feeling for Lane because he doesn't want to ruin their friendship. But with his brothers coming to stay indefinitely, Finn feels like his life is changing and he cannot control it. Then suddenly his feeling for Lane is getting stronger more than ever...

I do love friends-to-lovers theme ... BUT there is a downside to it, unfortunately. The arguments can be really repetitive and frustrating. And that was what I felt here. I liked the beginning just fine. I could get why Finn is upset when his half brothers are all coming down to the ranch, taking what they consider as legally theirs when they never help Finn with the ranch all these years. I'm probably going to be quite bitter too.

I also liked that Finn was the one making the first move. Usually when the heroine is the hero's friend's younger sister, he will be the one dragging his feet. Not here though.

It is Lane that I was having trouble to connect. Yes, Lane had a past, but I failed to see why it made her reacted the way she did. I couldn't understand her arguments when she pushed Finn away after he made the first move. I just didn't *get* it. I thought Lane's past wasn't 100% her fault ((view spoiler))

Lane has been Finn's friend for so long, she knows him well, does she really think that Finn will blame her? Does she think that Finn is not good enough for a steady relationship? I guess, I thought Lane was being a bit unreasonable. When Finn challenges Lane, that she seems to only needs Finn to do things like changing the light-bulbs, or getting rid of a mouse, simply *because* he's a man, I could totally see Finn's point.

Simply put, Lane frustrated me because her reasons are not convincing enough for the hot and cold attitude she put on Finn. And THAT made the book less enjoyable for me.

We did have a a turn-around (view spoiler) -- and for me this also didn't feel convincing with how both characters act with each other prior to that particular moment.

The epilogue is sweet though :)

While this isn't my favorite of the series, I'm still quite intrigued with the next story. It will be about the oldest brother Cain, a single father with a teenage daughter and Alison, Lane's good friend who is previously in an abusive relationship. I think that has potential, right?

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*The ARC is provided by the publisher for an exchange of fair and honest review. No high rating is required for any ARC received.*

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### **Michelle Lynn says**

This novel had everything that I should love: 1) It's set in Oregon! Hey, I'm an Oregonian; I have some pride. 2) There is a cowboy who inexplicably wears a cowboy hat on a dairy farm. (This literally made me laugh out loud multiple times. That hat would FLY OFF on the Oregon Coast, Maisey!)

However, I hated it.

Disclaimer: I received this as an ARC from NetGalley. This review will contain spoilers.

I hated it because:

- 1) These characters literally. never. shut. up. The dialogue goes on FOREVER.
- 2) There are so many characters. So many. I get that it is a series of a series of a series so like everyone in down is gonna have a book about them eventually. But dear god. So many characters. brothers and kids and friends and etc etc. And oh my god.
- 3) Did I mention these two idiots never stop talking?
- 4) It's so melodramatic. Everything is a fight! Everything is DRAMA! The back stories are TRAGIC!

Let's work through this.

We open the novel meeting Finn, who runs a dairy farm. His grandpa just died and he's like sad, but not sad enough to not check out Lane's ass. Because she's got a nice ass, y'all. There is a really gross, multiple paragraph explanation of how he's always wanted to bang Lane, but can't. So that's nice that that's how he thinks of his best friend. Not objectifying or gross at all! Lane has brought him casseroles (EYE ROLL) to feed him and his brothers. Finn is PISSED that his grandpa left the farm to not just Finn, but his brothers as well--which like, that's how wills work, Finn. I don't know how to explain this to you, but you're gonna owe a shit ton of taxes on that 1/4 of a farm, FYI. Anyway, as the brothers show up and Finn sulks, Lane leaves.

Lane owns 1) a cute, adorable little cottage, like the nymph sprite she is, and 2) a shop in the town that sells specialty foods. We're supposed to believe that this is somehow profitable, but we've all been in those specialty food shops in tourist-y areas. You know that don't last long. Everyone knows this. But ok, let's suspend disbelief and act like Copper Ridge is like magical or whatever.

Lane has her own very tragic back story, of course, that involves someone who is now a SENATOR. Spoiler alert: she had a baby when she was a teenager. Once she gave birth, the baby was put up for adoption and she moved to Oregon to live with her brother. That's like, whatever. It sucks, but it's not like... the worst? I mean, who am I to judge but that's kind of a lame TRAGIC back story.

On the opposite side, Finn has super sadness because his dad was a deadbeat and had 4 children with three different women and cared about exactly none of them. Dude, it happens! Finn's mom also sounds like a real winner and Finn is terrified of rejection and abandonment. Aw, what a poor wittle cowboy.

Here's another spoiler: Lane and Finn to end up together. But not after they literally suffocate themselves TALKING NONSTOP. ENDLESSLY. FOR PAGES. Dear god, Maisey Yates, chill out on the dialogue! No one talks like this! Lane was especially annoying because she talked in circles; it was supposed to be this cute quirk, like omg guys she's rammmmmables she's so RANDOM and QUIRKY. No, it's annoying as shit. No one does that. She never said anything straight or normally; she told jokes, she danced around it, she gave MONOLOGUES. No wonder Finn was like, "girl, STFU" all the time because DEAR GOD.

Not that Finn was any better! This stoic cowboy would occasionally turn into a therapist and psychoanalyze Lane. Like, cool, I'm glad we're suddenly in a Intro to Psych 101 class with the kid who thinks he is an expert already. (If you choose to read this book, which, bless, please note the scene where Finn literally f\*\*\*s the sadness out of Lane. ON A DOCK. ON A PUBLIC LAKE. ON WHICH THERE ARE OTHER HOUSES. This is never mentioned, but I literally started laughing thinking about it. Just one of Lane's neighbors looking out their kitchen window like "WTF?")

It's absolutely not the worst book you can read. If the dialogue was cut in half, it would be infinitely better. I've not read any of Yates' books before, but I suspect she's one of those authors where her characters have to have ~TRAGIC back stories to explain their 90210 dramaaaaaa. I guess to me that's just annoying because it's not true to life; not every relationship is dramatic and to make it so is unrealistic and frankly, boring.

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## Beth ~ Panda & Boodle says

**...he never wanted only part of her. And part of herself was all she ever gave to her friends. He wanted all of her. All of this.**

In the small town of Copper Ridge, all the cowboys are hot, all the women are sassy and all the hipsters want to invade to get their hands on the town's best organic, hormone free, probiotic-enriched, hand-tilled, vegan-butter-laden goods.

Okay, that's a *slight* exaggeration.

But hey, that's part of the charm of this series from Maisey Yates, now on its seventh book. It's set in an idyllic, borderline boutique Oregon town, and it's *fun*. I've enjoyed, to varying degrees, each and every book in this series. *Slow Burn Cowboy* is just another good book in a successful series of sex, steam, friendship and feels.

But it's not my favorite. I liked Finn, absolutely. I felt bad for him, and I understood his frustration regarding the return of his brothers. And Lane was quirky—not in a bad way—and she rambled (which I can identify with). I enjoyed her interactions with her friends and his interactions with his newly returned brothers (and the set-up for book eight), and I loved Finn and Lane *together*.

When they *finally* got together, that is.

I knew going in this one was going to be a slow burn—I mean, that title couldn't make it any more obvious—but for me, it was a touch TOO slow. There was talking... lots of talking, and it was so circular that I began to get frustrated. There wasn't anything new, except the words used to describe what everyone was thinking and feeling and hiding from.

Which means two things. One, I found myself less focused on the whole book and more focused on when I'd start to feel some progress. And two, that when progress was finally made, it was rewarding in a different way. I felt happy, for sure. But my main emotion? Relief. I'd made it.

And I am glad I did. I know it seems like maybe I am not, but I do adore this series and this author, and yes, even this couple. I loved being back in Copper Ridge, getting glimpses of the characters I know and love. Of all the sassy women who make me smile. And of all the hot cowboys who make me swoon. Like Finn.

**"For you, I want to be open. I want to be free. I want to be everything."**

~ 3.5 STARS ~

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