



Texas Hold 'Em

Christie Craig

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"Hold onto your Stetsons . . . A thrill ride of hunky heroes, hilarious high jinks, and heartwarming romance."
-Lori Wilde, *New York Times* bestselling author on *Only in Texas*

A HOTTER IN TEXAS NOVEL The last thing veterinarian Leah Reece needs is a man in her life. They're nothing but trouble-and not even the fun kind. But when her apartment is broken into and Leah suspects Rafael, her dangerous half-brother, of foul play, she can't deny she could use a little help. She just never expected that help would come with twinkling blue eyes and a sexy smile... All PI Austin Brook wants is to nail Rafael DeLuna, the man who framed him for murder. He'll do anything for information-even lie about his identity to charm Leah, DeLuna's half-sister. But her sweet dimples and fiery spirit soon make her more than just his only lead. Leah becomes his every desire. As Austin closes in on DeLuna, it's clear he won't go down without a fight. Now the only way Austin can protect Leah is to reveal all of his secrets and risk losing her for good.

Texas Hold 'Em Details

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Author : Christie Craig

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From Reader Review Texas Hold 'Em for online ebook

Zel Polev says

3.5

I liked this book but I'm inclined to rate it lower because Leah turned into a shrew. I got annoyed with her demands and her bull headed nature to see the worst in Austin. I thought she was finding every reason to dislike him, which really looks bad on her since he was doing it to save her life. He didn't need to stick his neck out too much but he did because he cared about her wellbeing. How does she react? Well she completely wipes out any good memories they had and focuses on his lies. I get that she is angry and I get knee-jerk reactions but the man just saved you from being shot. Her disdain for him was really unnecessary because without his investigative firm's efforts, she and her brother would be dead. She demands to be left alone but where will she even go? She doesn't know where the hospital is or anything for that matter. What would she do without him? She has her half-brother coming after her ready to kill her and she doesn't even have a contingency plan. Austin was right to not talk to her until she calmed down because whatever he said, she would latch onto and misconstrue so that she can continue to be self-righteous. I don't think she was interested in what happened in reality, she just wanted to continue being indignant, which doesn't really solve anything. She just wanted to berate him for lies he told, which she benefited from. I don't enjoy reading about people being hysterical, much less so when it is so drawn out. She kept up this attitude until they were in the cottage. I liked this book until then and it just left a bad taste.

However, there are a lot of good moments in the book. One of the best ones is Austin and the cats. He has a phobia with cats since he was mauled when he was a kid. He still had scars from it, one in particular was in his ear. I laughed when Spooky put his paw on his ear. His gradual warming up to Spooky was so adorable too. He was so pleased when the cat purred and it was just too cute.

Story brief:

Austin goes undercover and tracks Leah. Her brother is the one who framed the men as murderers and he thought she might know where he is, or at least to contact him. He gets to know her and they end up liking each other. However, it was bound to be destroyed since the foundation was built on lies. The feelings were real though and it complicated the matter.

The side story revolves around Roberto and Sara. I thought they were much better than Austin and Sara. Anyways, Roberto's wife and child were murdered by De Luna. He is on De Luna's track and wants to take De Luna down. He is undercover and is sabotaging De Luna's operations in order to lure the man out. He meets Sara when he investigates Leah. A connection is made but the secret identity makes it hard for them. He is also feeling guilty over his blooming feelings. However, Sara had been one of the good things in his life since his wife's death. He likes her and simultaneously feels bad about it.

There is a crime story in which De Luna is trying to track down his snitch. Numerous people have gone down and blamed for the failed operations. His latest suspect is his half brother. The brother said some suspicious things and was placed at the failed operation sites. However, it was a coincidence since it was really Roberto. De Luna threatens Leah and demands to speak to his brother. Leah refuses and worries for her brother constantly.

One of the operatives goes rogue. He was being blackmailed into working for them but he had enough. He starts going after them. He shoots Roberto on the leg by mistake but they end up working together. They

were friends before even if they didn't know the full story. Roberto saves the younger brother by driving him to the hospital. He warns Austin to take care of Leah since she was the next target.

Austin drives to Leah's workplace and he was just in time. There were men ready to attack Leah. Fortunately for him, he was helped by the rogue. He forced Leah to go with him since she was being stubborn. Minutes later, their car gets rear ended and they get shot at. When they got away, she continues his tirade against him because he was a liar. She ignores the fact that he saved her life and her close brush with death. She throws herself a pity party on how she was so fooled and she takes her anger out on him.

He takes her to a cottage. They move the younger brother. They come up with a plan to capture De Luna. She just had a bad talk with him in which he didn't commit to anything and she was ready to promise him forever. When the job was done, she left him. He thought it was because she blamed him for De Luna's death but it was because he didn't want to be a booty call. He ends up drinking. His mother comes to visit him and shows that she didn't abandon him. She shows him pictures to prove she was there in important moments of his life. She gives him the advice of going after who he loved. He went to Leah and they sort things out.

Roberto and Sara also sort their love lives out.

Everyone is having a great dinner, the firm's members and their wives, the veterinarian's employees and their significant other and the rogue finally could have dinner with Roberto.

I liked Roberto and the rogue's friendship. I thought Roberto's storyline was more interesting than Leah and Austin's. The most interesting one, however, has to be Austin's relationship with the cats.

Margreet Asselbergs says

My rating: 4 of 5 ??

After spending 18 months in jail, framed for a murder he didn't commit, ex-cop Austin Brook was itching to get his pound of flesh from the man who put him there, Rafael DeLuna. He no longer had the patience to try and lure his target out from the rock he was hiding under and was determined to start actively looking. But the only lead available was DeLuna's half-sister, who according to all appearances, has no ties to DeLuca his criminal dealings.

Frustrated that once again her baby brother, Luis, won't answer her calls, Leah Reece tries to get through the day at her veterinarian's clinic without worrying too much. Her new neighbour, Austin, could be a nice distraction....that is, if she were in the market for a man. With her track record and men, she best keep her distance. But when a break-in in her apartment is interrupted by Austin, her worry for her brother and concern for her neighbour temporarily weaken her resolve.

Austin had not expected the small gorgeous brunette to have such an effect on him, but something about her made it difficult to keep his focus on the job and his hands and lips off her. Although Leah was skittish, she seemed to be just as affected by him. But she was also obviously keeping secrets and seemed to be in some trouble. Not that Austin was telling the truth, but he had a job to do, even if it became more difficult by the minute to remember.

When DeLuna feels the heat of the investigation closing in on him, he turns on his half-siblings, and Austin has to take extreme measures to keep Leah safe. But in the process he blows his cover and may lose the one thing that has become more important to him than his pound of flesh.....

LOVE those Texas boys!!!!

It has been SUCH a long time since I last read a Christie Craig novel and I had forgotten how much I enjoyed her writing!!! So glad I spotted this one and grabbed it, it read so familiar and comfortable. I have always enjoyed the way Christie manages to interject tight suspense with moments of hilarity, and she does it again in this book!

Both Leah and Austin seem reasonably well adjusted folks, but they come with quite a bit of emotional baggage in addition to the mess that brought them together in this book. Baggage that wreaks havoc in their budding relationship (other than the lying bit, which doesn't help either!!). Each has some abandonment issues left over from childhood and nothing thus far in their adult lives have really shown them anything different. They (of course) don't communicate clearly and interpret the other's words and signals to confirm what they believe to be reality. Communication, or rather lack thereof, is always the culprit!! Luckily, these two have a few smart people around who end up knocking some sense into them, so you can safely expect a HEA.

One note: this book is in fact a twofer!! I am not telling you anything about the second couple, we'll leave something to the imagination...but you get not one, but TWO HEA's with this novel!!

Great action, sweat romance and some mild heat, sprinkled with the occasional moment of tension-relieving humour - and you have a fabulous fun read!!!

?A stirring, animated and touching search for retribution.?

ARC provided by NetGalley and Forever I. Return for an honest review.

Melody says

Book Source: Won an advanced copy from Goodreads giveaway

Austin Brook was a PI who was framed for murder and he ended up in jail for more than a year. When he was released from jail, he vowed to bring down the man, DeLuna who framed him. In order to find out where DeLuna was hiding, he came up with a plan which his two PIs friend strongly opposed but he ended up going through with his plan. His plan included disguising himself and getting close to Leah Reece, who was DeLuna's half sister. He thought since Leah was a family member of DeLuna, she would know where he was. His plan didn't include falling in love with Leah but that was exactly what happened. While trying to find out information about DeLuna, he had a hard time keeping his feelings and desires under control and not doing the things he wanted to do with Leah.

The last thing Leah Reece wanted was a man in her life. She had come to conclude that they were all trouble.

Her ex-husband cheated on her, her father abandoned her, and her half-brother, DeLuna was an asshole to her. Since her divorce with her husband, Leah hadn't date anyone and no one had her interest until she saw Austin Brook. At first she tried to stay away from him because she knew he was trouble and she couldn't trust him. She did everything she could to keep Austin away from her heart but when she suspected her half-brother, DeLuna broke into her apartment, she didn't have a choice but to accept the help from Austin and slowly she opened up to him.

Little by little, they gotten closer. They found out about each other's past and both felt something they thought they wouldn't be able to feel again. The connection they had was undeniable and both of them couldn't resist staying away from each other. But Austin had secrets that will torn them apart if Leah found out. Austin wanted to tell Leah everything but finding DeLuna was also important.

I loved this book so much. This book made me laughed many times and I loved that about a book. I loved all the actions this book offered and all characters stuck with me after I finished it. The story was told in four different perspectives which I really enjoyed. Reading from different point of views made me understand what was going on more and I liked that. I thought this book was going to be all about Austin and Leah but I was glad the author also included two other supporting characters' story, Roberto and Sara. Roberto and Sara's relationship was complicated but I was glad everything turned out well for them because they clearly loved each other.

It was clear that Leah and Austin had a bad childhood. Though Leah's childhood wasn't as bad as Austin. His mother left him as well as his father but I was glad his mother made an effort to get back into his life in the end. I loved reading all the parts where Austin had to interact with the cats. He made me laughed when he ran away every time he had to deal with a cat. Of course he hid the fact that he was afraid of cats because of bad experience when he was little from Leah but she found out anyway in the end.

DeLuna was brought to justice like Austin wanted. It was good that Austin and Leah decided to give in their desires and be with each other. I was a little bit disappointed when the book ended because I wanted to read more about Austin and Leah's story. I'm definitely going to give other books by this author a try because I know it's going to be as good as this book.

Lydia says

What a magnificent way to end a rather entertaining and hot trilogy!

Austin Brook seems to be the only one in the PI trio that takes the capture of DeLuna seriously as of late. He can't blame his partners, after all, now they're both married and have something to lose, so it's only logical to be careful. But Austin is a man who values necessary risks, and his instincts tell him Leah Reece, DeLuna's half-sister, is the key to taking the drug lord down once and for all. And since she's not his type, he won't be tempted to sleep with her and screw the mission up. Too bad the young cat-lover neither has anything to do with her half-brother, nor is easy to resist. Leah has been treated less than pleasantly by the men in her life so far. Her father never cared for her or her little brother, her ex-husband maxed her card for phone sex and cheated on her with the neighbors, and her half-brother is an abusing criminal that doesn't care to leave her alone. With DeLuna closing in from all sides, looking for their other brother, Louis, thinking that he's responsible for all the screw-ups in his drug deals lately, it's gonna be hard to keep her new neighbor - and his protectiveness - at arm's length. Not that she's sure she wants to, anyway. But what happens, when a woman who has been lied to so much, finds out that almost everything she thought she knew of the man

she's falling in love with is a complete lie? And what will Austin do, when he ends up needing to keep his arch-enemy's half-sister safe and by his side more than he needs his long-awaited revenge?

Didn't I tell you we needed the little break we got in Tyler's story? With both him and Dallas happily married off, Austin is sort of left alone to his machinations, until it's too late for them to stop him from going after DeLuna's sister - even if Roberto, their guy in DeLuna's business, told them she has nothing to do with their nemesis. And yeah, I did mean it, the two previous books were a breeze compared to the third one! Because Austin has waited way too long in his opinion to capture the piece of shit that framed him, and he's out for blood. Until he meets Leah - then he turns into the biggest wuss, worse than Tyler and Dallas have ever been! Then, he meets her FOUR cats - and discovers an ailurophobic's worst nightmare can come true faster than a wet dream in heat! (yes, my darlings, Austin, the world's most badass ailurophobic, falls in love with Leah, a woman who's so obsessed with cats, she became a vet solely for them, and has not one, not two, but **four** cats - two of which are semi-feral. I'll leave you to your deductions ;))

While Austin wasn't my favorite of the trio - I won't even repeat my obvious love for Tyler the geek and Rick the softie macho badass - I have to admit he was a pleasant surprise. I've seen the whole "she's not my type and could be an enemy so I'll just seduce and use her" theme for playboy characters like our dear blond clown, yet he made it all look quite refreshing and cute. The way he would try to keep his distance, but he just wouldn't listen, and the way he was so scared out of his mind whenever a feline was in the near vicinity, it was simply too hilarious to resist! Though he did end up "adopting" one because he wanted to be Leah's hero. Awww!!!

Speaking of Leah, yeah, well, not the best choice of woman, but hey, if Austin likes her, what the hell, I can accept her somewhat. You see, after being used to awesome heroines like Nikki and Zoe, Leah was not what you'd call a breather. We get it, you have trust issues, girl, and the guy lied to you and used you. Grab a pan and roast his nuts, I would be all for it and behind you 100%. But don't be such a judgemental bitch. You **know** what kind of a bastard you half-brother is, you've experienced it for yourself. How could you possibly NOT believe this one thing Austin says about being framed by him? Hellooo, the guy is a drug lord, an abuser, a criminal, a killer. If someone tells you this guy framed three cops, even if that someone has lied to you repeatedly, you ought to believe it, because you may not know the liar well, but you do know your brother and you know he's very much capable of it. But nooo, why act reasonably? Screw that and let's start saying the cops must not be innocent, and it had nothing to do with DeLuna. Super smart! (where are you, Nikki and Zoe? come give us your light of justice, because, frankly, Leah needs it!)

Oh, oh, let's not forget the fact she made him adopt a cat! Ok, to her defense, Austin said he liked cats, but, even if he did, picking up a cat and dumping it on him is NOT ok. Or acceptable. The woman started planning to do it right when she met him, the heck is up with that? And she was the worst kind of hypocrite - damn, I nearly forgot about it. She was trying to keep guys at distance when it was about Austin, but she goes out with that other vet, Eric, and suddenly she's trying to convince herself to like him because they have so many things in common. Oh, yeah, really nice of you, cat lady...

Right about now, most of you might be wondering about the high rating since I can't stop hating on Leah, correct? Well, I can tell you this much: Austin was hilarious and delightful (also, the man can cook, piss off!), the suspense and the action was so much worth reading Leah's awful thoughts when Austin was risking his ass to save hers, and the secondary couple was perhaps the best out of all the trilogy's couples! I mean it,

Roberto and Sara were freaking cool! The sex scene made me melt, alright, but it was more than that. All that tension between them, Roberto's guilt for falling for another woman because he felt he was cheating on his dead wife by being happy, how they tried to stay away from each other and couldn't do it. And the phone conversations, oh, I love those! Funny and simply adorable. It was nice to see them together at the end, they were a fitting duo. And he read romance novels because she suggested it, how cool is that?!

Having reached the end of this trilogy, I have to say I will miss those guys. They were really great - though they sort of acted like a bunch of gossipy teenage girls at times. And yes, I was very much satisfied with the way things went on with the DeLuna case - so I am an evil, bitchy sadist, sue me. One thing's for sure: Christie Craig is not an author whose books you want to miss!

****I was given an ARC from the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. The opinion stated in this review is solely mine, and no compensation was given or taken to alter it.****

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Guilty Pleasures Book Reviews says

Slick's review posted on Guilty Pleasures Book Reviews

The Only In Texas guys are back as Austin Brook plans on getting the information he needs to finally take down the man who landed him and his partners in jail for 18 months. Against his partner's wishes, Austin plans to get to know the man's half-sister and find the information they need to bring the guy to justice. What he doesn't plan on is liking Leah Reece just a little too much and finding out how much he enjoys her company.

Texas Hold 'Em is another entertaining and suspense packed book by author Christie Craig. I've enjoyed each book in this series but I'll admit Austin has never been a favorite character. He's a little too cocky and never seems to think things through thoroughly. However, as this book progressed I began to understand Austin better and discovered he's not a bad guy. He has some issues that he really has never dealt with but deep down he is honorable and wants to do the right thing always. Leah isn't without her own issues but I really enjoyed her sassy mouth and her sense of pride. At times though her stubbornness got the best of her, but so much of that stems from her needing to be in control at all times. I enjoyed the slow build up to their relationship and the fun times they had getting to know one another, but to be honest I was more intrigued by the secondary romance between Roberto and Sara.

I enjoyed this book, but at times I felt the suspense aspect of it overshadowed the love story. I would have enjoyed seeing more time spent with just Austin and Leah when they weren't arguing or mad at one another and less of the crime driven scenes. As always though author Christie Craig gives the reader many laugh out loud moments as well as some steamy love scenes. I loved seeing all the characters from the previous books and the epilogue was perfect for the end of this series.

Review copy provided for an honest review.

Sabrina says

Second novel of Christie Craig that I read. I couldn't stop laughing.

Susan says

Good conclusion to the series. Austin and his partners have spent the last several months trying to find a way to bring down the man who got them wrongfully convicted of murder. Even though they were exonerated, Rafael DeLuna is still on the loose, and they are determined to bring him to justice. But with his partners having found love in the previous two books (Don't Mess with Texas and Blame It On Texas) Austin feels like Tyler and Dallas have lost a little bit of their drive. He is convinced that DeLuna's half-sister, Leah, knows where he is and is determined to do whatever it takes to get that information out of her. He moves in next door to her with plans to charm her into revealing all.

Leah is a veterinarian with one thing on her mind - keeping her younger brother safe by keeping her older brother out of their lives. She isn't interested in having a man in her life. Between the father who abandoned her and the ex who cheated on her, it will take a lot for her to trust one again.

I loved the development of the relationship between Austin and Leah. Their first meeting did not go according to Austin's plan. Between the episode with the car horn and the broken bottle of wine, Austin's trademark charm turns out to be an epic failure when it came to Leah. Even his attempts to make it up to her faced stiff resistance. However, Austin is persistent and slowly works his way into Leah's life. One thing he did not count on was his unexpected attraction to her. She's nothing like the women he usually dates, but something about her gets past his own defenses. Leah is just as attracted to him, but his overt charm is a strike against him. She prides herself on her independence and fights that attraction as hard as she can, but it is a losing battle. I loved the interactions between Leah and Austin. He tries so hard to charm her and her comebacks shoot him down every time. As he works his way past her walls, he realizes that she is innocent of any knowledge of her brother's actions and that he really likes the woman she is. That puts him at a disadvantage because he has told her so many lies. I liked the fact that he felt guilty about those lies, and that he wanted to come clean before their relationship went too far. Unfortunately for him, fate didn't work in his favor. Leah's hurt and anger over those lies are understandable, though her stubbornness in the midst of the attack was not very smart on her part. I did like the way that she made Austin work to get back in her good graces.

There are a lot of laugh out loud moments in this book, but some of the best ones come at Austin's expense. Austin is terrified of cats, thanks to a bad encounter when he was a little boy. Leah is a vet who specializes in cat care, plus she has four cats of her own. The scene during which Austin attempts to plant bugs in Leah's apartment is hysterical. Austin is faced with four cats who he is certain are about to attack him. Even the most innocent of their actions send him into a panic. When an intruder traps Austin in the laundry room with cats and litter box, his reactions are priceless. One of Austin's lies to Leah is that he likes cats, which adds to his difficulties later when she brings him a "gift."

The suspense of the story was well done. Throughout the series, the three men have been intent on bringing

down Rafael DeLuna, the man who framed them for murder. In this book, we have Austin's attempts to get information from Leah, Rafael's threats to Leah, and the efforts of informant Roberto to force DeLuna out of hiding. Roberto's actions are effective, but dangerous, and bring unwanted attention to Leah and Luis. The intertwining of Austin and Roberto's efforts created a final confrontation that had me on the edge of my seat until it was all over.

There was a secondary romance involving Roberto and Leah's vet tech, Sarah. The attraction was obvious and reciprocal, though each has obstacles to making a success of it. Roberto is still grieving the loss of his wife and son, who were murdered by Rafael DeLuna, hence his involvement in bringing DeLuna down. His growing feelings for Sarah create a sense of guilt in him, as he feels he's being unfaithful to his wife. On top of that is his involvement with the DeLuna case, and he doesn't want to bring that danger to Sarah's door. Sarah's priority in her life is her young son, and she is reluctant to get involved with a man who seems to have an issue with her motherhood. The attraction can't be denied, and they slowly get to know each other. I liked seeing them open up about their pasts, and see that being together is healing for them both. There's some unexpected excitement toward the end that brings them closer together, including a scene with doggie pain pills that had me laughing out loud.

Cindy ~ says

This is the final book about three cops, who were framed for murder by Rafael DeLuna and sent to prison for 16 months who were finally proven innocent and released and started their own PI business.

Austin Brook wants DeLuna's blood more than justice like his partners do. When he thinks the progress of getting DeLuna out into the open is taking too long he decides he is going to take things into his own hands. This leads him to DeLuna's half-sister who he thinks can lead him to his whereabouts. Austin is willing to do whatever it takes which including lying and spying on her. What he doesn't count on is his attraction to her and his guilt for using her.

As this is a Christie Craig book you know there is going to be plenty of humor. Leah Reece is a veterinarian. Her specialty is cats – neutering them. Where the funny part comes in is Austin is deathly afraid of cats so there are plenty of laugh out loud moments as he tries to deal with the 4 cats that Leah lives with.

The secondary characters and romance are with Sara who works with Leah and Roberto who does undercover work for the PI's but has his own agenda in wanting DeLuna.

This was a great wrap up to the series.. Little bittersweet that it's the end but it was a fun ride with lots of humor, animals, great romances and the guys finally getting resolution to the hell they went through all those years ago.

Emily says

I've read the first two in this trilogy but it was a while back so the story arc that played a big part in this installment wasn't fresh in my mind. Ms. Craig didn't do a lot of rehashing so the plot was a little hard to follow at first. The one thing I have noticed in all the Christie Craig books I've read is that she follows a

formula (divorced heroine, hero involved in some way with law enforcement, animals a plenty along with quirky side characters); I find her books rather predictable and mediocre largely for this reason, and to be honest I don't really find her humor that amusing. This story took me a few days to read because I was having a hard time forcing myself to stay interested, overall it was okay but nothing special or memorable.

Sophia says

Private Investigator, Austin Brook, plans to get close to the half-sister of the man he wants justice against so he poses as someone he's not and then falls for the girl. The lies start to unravel when danger appears on Leah Reece's doorstep. Oh, this can't be good, but count me in.

This is the third story in the Hotter In Texas trilogy. While each story offers a different case, they were all leading up to this one. Finally, it was coming down to it with Austin's story. One would probably get more out of it reading them in order, but I read this one first without being lost or confused.

So this one opened with Austin impatient to get things moving along faster in the team of investigators' plan to find the man who got them wrongfully accused of murder among other atrocious deeds and he's tired of relying on someone else to get the job done. He packs up and heads off to track down DeLuna's half-sister to see if he can get DeLuna's location out of her. He'll try charming it out of her first, but if that doesn't work he'll have to get sneaky.

Leah Reece has been burned by men starting from when her father rejected her and her ex-fiance' cheated on her. She might think the new guy next door is cute, but there is no way she is giving Austin a chance. She'll stick to her vet clinic friends and her four cats for company. Unfortunately, her younger brother Luis seems to be in trouble, her older brother, Rafael is threatening her and she finds that for the first time she can't go it alone and needs Austin's help.

Austin finds that he can't treat Leah like a job and struggles with his attraction getting in the way of doing his job. Well that and his great fear of her cats. Leah is closed up about her personal life and he suspects she is not entirely ignorant of DeLuna's whereabouts since he seems to be threatening her and her little brother because something's going down in his criminal organization. Charm isn't working because she's more gun-shy about relationships than he is so he goes with Plan B. And when she finds out, and she will the way weird dangerous stuff keeps going down, she'll hate him, but to get scum like DeLuna and Cruz off the street and keep her safe he will do it.

Going alongside Austin and Leah's story, is Roberto's side of things and his little romance with Sara. Roberto has his own reasons for tracking down DeLuna and exacting revenge. He has placed himself in a precarious place just to get close to him. He has regrets when it comes to his interaction with Sara, but he still wants to be with her when it's all over.

Both stories overlap for that big heart-thumping race to the end when everything converges after all the plotting and planning. Austin and Leah have to come to terms with their feelings and learn if two damaged people can learn to trust in love after so many times of being burned.

I thought the premise of this one sounded fantastic and for the most part it lived up to that expectation. I had fun with Austin's antics trying to get close to Leah while avoiding her cats. I laughed out at the humorous scenes that made up their first meeting and later when she found his squirt gun and used it on him. I was

nervous for Roberto as he worked his way closer into company with DeLuna's evil right hand guy, Cruz. I was even taken with the romances- two of them for the price of one- both couples tentative reaching out and starting the relationships after what they both had in their pasts. My biggest focus was watching Austin dig his hole with Leah deeper and deeper with his lies to cover up why he was really around her. I kept waiting with expectation for that moment when it all came out in the wash. And let me tell you people, when it did, it wasn't pretty. Let's just say don't let that woman near sharp objects or squishy vegetables when she gets het up.

That being said, there were a few things about Leah that were bothersome.

I found that I got impatient with Leah's hang-ups and it seemed to bog down the pace for me. It wasn't a lot, but I admit that I was somewhat bored when dealings with her were like pulling teeth. She's got emotional issues and I get why, but at times it just got exasperating. When it came to beginnings of passion like kisses and touches or even looks for that matter, she runs off like a scalded cat even when she's the one who initiates a kiss or touch. Then she has the audacity to be hurt when he puts the brakes on and says they need to take things slow. Poor guy was afraid she'd freak plus he was honorable and didn't want to go too far with a lie between them.

Maybe it's just me, but when you can't even give someone a simple thank you when they stand in front of you sporting a bruised up face because they stopped an armed home invader for you, that makes me find you lacking and no issues from your past excuse this. Several times her gratitude was non-existent and that was just a peeve for me.

And the kicker? She couldn't accept help let alone admit that she was in way over her head knowing what that older half-brother and his people were capable of. There was a scene late in the book that I suppose was supposed to be funny and it was a little, but there was a part of me that just shook my head at her. When bullets are flying and Austin is trying to save her, he ends up having to duct tape her and cart her off to safety with her kicking and screaming-literally- because she is so fixated on her anger and hurt. Yeesh girl! Get a grip. Be angry about the lies, but get your head out of the sand and take in what's going down around you too.

Parts about Leah I did like and could respect, but it was a push to not skip through her scenes and points of view sometimes. Austin might have his hang-ups, but I really enjoyed his narration parts. He was a fun guy and really regretted the need for the deception, but as he pointedly asked Leah and she couldn't honestly say yes, "Would you have really shared if I had just asked?" She couldn't open up to basically a stranger and had learned to not trust in the police and he couldn't very well assume she was innocent since the bad guy is her brother so it was a bit of a tricky empasse there.

Just an aside, cat lovers will really like this one. Leah is a cat specialist vet and has four cats at home. Austin has a severe phobia to cats and freaks out around Leah's and one of his lies catches up with him when she saddles him with one of her rescue cats. The relationship that develops between him and that cat was high comedy for me and oh so cute. Gotta share a bit of a scene between Austin and Spooky in bed together much to Austin's anguish:

"The animal stood up, did a front-to-back stretch, and moved closer. Austin held out his hand. "No! Get. Go!"

The cat kept coming. Scared to make a sudden move, Austin froze. The cat stepped up on his thighs, moved up a couple of inches, right above boys and friend. Austin didn't even breathe. "Hey, buddy, I wasn't the one who neutered you." Loc3887 Austin to Spooky

Overall it was an enjoyable read and I would love to go back and get Dallas and Tyler's stories. That epilogue reunion with all the cast was cool and wrapped up the trilogy nicely.

Those who enjoy a lighter-style romantic suspense with just a bit of spice in the romance should give this one a try.

My thanks to Netgalley for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for my honest review.

Lynnette says

I won a advanced copy via Goodreads! I haven't read any of Christie Craig's books in the past and this one will not be the last!!!! Totally loved this book! A good mix of fun, laughter, action, and romance. Loved the four characters' point of views! Austin and Leah's romance was hot and fun! Enjoyed Roberto and Sara's hot romance also! Can't wait to read more books from Christie Craig! I want to get the first 2 books in the series to read Dallas and Tyler stories.

Eleanor says

Ah Christie Craig didn't let me down with the last book in this series. Really enjoyed it, Made me laugh out load at times and also gave me giant lumps in my throat.

Helen says

This one provides a satisfying conclusion to the three-book plot line of getting justice for the three detectives who were wrongly convicted. The only drawback for me was that it seemed to happen mostly off screen. I wanted the boys to face the bad guy, and I wanted to see it.

That being said, this is a delightful romance between a detective who gets by on his charm and instincts (and who also has a phobia about cats) and a cautious-about-love vet with secrets and 4 cats. The confront-your-fears parts are especially funny and heartfelt. Christie Craig crafts a believable romance with not just the main characters but a super subplot with appealing secondary characters.

Victoria Sturlini says

ANOTHER FABULOUS STORY!!!!

I really enjoyed this book..... It has everything a Christie Craig book always has. Lots of suspense any mystery.... Lots of romance and sexiness! Lots of friendship and loyalty..... Lots of great banter and humor.... all woven into a intriguing and engrossing story. I absolutely love the way she integrates two beautiful love stories plus a plethora of different viewpoints from the characters, that all gel together in the end for a very very satisfying read!!!! I enjoyed also the epilogue... I am a big fan of epilogues... They give me a nice warm contented feeling after reading the whole book to see how the characters end up rather than an abrupt end that leaves you wondering!! I enjoyed very much this series and highly recommend it!!!!

Jo says

What a wonderful final installment to this series, and I must admit Austin turned out to be my favourite, which I was not expecting.

Texas Hold 'Em was not as humorous as the previous books, and had a lot more depth. Austin is a very hot guy, but quite emotionally damaged as he does not trust that people won't abandon him, which is very understandable once you learn about his childhood. I always have a weakness for guys with a difficult past whom is slightly broken.

Leah is sweet and caring, and she was just perfect for Austin. Plus she made him overcome his fear of cats :-).

There was a secondary romance, which was a great addition, and had me rooting for their HEA. The final instalment was very sweet, the romance was great and it had a very satisfactory ending.

I really enjoyed this series, and I would recommend it to all romance lovers.
