



How to Knit a Heart Back Home

Rachael Herron

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Lucy Harrison sells books by day, and by night she volunteers with the fire department of Cypress Hollow. Her life is even-keeled and smooth, just the way she likes it. But when bad-boy ex-cop Owen Bancroft comes back to town, Lucy realizes that while she's never scared while helping others, she's terrified of risking her heart.

When the discovery of an archive of Eliza Carpenter's work throws them together, Owen struggles to redefine himself as a man without a badge, while Lucy has to decide how much of herself she's willing to gamble on love.

How to Knit a Heart Back Home Details

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From Reader Review How to Knit a Heart Back Home for online ebook

Teresa says

I tried to like this book. I really did. But it totally felt like a bad Harlequin Romance novel. Blech!

Sharon says

How could I not like a book that describes it's main characters romantic interest as being like Matt Dillon's character, Dally in The Outsiders!! Rachael Herron has done it again. She has successfully woven (no pun intended) knitting into a romance. Lucy runs a book shop, The Book Spire in the small town of Cypress Hollow. Her life isn't that exciting until Owen Bancroft walks back into her life. Owen was the highschool kiss she never forgot - but was it the same for him?? Then when through Owen she discovers a secret stash of books and lost patterns by world-famous knitting guru Eliza Carpenter - their relationship deepens. But will Owen stay on in town or will he leave Lucy just as he did in their high school days!! Throw in some eccentric characters and this makes for a very enjoyable read!!

Anne says

I don't think this book is as strong as the first. There are new characters and nods to character established in the first book. This is fine, however, there are inconsistencies. In the first book, there was a small amount of knitting around town, but not much. In this book, there is (I hate to say it) an actually unbelievable and unrealistic amount of knitting. The impression here is that anyone female is somehow required or expected to knit. There are only a couple of exceptions, and somehow I think they are more because they aren't considered focal points. I liked Abigail in the first book. I can relate to her. I can relate to the history of Lucy in this book, sure... But I found Lucy to be beyond stupid. And much as I hate to admit it, the book store she owns, as described in this book, would be dead and buried long ago. Even 5 years ago, bookstores cannot run the way this one is described. And I still dislike romance books, and this one tried too hard in my opinion to be a Romance. Not a bad book, but I don't know that I will read it again.

Catherine says

Great read. Loved the connection of Lloyd the local knitters. Ready to read another of Rachael Herrons books.

Christi says

I really shouldn't judge a book by its cover. But I get lured in by cute artwork - especially when browsing the

recently returned but not yet shelved cart at the library.

Picked this one up on Saturday based on the knitted heart. Didn't know it would be a romance novel. Not really my thing. Like another reviewer said, it was like a bad Harlequin romance from the 80s. There was no spark between the two characters. More like they were the only two single people in the story so they HAD to hook up, randomly, throughout the book. Oh, and at one point her mom will barge in and hang out with them in the room. What's up with that??? Was it supposed to be comedy?

The main character Lucy is supposed to be charmingly naive. I found her to be a dim and dull without a lot of common sense OR business sense. If not for the tons of help from people around her, she'd probably be broke and homeless! There are hardly any customers at her book store. Heck, her best friend buys books from Amazon and lends them to her brother! She can't even call a repairman to get her disposal fixed.

Every scene with Owen, the bad boy hero, mentions his injured hip. We get it, he was shot in the line of duty. After the 3rd or 4th time, we don't need to be reminded. I just didn't buy this big romance between Lucy and Owen. They kissed once in high school. He moved away and moved on. She stayed stuck. In the same town. In the same bookstore. In the same ratty yellow sweater. Right.

Also, I get that this is a book focusing on knitters and a knitting bookstore owner but, really, everyone is either reading or knitting at a bar on a Saturday night? That's just odd.

I'm guessing the next installment of this book will focus on both Whitney and Molly and the Lucy Brothers (I can't remember what their last name was and I *just* finished the book.) At least those two girls have spunk and smarts!

sarah b. says

I might be a bit partial since I think Rachael is pretty awesome, but I am not a romance girl. Or at least I didn't think I was until I read her first book. Her version of romance is suspenseful, sometimes intense, and written in a way that allows for strong male and female characters. The fact that knitting is woven in without being forced is just a bonus!

Dotti Elrick says

I like this book, but there were things I struggled with.

I really enjoyed the first book. This one had a lot of the same good qualities as the first, it was well written, kept my attention, I loved the main male character, Owen and the secondary characters, but I had a hard time with the heroine, Lucy.

Owen has returned to his childhood hometown. He's come home after a career ending injury, to care for his ailing mother. He has a rough road ahead of him as he did not leave with the best of reputations. The bad seed, from a bad home. Even though he's lost his job as a police officer, the town only sees the high school bully.

I didn't understand Lucy. She was at times very immature. Stagnant. She was afraid of everything, heights, rats, lightning, change. She was so stuck in the past and afraid of changing anything, she was on the verge of losing her grandmothers beloved bookstore. Her low self esteem was tiresome. Yet at the same time, she was

a volunteer firefighter/EMT. A job that requires you to think and act fast. A job you definitely cannot go in half hearted.

Owen and Lucy had a “moment” in high school that has stuck with both of them into adulthood.

Knitting is the thing that brings them together. Lucy finds a lost treasure in boxes of Owens donated books.

And it’s knitting that helps keep Owens mother grounded and focused.

As with the first book, there is a knitting pattern included in the back of the book, that relates directly to the story. I’m not a knitter, but I enjoyed the idea of someone being able to reproduce Eliza’s sweater.

A.M. says

Rachael has a trad publishing contract in Australia for this series and they change the covers and the titles.

This is sold in the US as How to Knit a Heart Back Home (Cypress Hollow Yarn #2) with a knitted heart on the cover. [yarn #2 - hehe knitting puns for the win]

But in Australia it’s called Lucy’s Kiss [and oddly, has the same girl on the cover as book 1] what?

So I was understandably confused and started the series at book 2. Oopsies. My mistake.

At any rate, Lucy is a knitter like a lot of the ladies in town - the Hollow is the home of the fictional world famous knitter Eliza Carpenter. Her family have always told her she’s kind of useless, and her mother is... problematic. Lucy has dated and loved, but they always leave her.

Her first, and best kiss, was from the young man she was tutoring in math. Owen was the local bad boy, the kiss was a setup, so Whitney could take photos and laugh at her, but it tilted her world. And she’s held quite a candle for Own, who left town the next day. Her memories of it are golden and slightly tarnished by the immediately following social suicide of vomiting on camera and being a laughingstock.

Lucy is, as a result of her upbringing and circumstances, nervous about EVERYTHING. Her grandmother left her a second hand bookshop but it just exists as a business because she’s terrified of trying new things or branching out into marketing, or whatever. She’s scared of heights, rats, lightning... the list goes on.

The bravest thing she’s done recently is join the volunteer fire brigade.

And she’s on hand when a car is t-boned and the driver trapped inside. Another man helps her rescue the driver, who turns out to be her pregnant friend Abigail [the heroine of book 1]. The man helping her turns out to be Owen.

He’s back in town after being invalidated out of the police force. His mother is ill with Alzheimer’s and barely remembers him and he now walks with a limp. He’d like nothing more than to shift his mother out of the town that holds a lot of bad memories for him, but it’s the only place that has any memories for her.

But he’s never forgotten Lucy’s kiss, either.

This was kind of sweet. Owen’s backstory is heartbreaking and he seemed like a great guy.

There was a LOT of knitting... I’m a knitter and I, at least, understood what they talking about but it must be hard for non-knitters. Evidently things happen in book 1 that have put the town on the knitting map so the whole town has got into it.

(view spoiler)

But I stayed up until 1am to finish... and oooh knitting patterns.

4 stars

Jody says

I really enjoyed this book and I'm not just saying that because I won a galley from the author (Hi Rachel!)

This book brings us back to Cypress Hollow with the story of Lucy & Owen. A bad boy ex-cop struggling to redefine his identity and a bookseller with some issues of her own.

Toots was by far my favorite character and she had me cracking up anytime she showed up in the story! Lucy on the other hand - while I did like her over all - there were a few moments when I just wanted to smack her upside the head. I don't want to give anything away by getting into the why she deserved a good smack here and there - but nobody is perfect and I can appreciate the fact that Lucy has some issues to be dealt with (don't we all.) One other thing about Lucy that work my last nerve... why the devil are all her hand knit sweaters so ratty?! She's a knitter for wool's sake - I get the sentiment but really?!?!

Overall this was a very enjoyable read. The knitting theme was well threaded throughout the book without feeling like you have to be a master knitter to know what they're talking about. The romance is steamy & the characters are likable. I love the fact that while Abigail & Cade (How to Knit a Love Song) have cameo appearances in this book - its not necessary to have read their book to enjoy this new story.

I think Rachel Herron is really growing as an author as this book flowed more smoothly than the first book and her characters have really gained a lot of depth and dimension. I'm really looking forward to the third installment of the Cypress Hollow books if Herron continues this trend it will be the best one yet.

Sandra says

So enjoyed this second book in the Cypress Hollow Yarn series. Now I want to learn to knit! If you like stories with a bookstore, knitting, and a wonderful bunch of characters, then you should read Rachael Herron's books. I like the romance and humor, a few sexy romps and a little mystery, then you should grab these books.

From Amazon:

From international bestseller Rachael Herron, comes a book too delightful to put down: Lucy Harrison sells books by day and volunteers with the Cypress Hollow fire department by night. Her life is just the way she likes it--full, even-keeled, and smooth--until bad-boy ex-cop Owen Bancroft comes back to town. Lucy has always been fearless, never scared about diving in to help others. When it comes to risking her heart, however, she realizes she's absolutely terrified.

In a small town like Cypress Hollow, everyone knows your business--and there is nowhere to hide. Then Lucy and Owen are thrown together by the discovery of the lost work of local legend, knitting guru Eliza Carpenter. Now Owen, adrift and struggling to redefine himself as a civilian without a badge, will have to learn how to open himself up to life's new possibilities while Lucy decides just how much of herself she's willing to gamble on love.

ALPHAreader says

Lucy Harrison's life was irrevocably changed and set when she kissed Cypress Hollow's resident bad boy, Owen Bancroft. She may have been only seventeen, and he did leave the very next day . . . but that kiss proved to be the standard by which all of Lucy's other kisses have been measured. And, unfortunately, Owen set the norm for men in her life who love her and leave her.

But that's okay. Lucy has come to accept the fact that she will always be alone. She will find joy and happiness in running the Bookspire Bookshop and hanging out with her best friend, Molly, down at her brother's bar.

But all that changes when Abigail MacArthur is in a car accident that Lucy saves her from . . . with the help of Owen Bancroft.

That's right, the bad-boy is back in town and suddenly Lucy's spinster-fate seems to be up in the air.

Owen is back to look after his mother, who is suffering from Alzheimer's. He's also returned home to get his bearings and make some life decisions. A stray bullet from a friend shattered Owen's police career, and now he's a gimp with no prospects and no direction in life.

Enter Lucy Harrison. His high school tutor and the sweetest thing he left behind in Cypress Hollow. He never forgot that one kiss they shared the night before he left . . . and it seems Lucy hasn't either.

'Lucy's Kiss' is the second book in Rachael Herron's heart-warmingly addictive 'Cypress Hollow Yarn' series. In the US it is titled 'How to Knit a Heart Back Home'.

I was positively delighted by the first book in Herron's series, 'Eliza's Gift', so I went into this second instalment with high hopes . . . and Herron exceeded expectation!

Once again, there is a delicious romance at the centre of this novel. Herron doesn't need to write flashback scenes to articulate the extent of Lucy's teenage crush on the dark and enigmatic Owen Bancroft. It's still so fresh in Lucy's mind that when Owen reappears in town, she has an outpouring to her best friend Molly about the disastrous night of her best first kiss. There was a fuchsia, puffed-sleeve dress involved . . . and a vomiting photo that ended up in the school paper, to say the least. It's like something out of 'Never Been Kissed' with Lucy as the veritable Josie Grosie.

But we also get Owen's perspective on the teenage Lucy whom he left behind . . . and it warms the heart to read of the soft spot he had for his nerdy tutor. Everyone in Cypress Hollow was wary of Owen as 'the bad seed'. His father was arrested three times and ended up dying in jail . . . the Bancroft family reputation preceded Owen his entire life. But Lucy was different. She tutored him when he was failing in math, and they shared one lovely, heated kiss that marked Owen's only regret in blowing out of the little Hollow town.

When Owen returns to town he takes Lucy up on her offer to rent the parsonage behind her church-converted-bookstore. And that's why sparks begin to fly. Neither of them can quite shake the crush of their past, and living in close proximity only heats those memories up. . . I absolutely adored Owen and Lucy. They share some of the sweetest moments that will make you go 'awwww' . . .

Owen drew her closer and used his thumb to stroke the side of her face. "You're doing good, heart."

He didn't know where that last damn word had come from. He wanted to take it back, to swallow it and hide it, put it away forever. And he wanted to hang it on a golden chain around her neck.

I really loved Owen. He's a complicated character with an interesting back story. He may have once been the town bad-boy, but he made good by becoming a San Diego cop . . . until a drug-bust went bad and he was left with a permanent limp and discharge from the force. Now Owen is grappling with his emasculating injury and trying to sort out his altered career path, while also coming to terms with his mother's downhill battle with Alzheimer's. Lucy was a wonderful counterpoint to Owen's woes. She's bookish and shy, unchanging since high school and still pining for the one that got away. These two were deliciously sweet, an odd-couple who balanced each other and together they steamed up the page!

Once again, the thread that holds this whole 'Cypress Hollow Yawn' series together is Eliza Carpenter. She was the veritable rock star of patterned knitting, and a Cypress Hollow celebrity. When Owen moves back home he and Lucy sort through his muddled mother's boxes of old things, and unearth some old handwritten notes and patterns from the late Eliza Carpenter . . . prompting Lucy to edit a new knitting book with her mentor's memories.

I love the theme of this series. I never knew knitting could be such an art form – or a balm for the soul. But Herron infuses her book with a love of the woollen art, and the chapter-beginnings with words of wisdom from Eliza Carpenter are wonderful and endearing (and a little more profound than the usual knitting puns; knit happens!);

When you think that the knitting is all that matters, it's time to put it down and look up to see the person sitting on the couch across from you. You may have forgotten who you're knitting for.

- E.C.

Rachael Herron has created a wonderful new contemporary romance series, based around an ages-old tradition. She writes sparking chemistry for her knitastic heroines, and pairs them with lush heroes who will curl your toes. 'Cypress Hollow Yarn' is definitely one of my favourite new series, and Rachael Herron has become an automatic-buy author for me. I can't wait for the third book 'Knit Together by Love'. Knit on!

Tara says

my God, I read some awful books for the sake of going to book clubs.

Michelle says

I'm on the fence about giving this book 2 or 3 stars. No, I won't settle for a 2.5. Some details of this story are cute and charming, others are ridiculous and inconceivable.

I like some of supporting characters, namely Molly and Whitney. They are nothing if not consistent and always pretty supportive of Lucy, who needs all the help she can get. Also, I appreciate that this is a knitting-related story and that terms are scattered throughout the plot, even if Lucy does bust out her knitting at some inappropriate times.

I couldn't stand the heavy emphasis on Lucy and her insistence on maintaining a grossly consistent (stagnant) life and that all of her decisions are "safe" ones. She insists on doing things like stand outside during a lightning storm but she won't invite her knitting group to meet in her bookstore. It just doesn't make any sense.

My biggest issue with the plot is that it implies that the muscle memory of knitting can overcome Alzheimer Disease (technically, there is no -s in the name of the disease). Alzheimer is way more complex than that and that while the author may (or may not) have observed miracles along the same lines, it's rare and it simplifies a complicated and tragic disease.

Also, I do not find Lucy's mother, Toots, to be very likable. This opinion was cemented when she barges into Lucy's bedroom when she and Owen are clearly in the throes of something. For a woman who is supposedly so liberal and sensitive to the feelings of other's, she should have the good sense to know that she's rude and while she may cockblock her daughter, it doesn't have to at the expense of Owen's privacy. Lucy had to get her lack of good sense from somewhere.

Cailey says

I enjoyed returning to Cypress Hollow in this story. The story of Owen and Lucy was slightly less compelling to me than that of Abigail and Cade. I liked the history between the two, but had a hard time believing the insta-love in this case. There was also added action that felt somewhat unnecessary to me.

This book was a good escape, but nothing super memorable to me. Enjoyable, brief, and sweet.
