



High Country Rebel

Lindsay McKenna

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Battle-weary former Navy SEAL Talon Holt's top priority is to defend his own. With a military dog to care for and his traumatized soul to mend, he hitchhikes from California to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, hoping for a fresh start and to be with his ailing mother. But he can't outrun the ghosts of war—especially when a ferocious storm forces Talon to accept the help of paramedic Cat Edwin. The gorgeous rescuer wants to heal his wounds inside and out, but the fear in her arresting blue eyes calls to his instinct to protect.

Trust just doesn't come easy to Cat, who, thanks to a troubled past and a violent ex, tries to keep Talon at arm's length. Yet attraction draws them together despite the very real danger each of them brings to the other. Now Talon is driven to save Cat, even when it leads to a high-country showdown that could cost them love...and their lives.

High Country Rebel Details

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From Reader Review High Country Rebel for online ebook

Andrea says

Lindsey McKenna known for her novels involving service personnel.

The Rebel is a former SEAL whose mother is being treated for cancer. He received a medical discharge and he and his dog are trying to make their way home to Jackson Wyoming.

Stacy Sabala says

Book Review-High Country Rebel by Lindsay McKenna

Talon Holt is an ex-Navy Seal who was captured by the Taliban and tortured along with his partner Hayden. He was saved by his canine, Zeke, who walked many miles to a US military outpost. Talon was rescued but Hayden died. As a result Talon was honorably discharged from his injuries and suffers from PTSD. He has haunting memories of his torture and Hayden's death.

So Talon and Zeke find themselves walking from Coronado, California back home to Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Just as they are nearing his home, a blizzard grips the area and he finds himself lying in the snow giving up. He can't breathe because of his bad case of pneumonia and he is suffering from hypothermia. The only thing keeping him going is Zeke.

Just as all hope was gone, Cat Edwin sees him as she is driving down the road on her way to Bar H Ranch. She is a paramedic for the Jackson Hole Fire Department. She stops and helps Talon and Zeke get into her SUV and takes them to Bar H Ranch. With the weather as it is there is no way to get him to the hospital. Cat is afraid for his life and doesn't know if he has enough strength left to fight off the infection.

She nurses him back to better health and tries to go on with her life, but her feelings for Talon grow and it scares the hell out of her. Her track record with men is pathetic at best and she is afraid to even try anymore. Talon is here for his mother who is dying of cancer, but Cat is getting under his skin. She is like a healing balm to his PTSD. He craves her company and needs her soft, caring heart. He knows she is skittish around men and decides she is worth the patience he will need to bring her around.

Unfortunately their pasts are catching up and Talon finds he is obsessive about protecting Cat. He has to walk the line to balance his protectiveness and trustworthiness for Cat to respond the way he wishes her to. It may be the most important mission he has had yet.

This book was great when showing the reader a veteran with PTSD and how they react to life after they serve. The characters were believable and I liked joining the group as the story evolved. I thought that Talon and Cat were a good fit. They had instant recognition of attraction and feelings. Unfortunately their messed up emotions would get in the way. They didn't trust their feelings and their guilt was overwhelming. I would get to the point of saying enough already. They could get to the point where something might happen and then Cat would push him away. It was frustrating to me. When Cat got to the cliff dealing with her feelings for Talon, I wanted to push her off myself. Overall, however, it was a good story with great characters. I liked the ranch setting and the small town feel of the community. I give this book a 4 out of 5.

Jan Kaplan says

Ms. McKenna's Wyoming Series bring stories to warm the heart. Each book is filled with interesting personalities who are struggling to find peace after intense military service has left them suffering with PTSD. Such a difficult condition is handled with great depth and sensitivity. Jackson Hole, Wyoming is the place where activity reigns supreme. And, what a place it is! There's no getting tired or bored with her descriptions of such majestic beauty.

High Country Rebel is, so far, my favorite! Rather than go into detail, I'll just say that Talon Holt, a military survivor along with his dog, Zeke are walking a great distance to get home to see his ill mom. Because of all the money he sent to her for her medical treatment, he is virtually penniless. With his heart filled with love for her, there is nothing he wants more than to take care of her. Zeke is a Belgium Malinois combat trained dog who has saved Talon's life on many occasions. Caught in a blizzard, close to home, Talon has no strength to push himself further and collapses, waiting for death. Zeke is always by his side and laying down next to him, with his fur as a blanket, he joins his master and friend.

Cat Edwin, a Paramedic and Firefighter is on her way home when she spots something in the road. Pulling over, she rushes out to check and is amazed to find a man, hardly recognizable, frozen half to death. With her formidable strength and tall stature, she is able to bring him to her home.

During Talon's recovery, a special relationship is building. Although Cat has her own demons to work through, she revels in the powerful connection between them. All in all, I love everything about this book, but have to say ~ Zeke steals the show! Wow, what an incredible dog!

Wolf Haven, Book 9 is a pleasurable read which I am enjoying now. Thanks, Ms. McKenna.

Yodamom says

2.5

It all started with a frozen damaged soul, instant attraction and a loyal friend. When paramedic Cat was driving in a blizzard she miraculously found a dirty, starving man and his dog nearly dead on the side of the road. Even while he was dirty, smelly and dressed in old torn clothes she felt a connection. Yes, insta-love. Oh, she didn't think it was love at first but there was something in his eyes. I was lost to the story at this point and it only went downhill for me from there. She had to take him to a local home and treat him herself. It was too far to a hospital in the blizzard. These two have issues. They both suffer from terrible histories and have PTSD to deal with, which they do together. The story takes us with them both through their recovery steps and fumbles and ends with a HEA. It was romantic and I just didn't get it or I couldn't relate. I'm not sure. I just didn't connect with the characters. I was left glassy eyed by the over explanation of the various issues these characters lived with. The story would start moving, and then stop to describe PTSD, or Seal life, Seal traits, Seal difficulties, Seal philosophies. I understand the difficulty of their sacrifices both firemen and Seals but I didn't need to be taught that much, a brief one time description would have worked. I appreciate that the author respects the professions so much but she lost me in the details. I also found the drama of her ex a bit unbelievable. I loved Zeke, the combat trained dog, but he was missing from several scenes in the second half of the book with no explanation of where he was or who was taking care of this possibly dangerous dog. His care and love for his companion carried the story for me. His story ended with a wagging tail. I was sorry that this didn't work for me. I really wanted to love this story when I read the outline. I think

this might be a fantastic book for somebody with familiarity with PTSD, service, or military life. I just don't have any and floundered trying to understand. It was a lovely romance but just not for me.

Dani C. (Paulette's Papers) says

I am such a fan of this kind of contemporary cowboy romance that has just a touch of military in them. This latest book by Ms. McKenna has all this and even more. I loved the flow of the story and found it very difficult to set down.

In High County Rebels we have both of the main characters that are dealing with personal issues. Talon has PDST due to his service for our country and Cat has her own demons she has to fight due to an abusive childhood. Both of these complex characters are attracted to one another but take time developing the relationship due to their issues.

This is a wonderful romance that has a lot of small town heart to it. I love how Gus wanted to take care of Talon and his mother. I love Zeke, Talon's Belgium Malinois combat assault dog. I have to say Zeke seem to steal any scene he was in. He is one wonderful dog and hero!

I truly recommend this book to anyone who is looking for a romance that has a good plot and interesting characters. I know I will be looking forward to Ms. McKenna's next book which is coming out later this year.

Shirlene says

Talon Holt and his partner were taken hostage as Navy SEAL's. Hayden died and Talon was injured and could no longer be a SEAL. He also couldn't talk to anyone about what he had been through. Most of his time in the military was top secret. He had PTSD and was on his way home from San Diego. He had his combat assault dog, Zeke, with him. Talon couldn't be in enclosed spaces so he had to walk to Jackson Hole, WY. His mom was going through her second round of cancer and he needed to see her. He didn't have much money because everything he had he sent home to his mother to help with her cancer treatment bills.

Talon was almost home and walking through a blizzard. He was ready to give up and die. Zeke was keeping him going. He was ready to collapse when a black SUV stopped and he was picked up. Cat Edwin was a paramedic and took him home. Talon had pneumonia and was in very bad shape. She found out that he was the son of a good friend, Sandy. She gave him antibiotics and called his mother to tell her that she was at the Bar H. Miss Gus owned the Bar H and Cat worked for her part-time as a wrangler. She was a fireman and a paramedic. She was good and her job and Talon came to appreciate that about her. He was attracted to Cat when he first met her and she was surprised that she was attracted to him too. He stayed with Miss Gus for two weeks until he was over the pneumonia and able to finally see his mother.

Cat Edwin had grown up with a very abusive father and had scars on her back where he had beaten her with a belt buckle. She had two previous boyfriends and they were both abusive too. She considered herself a poor judge of men and didn't trust them. Her last boyfriend had been Beau Magee. She had told him that they were through a year ago. He had become obsessed with Cat and wouldn't let her go.

Miss Gus was once a neighbor to Sandy and offered Talon a job as a wrangler and he gladly accepted. He began working for her as soon as he was well enough. He worked with Cat when she was at the ranch and

not working with the fire department. Talon didn't have nightmares and thought that was because of Cat being around. When he woke at night, she was usually up and talked with him. After a few weeks, she moved back to her condo because her fire dept schedule had changed to where she was working the night shift. Beau came to see her and she told him to get lost. She was worried about running into him again though.

Some time after she began her night shift, Talon sought her out because he missed her. He asked her to lunch and she went to the truck while he paid the bill. Beau was at the truck and missed Cat while trying to hid her with his fist in the face. He bruised her arms and id clip her face. Talon got to him and punched him as the deputy was driving by. Cade arrested Magee and she went by the next day to give him her statement and file charges against him. She called in sick to work because her jaw was swollen. She went to see Sandy and took her lunch and then went home. Cade had left a message telling her that Magee had gotten out on bail but she never got the message. He was a driver for a drug cartel and they had bailed him out. He was waiting in Cat's apartment for her. He took her to a cabin and made her promise that she wouldn't leave. She ran away as soon as she got the chance.

Matt, the fire chief called looking for Cat because she didn't show up for work. Talon called Cade and found out that Magee had made bail. He then took Zeke and did some research and found out there was a cabin nearby that was once owned by someone who had died. Talon and Zeke headed to the cabin and found Cat's jacket. Zeke was released to find her. He found her after she had torn her meniscus and could no longer run. She was headed toward the highway and Cade had been called. There was an APB put on Cat's truck to see if Magee could be found trying to pick her up when she finally realized that she had gotten away from him. Zeke found Cat who was frightened because a grizzly was getting ready to attack her. The bears had just come out of hibernation and were looking for food. Zeke attacked the bear and fought him until Talon arrived with a gun to scare the bear off. He took Cat to the hospital to have surgery on her knee. Zeke and he went to find Magee because the sheriff had found Cat's truck. Zeke did track and find Magee and had hold of his arm until Talon arrived with the sheriff to put handcuffs on him. He was treated and put back in jail while Cat was having surgery. They felt sure that the drug cartel wouldn't help Magee a second time around. Cat and Talon both realized that time could be short after what they just went through so they both admitted to being in love with each other.

Miss Gus called a meeting with her granddaughter, Val, and her husband, Griff, Sandy, Talon and Cat. Miss Gus told them that she had purchased Sandy's previous home, the Triple H, next door and was giving it back to Sandy. Talon and Cat would be moving into the home with her and would be their's into the future. Sandy had sold the property to pay her medical bills. Miss Gus had quite a bit of money due selling the prosperous ranch the she and her husband had previously owned. She sold it after her died and she found out that Val's father was abusing her mother. The abuse stopped once Gus moved in with them.

The only catch was that Talon had yet to ask Cat to marry him. He asked her to marry him that evening. Cat had to be taught by Talon that she could trust him. She believed that she could and she told him about her past with her father. Talon had yet to talk about what had happened to Hayden but he knew he would and that he could trust Cat to help him heal. They would be good for each other.

Val says

Read for the second time and I still really enjoyed it. Love the balance of romance and action.

Tina Sorensen says

Ahh...the Navy SEAL. What woman can resist this type of hero?

Talon is returning home to his cancer stricken mother. He has been sending all of his paychecks to pay for her medical bills. However, his best friend and he are captured in Afghanistan, tortured and injured. His best friend dies, but Talon is rescued and sent home with his combat dog, Zeke.

Destitute, Talon hikes to his childhood home in the mountains, in order to be with his mother. His injuries, lack of funds lead to his almost death during a freak storm. He collapses on the mountainside, lungs filled with pneumonia, right at paramedic/firefighter, Cat, drives by.

Cat is able to get Talon to the working ranch where she lives off and on between shifts. There, she and her friends, are able to heal Talon, although he fights PTSD.

As he recovers, Talon not only deals with the impatience of seeing his mother (he cannot until he is healthy) but the fact that Cat is being stalked by a former lover. Cat, a tall strong woman, has dealt with an abusive past and poor relationships. Can she trust Talon not to lose control as well?

As the story develops, Cat and Talon face his PTSD, her qualms with trust, the possible death of Talon's mom and a man bent on controlling Cat physically and emotionally.

A suspenseful read with emotions that run high from time to time.

Tina "IRead2Escape" says

High Country Rebel is the 8th book in the series by Lindsay McKenna, but my first experience with the lovely characters of Jackson Hole. I found this series very enjoyable. The characters were all very likable with just the right balance of flaws and imperfections. The suspense that this book provided was telegraphed from the beginning, but the "bad guy" was never a secret. There were a few parts that I found myself thinking "I would have known that had I read this series in order", but it didn't hurt this story in any way.

Talon Holt has more demons than most to overcome and it seems like the world is out to knock him down even more. As a former Navy Seal he's seen more than his share of the horrors this world has to offer, including the torture and death of his best friend. If it weren't for his trained battle dog he would surely be dead, as well. Hitchhiking back to Wyoming to be with his cancer ridden mom he's found himself freezing to death in an ice storm and no help in sight, that is until Cat showed up.

Cat Edwin can not believe her eyes when driving through a terrible snowstorm she sees a man collapsed on the side of the road. Even more concerning is the punch to the gut she feels when she looks into the handsome stranger's eyes. He's not a stranger, even. This is the son of her dear friend. She knows she can heal his body, the real question is can she help his soul.

This story was bittersweet. The pain that Talon had buried was heart wrenching and his journey to overcome it all was tough to read. Cat's diligence and understanding in trying to help Talon was inspiring. This will

definitely not be my last Jackson Hole story.

This book was provided to be by NetGalley.com in exchange for my honest review.

You can find this book and others at <http://riverinaromantics.blogspot.com> and <http://tinar1121.blogspot.com>

Cindi says

This was my 2nd DNF by this author; I still have one more of hers on my kindle so now to decide whether or not to even try it...I actually got about 2/3rds done before giving up the ghost. I liked the characters in concept however when they began acting/thinking in conflicting ways (ie: she swore off men based on her past abusive relationships yet she immediately had had thoughts of a relationship with this very ill man she saved from a blizzard--and he was mostly knocked out from the pneumonia he contracted!). While she wasn't TSTL, I just couldn't buy into it. I felt like the author was throwing the plot in only to justify her romance. Oh well, there are more books out there with my name on them!

Rhonda says

My Review

4 STARS

This is the third book lately that has bear attack in it. Makes me want to stay out of the mountains. High Country Rebel starts off getting your attention and keeps it with drama, action, interesting characters, romance and too many sex scenes and good, loyal, trained dog.

Talon was a Navy Seal with PDST. He was taken hostage, and rescued with the help of his dog. He was medically discharged. Because of his PDST he has walked from California to Wyoming to his home. He is almost close to Jackson Hole when a late winter storm has come. Talon has been sending most of his pay home to his mom who is fighting breast cancer.

Talon knows he is in trouble. He is sick, freezing in blizzard. Zeke his dog had saved his life many times over seas. He is well trained he is worried about what would happen to Zeke.

Cat is a paramedic and a fire fighter. She is on her way to her part time job as a wrangler when she sees Talon. She stops the car. Talon gives signal word Allow to Zeke so he knows that she is helping Talon not a threat. Cat takes him to the Bar H the closes place. Their is no way to get him to the hospital for help.

Cat starts him on iv liquid and gives him antibiotic that she keeps in her first aid bag in car. Cat has her own problems dealing with her abusive childhood to her recent ex-boyfriend who tried to hit her and now is stalking her.

Gus who owns the Bar H is a kind special lady. Her granddaughter Val came home to help her run the ranch and ended up marrying Griff. Even as Talon is fighting fever she tells him that he has a job and a place on the ranch. She watched Talon work with his father at the neighbor ranch before he joined the Navy.

Talon's mom has almost given up fighting against her cancer. This is her second round with the cancer. It is

good for her that Talon is back home.

There are a lot of good people that are willing to help others when they can. Lots of people have helped Talon's mom while he served overseas.

There is a lot of drama, Zeke is an awesome dog and saves lives overseas and here in Wyoming.

I was given this ebook to read and asked to give an honest review in exchange by NetGalley.

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Maggie Shanley says

This was a sweet fast contemporary western romance. It stands alone, you do not need to read the other seven books to enjoy this one.

Janet says

This latest installment in Lindsay McKenna's Wyoming series is a good one. The premise of PTSD afflicted hero who can't abide enclosed spaces, so is walking to his home through a blizzard, accompanied by his equally wounded retired military service dog was fascinating. The heroine is equally as complex and damaged a character, and I became emotionally engaged quickly. I was grabbed by the action from the first chapter and wasn't disappointed by the rest of the book. Remember Pretty Woman? "He Rescues Her and She Rescues Him Right Back"? This wonderful romance that develops between two tormented characters had me rooting for their happily ever after as every chapter concluded. Though part of a series, the book could stand alone, back story is provided as necessary. The pacing was fast but even, the story well plotted, and really well written.

*I received my copy from NetGalley.com in exchange for an honest review.

L M says

This book is riveting and had me captivated from the very 1st page. The characters are SO realistic, sympathetic and kind hearted. You feel their pain and hardships, share their struggles and achievements. The story sheds insight into the challenges faced by our returning Military Service Members, especially the supremely sophisticated SEALs.

Dog lovers will thrill to Zeke, the Belgium Malinois combat assault dog owned by the hero, Talon Holt, who was wounded just like him. They came home to make a new life for themselves. Ultimately, the heroic warrior and dog fall back on years of SEAL training to try to save their rescuer, Cat Edwin, from life threatening danger.

A romance develops cautiously as they are both damaged souls. This story is about genuine heart, earned trust and family - whether by blood or through close friendship.

The characters struggle and finally triumph over many obstacles. Throughout the book I found myself staunchly cheering for them. **HIGH COUNTRY REBEL** teaches that innumerable possibilities are achievable and can be reached when love, caring and trust prevail. This is a **MUST** read!

Susan says

Fantastic book. Cat rescues Talon and his dog Zeke from a bad spring blizzard as he is on his way home to Jackson Hole. While nursing him back to health they admit to a strong attraction to each other, but both also have severe issues to deal with. To top it all off Cat is being stalked by her abusive ex-boyfriend.

When Cat finds Talon and Zeke on the side of the road, Talon is near death from exposure and pneumonia. She gets them to the Bar H ranch where she nurses Talon back to health. As a firefighter/paramedic she is accustomed to helping all kinds of people, but something about Talon touches her the way no one else has. Cat was abused by her father as a child and because of it has severe trust issues with men. She has had a couple short relationships with men that turned out badly so she has no confidence in her ability to choose a good man. As she and Talon get to know each other, frequently in late night talks as they fight insomnia, Cat finds that she trusts him completely. She sees the passion he feels for her in his eyes, but she isn't quite ready to deal with it. She accepts his offer of friendship as the building of their relationship continues. When Talon comes to her rescue after her ex attacks her, Cat can no longer deny the attraction she feels for him also. I loved Cat. In spite of her horrific childhood she has become a caring and compassionate woman. In her work as a paramedic she is able to direct that caring in a worthwhile way. With great effort she has developed friendships with her fellow firefighters and doesn't feel threatened by them. I loved her instant connection with Talon as she sensed another soul who was hurting too. I really liked her empathy and how she was able to tell when to talk to him and when to just be with him. As she grew closer to Talon she was also able to share things with him that she hadn't been able to do with anyone else. It was so emotional seeing her trust him enough to cry in his arms. As their relationship deepened she knew that she loved him but wasn't ready to tell him yet. When things went really bad with her ex Cat was afraid she had waited too long. I loved the way that Cat's new confidence in herself helped her at the end.

Talon was a hurting man. His last mission as a SEAL had left him broken in body and spirit. Because of his PTSD and the presence of his combat dog he wasn't able to travel by conventional means, so he was walking and hitchhiking from California to Jackson Hole. He was headed home to care for his sick mother when he was caught in a spring blizzard. Already sick with pneumonia, the storm has been the last straw. If it weren't for the presence of Zeke he would just lay down and die. When Cat pulls over to help him he thinks he is hallucinating the presence of an angel. He stays conscious long enough to explain how to command his dog then passes out as they head for the Bar H. He remembers ranch owner Miss Gus and is grateful for the refuge and care he receives. He is also thankful for the offer of a job on the ranch. He worries that his PTSD will cause him to harm Cat or the others on the ranch but discovers that Cat's care has begun a slow healing process within him. I loved seeing his instant connection with her and how it enables him to help her. He can see the shadows in her eyes and is determined to make them go away. In spite of his intense attraction to her, which he does not hide, he has the patience to go at her pace to develop their relationship. I loved seeing his

care for her and how he is able to build her confidence. Talon is fighting his own battles with his ghosts and appreciates the way that Cat doesn't push him to talk. He knows that she is there when he's ready. Just being there with her gives him a peace he hasn't felt in years. He also discovers that being with Cat creates feelings in him that he doesn't recognize. As a SEAL he has had a fair number of encounters with women but nothing has been like it is with Cat. He has no experience with romantic love and hesitates to say that's what he's feeling. But as his protective instincts kick in he realizes that it is love that he feels but thinks it's too soon to bring that up with her. When his abilities as a SEAL are needed to rescue her, he fears he has left it to late.

I loved the way the relationship between Talon and Cat developed. Both of them realized that their issues were something that had to be dealt with. The way that they discovered that helping each other was a key to helping themselves marked a big step for each of them. I loved the way that Cat's past helped her have an empathy for peoples' pain that was unusual. I also liked the way that they took time before making their relationship physical.

Zeke was one of my favorite characters in the entire book. His focus on Talon, especially when Talon was so sick, was so moving. I loved the way he was described as having such expressive eyes. The descriptions of his training and his role in Talon's SEAL unit were great and really gave me a good picture of how important the combat dogs are. I really liked seeing him make Cat part of his "pack" and loved his begging for marshmallows.

Having the book take place on the Bar H was wonderful because I love seeing previous characters. It's lovely to see Griff and Val doing so well. Miss Gus is as wonderful as always. Loved the way she took Talon in so easily and gave him the security of knowing he had a job. Also loved her friendship with Talon's mom and the way she and so many others helped take care of her. Her actions at the end showed just how big of a heart she really has.
