



# Calamity Jayne

*Kathleen Bacus*

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## **Calamity Jayne** Kathleen Bacus

Tressa Jayne Turner has had it up to here with the never-ending string of dumb-blonde jokes and her longtime nickname. Crowned "Calamity Jayne" by Iowa Department of Natural Resources officer Rick Townsend, Tressa's out to gain a little hometown respect --or die trying. Unfortunately for Tressa, that may be the case. She's just been handed the perfect opportunity to get "Ranger Rick," the doubting Don Juan of the DNR, and a skeptical citizenry to finally take her seriously. How? By solving a murder no one else believes happened...No one, that is, except the killer.

Yup, Calamity Jayne is in it up to her hot pink snakeskin cowgirl boots and matching rhinestone belt. Tressa would tell you her momma never raised no dummies, but the jury's still out on that one.

## **Calamity Jayne Details**

Date : Published January 1st 2006 by Leisure Books

ISBN : 9780505526656

Author : Kathleen Bacus

Format : Paperback 326 pages

Genre : Mystery, Romance, Cozy Mystery, Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Humor, Contemporary

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# From Reader Review Calamity Jayne for online ebook

## Teena in Toronto says

I like mysteries with entertaining comical writing so I had high hopes for this book.

The description implies that it will appeal to Janet Evanovich's Stephanie Plum fans. I like that series ... this is a Stephanie Plum wannabe.

I really wanted to like this book. The author tried hard to be funny and sarcastic ... but I found at times that she tried too hard. She did a lot (a lot!!) of comparing. Here are some examples so you know what I mean ...

It would be all over town quicker than the flu after Christmas vacation.

The police were moving slower than the line at the drive-up bank on a sweltering Friday afternoon at quitting time

The police had rejected my theory faster than Darva Conger rejected her who-wants-to-marry-a-millionaire.

These are some examples just over a couple pages. It happened all the time and I found this writing style annoying.

I liked Tressa but thought she got away with a lot in her desire to solve this mystery. The interactions between her and "Ranger Rick", her potential love interest, were really juvenile (they are in their 20s). I liked Gramma and Grandpa Joe, though.

Despite all this, I kept reading.

Then I got to the ending, which I didn't buy ... I kinda went "huh ... are you serious?" So after all that, I was let down by the ending.

I won't be rushing out to read any more in this series.

Blog review: <http://www.teenaintoronto.com/2011/05...>

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## Kelly says

Part of me doesn't know what to think of this book. While I understand there's supposed to be a humorous element to Tressa's wacky hijinks, a big part of me wished she'd been able to stick it to her family for treating her so... I don't quite know how to put this... uncaringly. Maybe. Not that they don't love her, but she's constantly compared to her sister and it was a little painful to watch. The only time I got the feeling that anyone noticed how all the comparisons got her down was at her sister's birthday when Rick seemed to see her. Which he then walked all over by making her accidentally use her catastrophic powers of destruction to pull a table cloth off a table and ruin the meal.

Not that I didn't enjoy the book. I did. Tressa's stick-to-it attitude when it came to standing by what she had

seen (a dead body in the trunk!) amused me. The fact that NO ONE took her seriously (because she's CALAMITY JAYNE and she probably imagined it!) was kind of freaky. Rick just confused me. It's almost like he doesn't know what to think of this potential relationship blossoming between them so he kept running hot and cold.

I did enjoy Tressa deciding to take control of her life. She didn't necessarily do it gracefully, but she found what she wanted and marched into the newspaper office to present her case. And then she followed through.

I was amused. I wasn't amused. I'd read the next in the series if the opportunity presented itself. DO YOU SEE HOW CONFUSED I AM HERE?

-Kelly @ Reading the Paranormal

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### **L.W. says**

FUNNIEST book I've read in a long time. I loved the way her thought processes worked, her ineptitude, the characters around her and of course the story.

Lots of unexpected moments that were laugh out loud funny. I have to admit I had a hard time putting it down, once I got in to reading it.

Very pleasant way to spend a few hours. Can't wait to check out some of the others

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### **Renee says**

I really enjoyed this book. I thought Tressa "Calamity" Jayne Turner was a great character. The author knew her inside and out so her voice was very strong - and extremely funny. There were many moments where I laughed out loud at Tressa's view on life and her place in it. Naturally a person jumps to compare this type of book (i.e. first person/witty/funny/crime solving heroine with a hot guy she loves/hates) with Janet Evanovich. Surprisingly I felt this book stacked up quite well because Tressa was a character so full of personality and life, and the plot well thoughtout and interesting. The male lead, Ranger Rick Townsend, was no Morelli but seriously folks, we all know there can only be one Morelli. I think the author laid some great ground work for the budding romance between Tressa and her older brother's best friend (and her childhood nemesis), Ranger Rick. The plot itself is a murder mystery with wannabe reporter, Tressa, trying to solve the case with the help of some good supporting characters. There are enough twists and turns to kept things interesting, I did however feel the author wrapped everything up very quickly in the end but not to the extent where it affected my enjoyment of the book. This book did lack a bit in the romance department but it had enough sexual tension between the leads to keep me coming back for more. I'm looking forward to the second installment. This is worth a read.

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### **Ian says**

After discovering a body in her car, a body that immediately disappears Jayne finds herself once again the

butt of all jokes. But she knows there is a dead body out there somewhere and if there is a body there must also be a killer.

She sets about investigating the murder in the hope that people will finally take her seriously.

I'm not really sure. The author is trying to write a snappy and snarky comic mystery novel but it's a little too much and it only works half of the time. It's also a debut and honestly I can't be too critical of a first effort so I might reserve final judgement until I've read another book in the series.

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### **Samantha says**

Tressa annoyed the shit out of me in this book. She's tired of her dumb blonde reputation and we see a couple of times the impact of having everyone think she's a twit has on her. But those moments are really only quick glimpses and it only happened twice in the book. What really annoyed me is that instead of dropping the dumb blonde routine and finding a direction in life she takes up an insane quest to find the killer of a local lawyer to prove herself. That would've been all fine and dandy considering that it is a mystery novel. But what bothered me was the fact that she didn't really prove herself at all. She didn't even solve the case in the end. Clues and dead people were just thrown at her and she tripped haphazardly over them and had to have Ranger Rick save her. Her clumsiness was another thing that really started to annoy me. It was taken to the extreme and so the entertainment of it wore off really quick.

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### **Barbara ★ says**

Tressa "Calamity Jayne" Turner is well named. Trouble follows her around like a lost puppy. She's the butt of jokes in town and even after finding a dead body in her trunk, which promptly disappears, and after she is threatened again and again, absolutely no one believes her. Well Tressa's had enough and takes matters into her own hands investigating the body found in her car.

I found her efforts amusing and blonde or not, she wasn't half bad at her new job. I liked Rick Townsend and new immediately that at some point, they will be an item. The antagonistic attitude between them, the name calling, the blonde jokes etc. all point to repressed sexual feelings. It'll be fun to join them in further adventures and see where the relationship goes.

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### **Nola Arganbright says**

#### **Excellent read**

A great chick lit cozy! The characters are extremely well developed and a strong plot that is well thought out make this a satisfying book. The story flowed well. A 5 star first of a series that I am anxious to enjoy more of.

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## **Christina T says**

This was a fun book but doesn't live up to its marketing label. It was supposed to be a contemporary romance but honestly other than some love/hate name calling banter and a couple of smooches there wasn't much romance. It was more of a mystery but a weak one at that. I think the saving grace was that there were a few characters I loved. I loved the "hero's" grandpa who informed Tressa (aka Calamity Jayne) that he was the Green Hornet and she was his Kato and just needed to drive. This was before he pulled out a gun that would impress Dirty Harry for their protection which ended up stolen and used to murder a murderer. I didn't like Bacus's way of wrapping up the mystery either. She builds up a somewhat suspenseful scene where the killer realizes Tressa is on to him/her and Bacus tries to continue the suspense by saying things like The Killer stared at Tressa. The Killer smiled a cold evil grin. So not identifying the killer during the big stand off for a bit which I thought was a bit overkill and didn't make the mystery better. However, like I said there were some great (well, at least interesting) characters so I gave this book a 4 star rating and will read the next one. Oh and the blonde jokes peppered through the book were fun too.

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## **Jessica Sinn (Books and Trouble) says**

Throw in two parts Nancy Drew, one part Lucille Ball, add a dash of Stephanie Plum, shake it all up and you've got a one-of-a-kind amateur sleuth with a penchant for junk food and hot-pink snakeskin cowgirl boots. Tressa Jayne Turner (who begrudgingly answers to "Calamity Jayne") is lovingly known around her small Midwestern town for being a magnet to mischief and mayhem.

Calamity is fed up with dumb-blond jokes and sets forth on a mission to give her nickname an overhaul by replacing "Calamity" with "Ace Reporter Extraordinaire."

The fair-haired protagonist haphazardly finds herself in the middle of a high-profile mystery when she discovers the corpse of an accused drug smuggling lawyer in her trunk. When the corpse disappears, she (once again) becomes the laughing stock of the town. Fueled with frustration and anger, Calamity sets out to solve the crime and to finally earn some much deserved R-E-S-P-E-C-T. What better way to make a name for herself than by single-handedly solving a mystery and writing about it as an ace-cub reporter for The Gazette?

Bacus's laugh-out-loud mystery/romance/comedy novel, complete with heart-pounding romantic encounters and small-town charm, is a cozy read filled with eccentric characters and quick-witted dialogue. My only qualm about this cozy read is the lackluster mystery plot. Readers can easily finger the culprit when they reach the halfway point. However, the veritable smorgasbord of richly developed characters, especially Calamity's feisty elderly crime-fighting sidekicks, make up for the story's predictable ending.

It seems apparent readers just can't get enough of this kind-hearted, frizzy-haired amateur sleuth. Calamity Jayne is the first installment in Kathleen Bacus's series: Calamity Jayne Rides Again, Ghouls Just Want to Have Fun and Calamity Jayne Goes to College.

If you're interested in a light beach read, pick this one up. A word to the wise: if you're prone to laughing out loud when reading funny books, try not to read Calamity Jayne when you're sandwiched between two sleeping passengers on an airplane...sometimes we learn these things the hard way.

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## **Kevin says**

Stephanie Plum with cowgirl boots, hot pink cowgirl boots. Tressa Jayne Turner is a cowgirl in Iowa, she's not a ranch hand but she's had a string of career disasters and is now working at a Walmartish store as a clerk and a Dairy Queenish restaurant as an order taker, before she gets involved in a murder or three. If you like the Stephanie Plum series you'll enjoy the humor in this series and this first book also has a decent mystery.

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## **Carrie says**

This book was suggested by some friends who knew I loved Janet Evanovich's Plum series. Calamity is kinda like the mid-west Steph. From start to finish Kathy is a great writer and I fell in love with this series! The laughing out loud won't stop until you finish book 6!

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## **Ellen Hardin says**

first off- apparently there is a different cover for the e book and paperback--- and you thought your luck was bad --- when i think calamity jayne i think doris day- -the only reason i started reading this book is because we will be discussing it at book club---- well happy to say i loved it --- so Jayne being so tired from working 2 jobs back to back to pay the bills gets into the wrong car- hey it started up- first finds thousands of dollars in her glove compartment - and then gets a flat tire out in the middle of nowhere- so she pops open the trunk to change the tire and --- she finds the dead body of a sleazy attorney --- not being stupid she gets the hell out of dodge and gets help- when she and brothers best friend her secret crush and high school nemesis hunky ranger rick return to the car- the body and cash are gone- - as she and rick are looking through the car and around it a deputy pulls up and we find - - it is the wrong car- seems disaster and accidents follow our gal so much that she has the nickname calamity jayne -- she goes down to the police station but no one believes what she says happened - think maybe she imagined it-- anyway as the week goes on - she is threatened by a thug- her home is trashed- her grandma cat almost hung- her sisters car is vandalized she finds yet another body - but still the only person who sees to think the attorney is dead is jayne and the killer -- but hold on seems ranger ricks grandpa also thinks some going on and becomes her partner trying to find out just what the hell is going on in their town-- there are lots of dumb blonde jokes in the story and a lot of the town folk as well as her family tease her in a good natured way but Tressa Jayne wants to solve the crimes and prove that this so called dumb blonde is not dumb at all - will she find the killer before she becomes the next victim-? is ranger rick more then just an annoyance? this book had me almost guessing to the end- and laughing out loud - i loved the rapid banter between rick and jayne and the smoldering romance that seems to have started with them -- hoping it ignites in the next book - which i plan on reading since i enjoyed this quirky cozy mystery

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## **Joanne Simpson says**

Janet Evanovich called, and she wants Stephanie Plum (er, Tressa "Calamity" Jayne Turner) back.

Nevermind, Kathleen Bacus can keep her. Um, cute 20-something with crazy wild hair, 2 dead end jobs, crazy grandma, lackluster love life-turn love triangle, and shoe fetish finds a dead body in her trunk, but no one believes her once the body goes missing. Ranger Rick Townsend, her older brother's best friend and arch nemesis makes a good love interest, but the story is more dead body/mystery than romance. Some good snarky dialogue, but it took a bit to get into the writing style--lots of down-home cowgirl hyperbole. I read this, the third, and the final book (that makes 3) in the series over the course of a week, so I'd count it as lightweight and diverting, and leaving you wanting more. I think the author won a new-writer contest with this book...and if you get into the characters in the first book, the last two are better. I thought the last book was best of the three I read. (And unlike Stephanie Plum, you get some closure on that triangle).

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## **Rachel- Goodbye Borders says**

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Tressa is also known as Calamity because she is clumsy and a bit like the village idiot. She also lacks ambition and doesn't know what she wants to do with her life. I wanted to like her, I did. But, really? How can someone be so TSTL? Some clumsiness, is fine, but Tressa is extreme. Very extreme. She takes the WRONG car. She talks about how broke she is, but does she save money? Hell no! "Hey a girl can go without eating, but she must have a new pair of shoes

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