



Letters From a Cowboy

Sue Brown

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Letters From a Cowboy Sue Brown A Morning Report Story

Simon Wood arrives at Tamar Ranch looking for a job after being fired from his last position for seducing the boss's son. It doesn't take much for him to prove his skills with horses, so he's taken on, but soon he clashes hard with Chip Henson.

The animosity between them hides something very different, but not for long. No matter how hard they try to resist their attraction, eventually they give in to their need. They start leaving notes for each other, and others notice and warn them to be more careful.

Fearful of discovery, Simon leaves Tamar Ranch to save Chip's job. When he learns that his departure sent Chip off the rails, he knows he needs to risk everything and go back for him.

Letters From a Cowboy Details

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From Reader Review Letters From a Cowboy for online ebook

multitaskingmomma says

Original Blog Post: Blog Tour, eARC Review, Excerpt & #Giveaway: Letters From A Cowboy (A Morning Report Story) by Sue Brown

Review by: multitaskingmomma

My Rating: 5 of 5 Stars

Some say this story is darker. Some say this is more a prequel than anything else. What I read was a beautiful story of how two men survived their times as a couple and going through life hiding right under every one's noses. Yes, this relates the story of those two men who exchanged letters discovered by Luke and Simon. Those letters sounded desperate and spelt of two star crossed lovers who may not have survived. What came out was just one of the best stories from The Morning Report series.

For those who follow this story, the discovery of the love letters between one Simon and Chip triggered Luke and Simon to try to find who those two men were. The letters had a back story and this is their story. It is set in the 1950s at a time when bigotry meant the authorities turned a blind eye to murders.

Simon and Chip meet in Tamar Ranch, when Simon sought work as a cowboy. Simon left his previous work so his boss' son could be the man his father expected him to be. Was he in love with the boy? Maybe but maybe not. All we know is that when he finally meets Mr. Movie star Chip with the Kirk Douglas chin, he knew his heart was lost.

Chip had hid himself from the other ranch hands in Tamar Ranch but his parents are understanding. When he meets Simon, a clash of will spark a tentative relationship that soon spirals to a secret love affair. Try as they could, they hide. Unfortunately, they are not that good at hiding from the knowing eyes of the others. When Simon decides to leave so Chip could stay on, his decision sends Chip off the rails and Simon gets called to rescue him.

Although this was written in a light manner by author Sue Brown, I still felt deeply for these two men and I found myself crying crocodile tears at the unfairness of the life they were trapped in. The HEA more than made up for the tears but the thought of what those lost had to go through leaves a sobering feeling. That part is what makes this a darker read for me.

Another fantastic read from Sue Brown. It's different. It is sweeter if I may say so. It is also more real.

Helena Stone says

I'll start this review with the confession that I haven't read the three previous Morning Report book. Since the story in this book takes place in the 1950's rather than the present day, that turned out to be no problem what so ever, and I feel confident when I say Letters From a Cowboy can be read as a stand-alone.

I was very impressed with this book. This story touched my heart and took me through a host of feelings. I loved seeing Chip and Simon together which made it all the more difficult to have to watch them in a time and place where their love for each other could not only get them in trouble but also cost them their freedom

or even their lives. When Chip falls apart after Simon leaves it broke my heart and yet, I couldn't fault Simon for what he'd done. Under those circumstances he did the only thing he could think of to keep them both safe, and yet it nearly broke both of them.

Part of me read this book hoping for a miracle, a sudden change in attitude from the people around our heroes. A far bigger part of me is glad that Sue Brown stayed true to her historical setting and yet still managed to give Simon and Chip the happy ever after they so richly deserved.

This book made me think. Initially I just found myself angry that things had been so bad for gay people in the past and then I nearly slapped myself upside the head. This story may be set in 1950's; the situation as described in it is a reality for way too many people in the world right now. Changes may be taking place but universal acceptance is still a thing we can only dream about and campaign towards. And while there is no harm in celebrating how far we've come, it is good to remember we still have a long way to go.

As I've come to expect from this author, the book is very well written, the storyline gripping right from the start and the development clever and realistic. The only downside to having read this book is that I now feel the need to read the earlier Morning Report titles as well, which is not a downside at all of course except...so many books and so little time.

Tamika♥RBF MOOD♥ says

I thought this was okay. I read this as a standalone book. I know it was part of a series, but I did not feel lost at all. I liked the characters, and this was very much insta-love to me. I mean it happened quick, I don't think they said more than 50 words to each other before it happened. Some little things bothered me, and I don't know if they should have considering the time frame that this was set in. I guess I should be happy that they had any form of acceptance in the 1950's. I thought Chip & Simon's relationship came together well. I was glad to see them at the end still together from this day on.

Chris Jeffreys says

This story is billed as part of the Morning Report series from this author; but, it really isn't. This story takes place fifty or sixty years before the Morning Report series, and the only way the two are tied together is by a rather pathetic epilogue that attempts to latch the stories together. IF you liked the Morning Report series, don't read this book -- do yourself a favor reread one of the books in the series that you like.

But, if you are hell bent on spending your money to learn a lesson, here are some thoughts on this book.

Chip and Simon are two gay cowboys at a not-so-friendly ranch. There is a lot of forbidden love in this story, and that gets a little old in short order. Homophobia is rampant in this novel, and it is likely, according to the story, that the two main characters will end up dead in a ditch or hanging from a tree branch. The two lead characters know that being caught can be deadly, but they behave like dogs in heat for most of this story.

Well, the two get caught doing the nasty by a "friendly" cowboy who warns them to be more careful. Simon decides that the best way to be safe is to leave the ranch and move on to somewhere else. He makes up a story about why he has to leave and is ready to go.

He leaves and about six week later one of the farm hands tracks him down to tell him that Chip had left the ranch without telling anyone. Simon tracks Chip down, and Chip is a drunken mess in a small town bar. He tells Simon that he left the ranch because his heart was broken when Simon left.

Yada yada yada . . . and they return to the ranch begging for their jobs back with the threat that they could easily be killed if anyone finds out that they are gay. But they shack up in the same bedroom on the ranch nonetheless.

Ultimately it turns out that the homophobic ranch owner finds out about Chip and Simon, and Simon gets fired on the spot for being a "sodomite". We don't learn what happened to Chip until the epilogue.

Fast forward about 50 years . . . Simon is now in a nursing home at age 81. Luke Murray from the gay friendly Long Cow Ranch in this author's Morning Report series shows up in the epilogue to try and tie this piece of crap book to the prior excellent series that was written by this author. But, it is far too little too late.

This is just a bad prequel, if you want to call it that. I agree with other reviewers who have said that the book is driven forward by bigotry against Mexicans and homophobia. Anyone who says differently, did not read the book about "wetbacks" and "Nancy boys" that I just finished. Being extremely generous, I give this story two stars.

Nic says

Those who know me, know that I love completing a series, once I start one. This means that sometimes I'm let down by stories that aren't as good as the first. But that was definitely NOT the case in this instance. In fact, I think I enjoyed this book the most.

It does have a different feel to the other books, but that's not surprising as it's set in a completely different era. I enjoyed seeing the glimpse of life in drought-ridden Texas in the 1950s. It was also satisfying to have the mystery of the letters solved.

The characters were wonderful, the story engaging, the ending happy. 4.5 stars.

Caroline Brand says

REVIEWED FOR PRISM BOOK ALLIANCE

4.5 Stars

I have loved the Morning Report series ever since I read the first book and Letters from a Cowboy is just as good as the previous books even though it has a very different feel to it and isn't set on the Lost Cow Ranch.

If you have read the series you will remember Luke and Simon finding a bunch of heart breaking letters from lovers Chip and Simon but not having a clue who the two men were. Well, swing back to 1954 where there is the drought of all droughts and ranching is a harder job than ever. Finding a job isn't easy, if you aren't Anglo your opinion isn't valued and if you are gay or people even suspect you might be then turning up dead is a very real option.

Simon had to leave his last job when things with the owner's son got out of hand. He arrives at the Tamar Ranch, the place has a good feel to it and the people seem fair. The only problem that arises is that another rancher named Chip quickly gets under his skin and as much as both men try to keep to themselves it proves impossible. Their moments are snatched and few between but even with the inherent danger the two men become tied to each other when their feelings for each other grow. Secrets prove hard to keep and Simon and Chip are not as good at hiding things as they think. Gradually one person, then two, then three realise there is more to their relationship but none of the people that find out prove to be any danger.

Simon believes he is acting for the best when he leaves the ranch, and Chip, to prevent any trouble. This proves devastating for Chip, a man that has never had a relationship before and has fallen deeply in love. His despair knows no end and he finds solace in a bottle and very quickly his life is turned upside down when he walks away from his job and friends on a seemingly endless binge. The concern from one of his friends is the thing that saves him when he gets word to Simon of how bad things are and Simon is left with no choice but to find the man he loves.

This is quite a sombre story laced with real fear. I worried that I would miss the usual characters of the series and it wouldn't feel the same but from the start Chip and Simon's story drew me and kept me captivated. The harsh reality of fifties America were just that...harsh! With Luke and Simon finding the letters I ended this story coming full circle and with a smile on my face.

Ele says

I admit I'm not a fan of this series, but I *kinda* liked Papa's Boy and this got all these great reviews so I thought I should give it a go.

I'm a little torn, to be honest. The whole concept of this book is brilliant but there were some things in the execution that really threw me off.

Although I didn't get it from the blurb, this is a historical, set in 1950's Texas. **There is a heavy dose of homophobia and racism against Mexicans, very true to the time period.** Also, there is a minor character's death and financial problems all ranches in the South had to deal with back then. The angst did not bother me, on the contrary it was expected.

Simon came to work at Tamar Ranch, where he fell in love with Chip. Chip reciprocates and they get together. But when rumors started flying around, he decides to leave before they get caught. **This was too quick for my taste, almost insta-love. There was no relationship building and I felt no connection between the characters. At least not one that justifies Chip hitting rock bottom after Simon left.**

SPOILERS AHEAD!!!! SERIOUSLY, MAJOR SPOILERS

When Simon gets back and they eventually get caught, the boss pays Simon and asks him to leave. Simon writes a letter to Chip, saying he 's heading to The Lost Cow Ranch (yes, this is where Morning Report happens) and leaves.

And then there's the epilogue which takes place many many years later. **I would have liked to see their reconnection on page. What happened at the Lost Cow Ranch? When did Chip go to find Simon? There was nothing.**

We get the HEA in the epilogue, though, and it was very touching. (view spoiler)

So three stars because I did like some things, but although it was well written, the way the story unfolded was not my cuppa.

Becky Condit says

More of a prequel than a sequel to the Morning Report series, Letters From a Cowboy is a darker story than the other Morning Report books. Set in the 1950s, this is the story behind the love letters found by characters in a previous, but set in a later date than this one, book.

At a time when rural America was a dangerous and unforgiving place for anyone who was not male, white, and straight, Simon and Chip find in each other a deep, abiding love. Even appearing to be gay could be a death sentence, tied behind a pick up truck and dragged to death, so when Simon and Chip can't keep away from each other as they work on the Tamar ranch, they are taking a huge risk. Bullies in 1954 are not people who sneer, call names, and beat someone up. They are killers without a conscience. Eventually Simon sees the only solution is to leave the ranch and Chip behind, in order to save his lover's life. The result is not what he hoped for and Simon gets word that Chip has fallen into despair and the life of an alcoholic.

There is an HEA to this book, although it is not an easy road to get to it. Sue Brown writes us back in time and then forward again to take us full circle in the Morning Report series. Beautifully done and a book that was needed to provide a backstory for not only the characters of the series but also an important part of the history of gays in America. It may make you cry and cringe but in the end we come back to love is love. I highly recommend this book, which can be read as a stand alone novel, and the entire Morning Report series.

R.J. says

Simon and Chip. A perfect love story that ties in so perfectly to the Morning Report series. A look back at a love story that had me crying at the end. A beautifully written book that looks at prejudice from contrasting angles and gave me the HEA I craved.

Curtis says

Luke and Simon found a box of letters that appear to have been exchanged between a couple from the past-- Chip and Simon--and know nothing more of them than what is in those letters. As Luke and Simon are getting married, they end up reflecting on these letters as the story of Chip and Simon unfolds.

The story flashes back to 1954. Simon has just left his last job when he had to brake things off with the ranch owner's son. He could fly under the radar on his own, but a relationship like that would be difficult to hide. Not long after arriving at the Tamar Ranch, sparks start to fly between Simon and one of the other ranch hands, Chip. They know it's dangerous to even steal private moments when they can, and they soon learn that their secret is not nearly as secret as they believed it to be. They're faced with two options: continue their relationship in secret and simply hope they don't get caught or break it off and try to work alongside each other without being intimate despite their feelings. But Simon knows there's a third option, and it's one he considers without realizing the full extent of possible consequences.

Talk about a real, gritty, well-written historical romance. This isn't all sunshine and rainbows--being gay in 1954 alone should tell you that--but it's not a total downer, either. Simon and Chip are great characters, and I found myself really enjoying the dynamics of several of the secondary characters as well. It was very easy to get lost in their world.

Although this is the fourth book in a series, it definitely stands on its own as it tells the story of a couple from the past. I've not read any of the other books (though I'm thinking now I will), and I had no trouble following the plot or understanding what was happening. Definitely recommended for anyone who enjoys historical m/m--especially those cowboys and ranch hands. This won't disappoint, for sure!

P. says

skimmed

Louan says

4.5??

Wanted to grab a 2x4 a quite a few times to take out the racists, homophobes and all round asshats. Loved loved loved the ending!

Clare says

I was engrossed all the way through. The cowboys are vividly drawn as real men, victims of their time, yet unashamedly gay and knowing they need love and other men. There's no sap, just genuine lust and love, and I think that's what makes this story untypical of other cowboy romances. These guys act as cowboys must have done then, yet with vulnerabilities and character flaws that we recognise in men in all times. The ending was delightful and well deserved for Chip and Simon :). This is one of Sue Brown's best, and one I'll want to re-read.

SheReadsALot says

A Hearts On Fire Review

FOUR HEARTS--Give me cowboys set in the past and I'm a happy camper.

In "Letters From a Cowboy", the fourth book of Sue Brown's Morning Report series, the past is not that distant (1950's Texas) but it is set before I was even a thought, it's historical for me.

Simon Wood is an ex-solider cowboy going from ranch to ranch looking for work. Simon is gay and trouble seems to follow his dick. With his new job, it should've been a clean slate and then he meets coworker and fellow cowboy, Charles "Chip" Henson, with his "movie star chin". Both men share the same predilection for men and try to deny their shared feelings. Being gay in the fifties could lead to a lot of different atrocities. This is Sue Brown though...so of course they're going to hook up.

I thought their getting together was quick, their shared feelings were kind of insta-lovey but somehow it worked. Also the dialogue read like I was reading something in 2015 at times, not saying in the fifties the language was vastly different but something about it felt modern at times. I also like the way the story is broken up. I did have to go back to read it because I was afraid I wasn't going to get a HEA (there is one).

Simon was good at everything: cooking, cleaning, befriending other cowboys, finding lost people, etc. He reminded me of Weber, the cowboy from Mary Calmes' "Frog" a little bit. And Chip, he definitely is a Sue Brown character. He goes off the rails once things change. It seemed like a lot of people in Chip and Simon's life had a family member that was gay and was sympathetic to their relationship. Not everyone but a lot of characters. It made their secret relationship easier and (at times) sloppy hiding techniques also easier to get away with. Because sometimes those two namely Chip, just couldn't keep it together. And yet I enjoyed it.

I should warn there is racism, homophobia that is authentic to the time period. Also there is minor character death and animal death. Sue Brown is known to bring the angst and she did but it wasn't extreme. If I had to describe this book it'd be as if "Bareback" and "Brokeback Mountain" had a soap opera baby, because I couldn't stop reading. So much sex between cowboys who were supposed to try to keep it secret. That was hot. And the letter writing, that was the reason why this book was created. The letters Chip and Simon wrote to each other to hook up and share their feelings, were found on the Low Cost Ranch in present day.

The author gave the letter writers their own story. :) Hot, angsty and a little bittersweet with a HEA.

This can be read as a standalone as I've not read the previous books.
But I definitely will be rectifying that.

Mari Cardenas ~ Bayou Book Junkie says

Copy provided to Bayou Book Junkie in exchange for a fair and honest review.

I've read several stories by Sue Brown and I think this one ranks up there as one of my all time favorites of hers and other authors.

I was almost automatically transported back in time as I started reading, as if I were in a movie like Giant, perhaps. The writing style, language, the descriptions and all that the characters had to go through in the book just made the experience richer, fuller and definitely better all-around.

I usually have a favorite main character but in this case I loved Chip and Simon all the same. They were both strong and vulnerable and so in love, their chemistry was amazing, too. The stolen moments, the glances, the pressing of their legs under the table, everything about it just showed how perfect they were for each other.

I absolutely adored most of the supporting characters we got to meet in this story, too, Lofty, Manuel and Susan, and even Chip's parents.

It wasn't an easy path towards a HEA, especially considering the period this story is set up in, but it was definitely worth it. I would've liked to read a bit more of Chip and Simon through the years, but I was chuffed to bits with what I got: a sweet, heartwarming, hot, sexy, fabulous love story where two fantastic characters managed to stay together despite all the obstacles thrown their way.

Rating: 5+ Heartwarming Stars!!!
