



# Matters of the Hart

*M.E. Carter*

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## **Matters of the Hart** M.E. Carter

In an instant he became her hero. Then he became her lover and friend.

My name is Jaxon Hart.

You watched me grow up. You watched me fight for my life. Now, I'm fighting for hers.

From the second I laid eyes on Annika, I wanted to help her. Protect her. Vindicate her. But she's got baggage to get through. Hell, we both do.

But a funny thing happens when you finally connect with someone in a different way than you ever have before. The baggage doesn't seem so heavy.

I supposed that's really the only thing that matters when the heart gets involved.

## **Matters of the Hart Details**

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Author : M.E. Carter

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## From Reader Review Matters of the Hart for online ebook

### **Diane (Books and Tequila Blog) says**

“I realize my new reality is the two separate parts of my life...before last night and after last night. I'm only five minutes in, and the after is already proving to be harder than I expected.”

This story just pulled me in from the start. There are some extremely difficult to read parts, but all so worth it! Such a romantic, beautiful story and so emotional. I was definitely brought to tears, but the story is an uplifting Must Read!

-5 Stars-

My full review:

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

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### **Leo (Queen of the Rants and the Crazy) says**

For now I won't write reviews. These couple of days have been not good for me. So for now my reviews will be on hold.

Just know that I think the heroine was a strong woman and my heart broke for her.

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### **Nerdy Dirty & Flirty says**

Annika Leander has always been big on self defense. Being raised by her dad and brother, they needed to make sure she knew how to defend herself. Little did they realize that self defense is useless when you're drugged. You can no longer help yourself. You're left at the mercy of the one there to hurt you. Now only one person makes her feel safe. He saved her, now she'll save him right back.

Jaxon Hart grew up fighting for his life. He's now third string on the football team at college and working part time at a bar. He's struggling with the tension between himself and his adoptive father. After stumbling upon an attack and in turn rescuing someone, he's feeling like he actually let her down. He has a lot of guilt and only being near her makes him feel better. When a horrifying situation brings two people together, it can be beautiful.

This. Holy wow...let me start with Annika. She was an amazingly strong young woman. She didn't want anyone to hurt or blame themselves, like Jaxon was, if they knew her secret. I hurt for her, and the changes she went through. The connection she and Jaxon shared was questioned by their therapists, but they knew it was real. The struggles she endured and the pain she held in were hard to hide.

Jaxon was amazing. Of course he felt some sort of protective instinct when he found Annika. He was absolutely swoon-worthy. He was gentle and seemed to know exactly what she needed and when. I loved that he kept everything that wasn't public to himself, even from his best friend. He was her true hero, turned

friend and finally lover.

Carter has a way with the words and making you feel every emotion possible. I felt the dual pov was very important for this story. The guilt, fear, love and support were tangible. I felt like I was part of the story. I seriously couldn't put this one down. I was so engrossed from beginning to end, devouring every page, just hoping for that hea. Make sure you have a couple tissues handy, some uninterrupted time, and dive into this one!

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## Jo - \*\*\*.★Reading Is My Bliss★.\*\*\* says

4.5 stars

If you have read books in the Hart series you will be familiar with Jaxon. In Matters of the Hart he is all grown up and attending college.

Jaxon is not really into socializing as much as his friends are, he is focused on his studies and enjoys playing football. He may be the son of Jason Hart but the elite football skills his dad possesses have not graced him. He does have a passion for the game though and loves to run stats, making him a valuable team member.

Annika is in her first year at college and is adjusting to the dormitory life, living away from home. Her very over protective father checks in with her regularly, making she is okay and keeping herself safe. She is not overly keen on being a part of the party scene as she has a load up schedule and really needs to focus.

After the constant pressure from her roommate, Annika gives in and agrees to go out with them for one night of fun & dancing. Bars are so not her scene. Jaxon shows up for work at the same bar and can see that it is going to be crazy busy so it's all hands on deck. Jaxon and Annika have no idea that their paths are about to cross and in the worse possible way. A night that will forever change them both, leaving them with hidden scars.

Jaxon Hart is a young man any parent would be proud to call their son. His actions and behaviour towards Annika were so sweet and heartwarming. He is a testament to his upbringing and I loved seeing how he has evolved from a boy into a man. Despite the fact that the circumstances that brought Annika and Jaxon together were not pleasant, they now share a connection that no one else will ever understand.

Also weaved into this story is the relationship between Jaxon and his father Jason. We get a huge amount of insight into the dynamics of their relationship and I was really surprised at the revelations made between them both. It is obvious that Jason loves and adores his son, I think this is reflected in the way that Jaxon is with Annika.

I loved being back with the Hart family and seeing what an incredible young man Jaxon has turned out to be.

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## Siobhan says

I'm an eclectic reader, I'll give anything a try. My bookshelves are covered in all kinds of reads – from deep philosophical tomes to mindless romance, from edge of your seat thrillers to quick and easy young adult novels, and everything in-between. I would like to think this makes me a pretty good judge of books, that I

can work out what to expect, yet Matters of the Hart managed to prove me wrong.

Although the synopsis intrigued me, it left me with rather broad expectations. I thought it would be your typical sports romance – lots of drama and plenty of steam – yet it turns out I was completely wrong about this one. Sure, there was some sport, along with drama, but labelling this a standard sports romance is such an injustice. This is a deeply moving read, one of the most powerful books I have read in quite some time. This is one of those books where, upon completion, you need to sit down and spend some time wrapping your head around the emotions brought about throughout the story.

You see, this one will hit you so hard.

There are plenty of books on the market that deal with heavy topics, yet I have never read one that hit me quite the same way this one did. I started the book at midnight, telling myself I would just read a couple of chapters before bed, and the next thing I knew it was coming up to three o'clock and I was a bundle of feelings as I turned the last page. It grabbed me from the very start, and each page I turned left me feeling more and more.

Although Matters of the Hart is the third book in M.E. Carter's Hart series, it works perfectly fine as a standalone. There are elements throughout this one that clearly link back to Change of Hart and Hart to Heart, but it is not necessary to read those books first. Matters of the Hart stands solidly without any knowledge of the prior books. You will be left with the desire to go and read the prior books upon finishing this one, though, as you'll want more details about the past of the characters. Such is where I'm currently sitting – I adored this one, and now I have the desire to immerse myself even deeper into the world through getting the history of the characters. As I said, though, you do not need to know anything about this series to enjoy this one.

Matters of the Hart sucks you in from the very first page, leaving you desperate for more of the characters and their story. It is filled with heavy topics, aspects that will threaten to leave you bawling, and it is painful in the most beautiful of ways. It is not for the faint of heart, but those who are willing to read this will be rewarded with a truly amazing story.

I'm not going to go into detail about all the topics covered, because of spoilers, just know they're all really well done. I especially enjoyed watching the way our female character developed over the course of the book, the way she reacted to what happened to her. As someone who works with victims of such crimes, it was great to see a story reflect the journey so well – looking at how it impacted her life and the life of those around her, along with the various emotional states experienced after. By the time we reached the end, especially one of the scenes towards the end where she has a lot to say, I could feel my emotions flying all over the place. It reminded me so much of some of the cases I have worked, of the pure emotions felt whenever a person reaches the point of empowerment where they feel able to share their story and make a difference for the future. Honestly, it hit so close to home – especially with how I then went to work the next day and dealt with such cases, the emotions of the story fresh in my mind and making me realise just how real it was.

I was so close to giving this one a five-star rating. In fact, a small voice in the back of my head keeps suggesting I go and change this to a five-star rating. It's just little things, such as repetitiveness in the writing, that had me holding back on handing that five-star rating. It's an elusive rating for me, one I so very rarely give. But this is certainly the closest I have come in a long time.

Without a doubt, this is one of the strongest four-point-five-star ratings I have given in a long time. So worth reading.

## **Katerina says**

I'll tell you why I was impressed with this book. And yes, it's a spoiler but at the same time it isn't because it's revealed very early on in the book, but we witness the rape of our heroine and the introduction of the hero is when he tries to save her.

However the deed has been done.

Authors kind of tip toe around this subject matter. Like it's fine if your heroine is assaulted by fingers, kissing, grabbing, ripping, maybe light penetration before she is saved. She is almost always saved by the hero. But fact of the matter is, what is the probability of this kind of outcome (no matter how horrible). Low. I almost feel like they do it so the heroine does remain "clean" of actual rape which again tells me that the authors writing books kind of perpetrate some messages, maybe subconsciously that honestly they shouldn't. Let's just face the truth. Chances are a woman will be raped (if put in the situation), and will have the rapists sperm in her. Maybe she'll get pregnant. Maybe it was brutal and she's raw. Or maybe she was unconscious. In this book it happened. She was raped. And I thought that was bold. And that does not make her unclean or impure or damaged goods but, honestly someone who has survived a terrible ordeal.

3.5?

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## **Anne OK says**

Jaxon Hart is grown up -- now twenty-one and a junior in college. Things have changed a bit for him and there are issues he is grappling with concerning his adoptive father. I really didn't like this part of the story -- it saddened me to know that at this time in his life he was unsure of his dad's love. Of course, he meets "the one" -- in one of the most horrid ways possible. Watching Jaxon and Annika find comfort in each other and grow a relationship was the best part of the story. Well, there was one speech made by an awe-inspiring young woman that probably was the very best!

All in all, this was a good installment to the "Hart" series. I was a little disappointed in the finale -- just didn't seem to have that rah-rah happily-ever-after forever feel. And no Epilogue. Too much left unspoken. More of a happy-for-now and a lot of education yet to be attained. Maybe there'll be another book?

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## **1-Click Addict Support Group says**

This was an emotional read that had me in tears and needing to put it down to regain my composure.

Jaxon was expected to follow in his father's footsteps but somewhere along the line he knew what he really wanted to do and that did not involve being a businessman. Annika has always been smart but one night she let her guard down and it changed her life forever.

The events of that night brought Jaxon and Annika together but I wondered if they would survive. Being able to read it from both POV's helped me to see what each one thought.

Be prepared to cry, laugh and love with Jaxon & Annika. Kara~4 Stars

## **Mari says**

I don't know how to write this review without spoiling anything about the story, I'll keep this short. I'll just say to proceed with caution if you have triggers. I'm glad Jax got his story from the previous Hart books now grown up. Doing well but he has struggled with himself and growing up under the Hart spotlight of his dad Jason. I didn't expect Jaxon, nope this guy is just everything.

The author packed a punch with this story. This was Jaxon's story but in turn it was also Annika's. Their story together was intertwined it might sound cruel and unconventional but it's still beautiful. Like the song goes they found love in hopeless place. Annika I want to hug her and help Jax shield her, she's resilient and strong. She had this vulnerability as well that made her character rounded. The pace of everything fit together and it was just wonderfully done.

Jaxon's story had it's fair share of ups and downs, life changing moments and moments where you become the hero. More than words it's actions to be stand up person. M.E. Carter brought all the darn feels. Her characters story well thought out and the emotions in each moment. It's a story that will stay with you in importance, it had heart breaking, triumph and realness. Catching up with the Hart's was also a treat. The family plays part in this one of course. Highly recommend this one.

\*\*\* ARC provided for an honest review \*\*\*

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## **Atira says**

My favorite thing about this book is how open and honest Jax and Jason are with one another. It eliminated all the unnecessary bullshit some authors like to exploit. Even when they weren't getting along they were still perfect. The "adoption issues" were handled well. Their whole relationship was handled well. Especially considering what they went through in the last 2 books. There was one small insignificant scene that was everything to me... There was a moment where shit got real and Jax picked up his phone to call "the only person he needed to talk to"(I can't remember the direct quote). With most books in this genre that one person would be the new "soulmate" he met 5 minutes ago and can't live without so I was expecting him to call Annika and I was fully prepared to roll my eyes and hate this book a little. But that didn't happen. HE CALLED HIS DAD!!! OMG He called Jason and I knew I'd love this author forever. I almost cried. So perfect!! Thank you, M. E. Carter for not being cliché. Thank you for creating a character who can still function like a normal human with friends and family even after they find who might be "the one". There was no displaced dependence on new love but instead on his father. Even when they weren't on the best terms Jax still knew he could count on his dad.

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## **Jamie C says**

4.5 stars with an epilogue this definitely would have been a five star read!

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## Ryan - Sweet Red Reader says

I voluntarily reviewed an Advance Reader Copy of the book.

Oh boy! This book was not at all what I was expecting but it was so amazing nonetheless. I binge read M.E. Carter's Texas Mutiny series earlier this year and thoroughly enjoyed it, so I jumped at the chance to review more of her work. This book is NOTHING like them but I loved it anyway. I went in to this without reading the first two Hart books, but I enjoyed it so much that I will definitely be going back to read Change of Hart and Heart to Hart. I do feel the need to give a trigger warning for rape/sexual assault, but I will also let you know that it handled with respect and sensitivity. I feel like this should be required reading for male and female students before they go off to college - it is that real, relevant, and poignant. Jaxon is such an honorable and remarkable young man - I wish that we could make clones of him and deposit them in our reality because it would make the world such a better place. And Annika was so strong and smart and capable. This story was just absolutely incredible from beginning to end. Given the nature of the story, it is not surprising that the sexy times are very scarce, and while that sometimes drives me crazy when I'm reading romance (give me all the steamy goodness), I didn't even miss it here - I was too engrossed in the characters and their story to care. Matters of the Hart is truly a remarkable book and I can't wait to read more from M.E. Carter. 4.5 out of 5 wine glasses.

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## Kiki says

Triggers: heroine was drugged and raped, on page.

Unprotected sex between MCs.

Now let's come to the actual review.

3.5 stars. Why? As much as I have loved reading about it, and as much as the actual premise was realistic, the romantic aspect along with the trial? Was a fairytale.

Don't get me wrong. I'd LOVE this book to become the new reality. But it isn't. Reality, sadly, is Brock Turner.

*"The Grand Jury will want to hear both your testimonies." I grimace at his words. "It's not going to be a picnic, but they try to be respectful, especially since neither of you are the ones on trial."*

"but they try to be respectful, especially since neither of you are the ones on trial" - LIE!

They DO NOT try to be respectful! They'll ask you disrespectful questions. "What were you wearing that night?" "Were your clothes too revealing?" "Do you think you were attracting too much attention?" "Did you accept a drink from any stranger?" "Were you by yourself?" "Do you usually go out at nighttime?"

They already know that the majority of the blame lies with you. They'll try to figure out how much of the tiny portion lie with him so he can get a laughable farce of a sentence.

This book as a fantasy is wonderful. Kudos. I want what the book is offering. But it isn't the reality. No matter what the author puts in her little additional note.

The romance between the MCs is also something I wasn't sure I was completely comfortable with. They both face monumental amount of trauma. Yes, they both were seeing therapists, but to me it felt like they did

exactly opposite of what the therapist asked them and used each other as crutches. As a result it looked like they're abandoning their existing life. So I couldn't even get properly angry with heroine's best friend for feeling replaced.

Coming to her. I'm sorry, but she's a terrible friend. She's been friends with the heroine for a while by the sound of it and she doesn't care for the fact heroine isn't comfortable at social gatherings? Why would she drag her along when she conveniently forgets about her there and just hopes she got laid and that's the reason for her not responding to her texts? If she doesn't go to those party to spend time with heroine then why drag her along when she doesn't like it? She can very well go by herself to these places. Because the end result is the same. We're NOT talking about dinner or movies here.

Yes, it WAS Annika's fault she felt dismissed, but did she talk to Annika? Ask her what's happening? No. She was a bitch to her and stormed out like a child because Annika refused to give in to her bullying (by the sound of it the first time in the whole friendship) to go to a stupid party. It wasn't like she went to the party with Jaxon instead. Let me tell you exactly what happened. She. Was. Jealous. Also, who the fuck waves flirtingly at the guy who was still in your best friend's bed?

Then her reaction to Annika's abuse, which Annika WAS forced to tell her because of her behaviour?

*"What?" she shrieks. "What the hell, Annika? What happened? Tell me. I need to know."*

1. Stop shrieking, you female bovine species! 2. No, you kinda DON'T "need" to know ANYTHING that Annika doesn't voluntarily share with you, you bitch!

*"Annika, why didn't you tell me?"*

Ummm.....she didn't want to??? Doesn't mean you have the right to drag her to parties she doesn't want to go to!

*"I'm your best friend. I would have helped you through this."*

Please submit a 50 page proposal on how you would have helped her through it. Minimum 20 academic references required, in text and Harvard style.

*"there is safety in numbers so someone always has your back, and I didn't. I was there, and I didn't even notice."*

Now the cow realises? Why didn't you? She was your friend. She was with you.

*"No. No Lauren, do not go there."*

Actually Annika, let's. Let's go there. You never texted her back when she was trying to look for you and she dismisses it as "you must be hooking up"? Is that something you regularly do? No? Then why is your "best" friend just assuming that and going her merry way to hook up with someone herself guilt free?

Why were you in the hospital feeling violated by yourself, while a stranger was sitting in the waiting room with his father refusing to leave because nobody has yet looked for you?

No, I'm not asking her to be responsible for every half second you weren't mindful of your drink. She didn't need to anticipate you'd be drugged and abused. But she should have been concerned but she decided to ignore it. That actually does make her a shitty friend if not the worst one.

On the plus side I really liked the conversation Jaxon had with his adoptive father. I really liked the fact that his father was scared shitless that Jaxon might not realise he loves him much more than his own kids. And

completely screwed up in the process! But because he does in fact love him as his own and blood tie means shit, Jaxon was able to extend his love to someone when it really mattered.

Jaxon definitely IS one of the best heroes and men I have ever read about. This book is very much about him. However it just didn't satisfy me enough all over.

However, highly recommend.

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### Maayan says

4.5 ??

I Loved it!!

Safe. No ow. No pushing away / separations. It's a slow burn - friends to lovers kind of romance, but the amazing kind where the guy stay faithful and wait for the right time to make a move on the girl he wants. I adored the H - he was sooooo amazing with her! He was her rock, and I appreciated how he took his time with her until she was ready for more. Loved the h too! She was super strong and I loved how she took this tragedy and made out of it something meaningful ?

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### Alex ? says

I read the words 'The End' and was going to give this book solid 4 stars.

But then I read 'Author's Note' and added one more.

A book with a good and deep message, which made me think about it and will probably haunt me for a while.

I hope it'll find a resonance and make us, as a society, at least try to **make a difference**.

This book is not heavy on sizzling romance and sexy times, and its fully reasonable due to the main content. No perfect characters, either physical or emotional.

Real people with real flaws and struggles.

And I freaking loved it!!!

I can only speak for myself, but I'm exhausted to read about another alpha-hole 7 foot tall with 9 inch IQ.

This hero was nothing like this, he was amazing and he was so real! ?

I can't write spoiler-free reviews, so I'd rather stop here and let you decide it for yourself.

One of the best samples for 'Don't judge a book by its cover'.

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