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Annie West

Imprisoned by a Vow



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Signed, sealed...forever! Being sold into marriage by her stepfather is Leila's one chance to escape. But instead of freedom, Leila finds herself bound by deep passions ignited by her inscrutable new husband.

Australian billionaire Joss Carmody knows the rules of this game—he'll shower his new wife with diamonds and in return he'll use her land to expand his business. That's all he ever wanted from this exchange, but he hadn't banked on the attraction Leila awakens.

Then the one night that was supposed to slake their desire, binds them beyond the signatures on their marriage contract....

Imprisoned by a Vow Details

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Contemporary

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From Reader Review Imprisoned by a Vow for online ebook

Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says

Imprisoned by a Vow has Annie West's characteristic intense writing and a compelling story. Readers who enjoy a romance between two troubled souls will probably enjoy it.

While I liked this story and I gave it four stars, it doesn't quite appeal to me the way some of this author's other books have. I think part of it was I didn't quite care for Joss for most of the book. While I love a rugged, tough hero, I like them to have more accessibility than Joss had, especially in this kind of book. I can understand a cold as ice, impenetrable spy, but a businessman with that much ice around his heart was a little harder to reconcile.

I think that Leila makes this story. Her struggles to regain the sense of self destroyed by her cruel stepfather and her strong spirit in the face of very crushing emotional and mental abuse spoke to me. Honestly, I think she was much too good for Joss. I was hoping he would realize that a lot sooner than he did. It took him a bit too long. The ending was nice, but I would have preferred a more drawn out redemption process.

Joss goes from being Man of Ice to I Might Have a Heart way too quickly at the end. Yes, he does show some caring touches to Leila, but she was always able to explain them away as acts he did for his own convenience. As a reader who strongly appreciates "the gesture" as showing love, even as much as the words, his gestures didn't speak loudly enough for me in this book.

The passion is well written, as always. And Leila's journey of coming back into herself was inspiring. Annie West doesn't tend to disappoint this reader. While she didn't disappoint me with Imprisoned by a Vow, per se, I just wanted a little more out of her hero than I got.

But overall, a very good marriage of convenience turns to love story.

Vintage says

Angst ridden, low energy romance between the angsty heroine and the equally angsty hero.

The heroine has been beaten down over the years by her stepfather who has isolated her to the point she is for all practical purposes agoraphobic. This MOC with the emotionally shutdown hero is just what she needs to escape.

Well, eventually they have sex, and it's just the Rx for both as she can actually go down the elevator (that's not a euphemism) when the hero distracts her with a make out session and his Grinch-like heart grows a little. Despite being quite virginal, the heroine takes to sex like a duck to water and the passion is written nicely.

I can take angst as long as the hero is not an utter, cruel cad, and the evil-doer gets a comeuppance. The hero does do a tad too much inner monologuing about the heroine's entitled life growing up which it was not, of course, and he pushes the poor-pitiful me envelope a little too long. The evil-doer's comeuppance is pretty benign, but this is a nice filler.

Lady Jaye says

Hmmm. I am not sure my rating accurately reflects how I feel about this here story, so lemme attempt an explanation.

Joss, business man extraordinaire, enters into an arranged marriage with the stepdaughter of a mogul from the Middle East. The guy gets to use Joss's influence and in return Joss gets some land for oil fields that he'd been eyeing. Leila agrees to the marriage because she wants to get away from her controlling stepfather, who's emotionally abusive.

Most certainly the best thing was the heroine, Leila. When Joss called her a survivor or a fighter or a strong character, I could believe it. She stood her ground, and would not allow herself to be disrespected by Joss, or anyone else, at anytime. And even in the situations where she was helpless, took ownership of her circumstances. She agreed to marry the stranger, instead of waiting another year or so before she could legally come into her own. She **chose** her life as best she was able, and that alone makes her magnificent.

Less good was Joss. He was most definitely less of a douchebag than a great many HP heroes have been, but was a curiously flat character. Perhaps I can talk like this because I've never experienced it, but it was sooooo weird to hear him deride all women because his mother was selfish and swear off family because his parents were horrible. I didn't see him pop off on men because his dad was a douche- it was just women (because his mom was a douche). I also found it strange that in this whole wide world of 7 billion people, he hasn't come across any couple or any family that made him want one, or at least made him understand that happy families exist, or that good men and women populate the planet too. He inner-monologued about how untrustworthy and mercenary women in his past were, but never demonstrated to me any reason why they wouldn't be. If you only seek out women for flings and give them stuff (read: money and expensive things) later, why should I be sorry that you only met women who were interested in financial remuneration? You weren't offering them anything but money in exchange for a good time, why should they offer you any more? You ain't worth it, dude.

Additionally, St. Leila. I love Leila's character, but she was the sole paragon in the book. Joss's mother was mean; his poor helpless sister we're told, became anorexic; the other rich men's wives were trophy wives and plastic human beings, not worthy of respect. All but St. Leila. Eh.

Finally, while I liked the initial period of adjustment Leila and Joss had, I do think the declaration of love and ensuing scenes were a little rushed. We definitely needed more time to let it sink in. But then, there's only so much you can do in 192 pages.

I quite enjoyed myself, even if my rating doesn't reflect it. Too many problems to let it slide by on just enjoyment. But still recommended :)

Penny Watson says

I ADORED the beginning of this book. Seriously. Crazy adored it. But the ending was so...not good!
WAHHHHHHHHHHH!

The beginning of this book deserved a better ending.

Beginning: 5 stars

End: 1.5 stars

I guess 3.5 stars?

Wah.

Nas Dean says

IMPRISONED BY A VOW by USA Bestselling author Annie West is Harlequin Presents 2013 release.

Joss Carmody is a billionaire and he can have anything he want. Yet he does a deal with Leila's stepfather to marry her for oil-rich land. He just has to shower her in diamonds and finance her shopping trips. Yet, she is not going out shopping. Why? Now Joss is intrigued by his wife. And he feels drawn toward her. The spark between them is very real. Would he be able to unravel the enigma his wife was?

IMPRISONED BY A VOW is as much a story about recovering from past grief as it is about the unquenchable desire between Leila and Joss. Reading of Leila's past hurts packs an emotional punch so powerful that you wouldn't be able to stem the tears. It truly is a romance packed with sizzle and sexual tension adding to the page turning quality of the book.

Annie West's story-telling makes the characters come alive on the pages and the reader is personally involved in their happiness and craves the resolution as deeply as they do. Highly recommended for all lovers of sizzling sensuality and romance.

StMargarets says

Traumatized heroine. Aloof hero. Forced marriage.

The angst at the beginning was off the charts, but as others have noted, the ending left something to be desired. The hero's need to protect himself from love just seemed ridiculous after everything the heroine went through. I mean, man up, hero. You were great in observing and drawing out a heroine who had severe agoraphobia after being kept in solitary confinement by her evil stepfather*, so surely you can handle a little affection.

I don't agree with putting the characters through an Oppression Olympics to see who has the worst backstory, but the hero's inability to love seemed like self-indulgence/old habit compared to what the heroine went through.

H/h were great together. I enjoyed the evolution of their relationship - until the end.

Triggers: emotional abuse, domestic abuse, eating disorders discussed

(*Stepdad also starved her and kept her cut off from everyone for two years after he destroyed her mother.)

Saly says

Really enjoyed this one. Heroine's stepfather is abusive and controlling and sells her in marriage to hero as part of a business deal and she is fine with it because she wants to get away from him. The hero needs a wife in name only because after the horrific childhood he had he has no intention of getting tied down and taking care of someone. At first he thinks the heroine is a rich spoiled woman who only cares about shopping but then slowly he starts noticing her, how she is afraid of going out and not at all like what he imagined.

We see them get involved sexually but it's obvious it's more, the hero comes home from work to her, tries to help her with her anxiety, teaches her to drive and stands up to her stepfather and then she gets pregnant, the very thing the hero didn't want and he acts without thought, hurting her and she leaves. Of course he comes back, afraid and missing her. All in all a good HP.

Nancy Crocker says

Leila hates the idea that she is basically being sold into marriage, but anything would be better than staying with her abusive stepfather. She will even let the man chosen for her, believe she loves nothing but spending his money. Nothing could be further from the truth. She just wants to escape the hell she has been living in.

Growing up with parents that liked to use their children as pawns in their personal war with each other helped mold Joss Carmody into the man he is today. He does not love, has no emotions and never thought he would marry. But this is to be a marriage on paper. That is until his wife starts grabbing his attention. He soon realizes the wife he believed to be a spoiled shopaholic, never even leaves the penthouse.

I really enjoyed how these two tortured souls found each other. I enjoyed the passion that grew between these two. I loved how Joss helped Leila overcome her issues. And the things he did to right the wrongs she had suffered. While I had issue with how Joss left. I think the author did a really good job of showing he really was scared, having never experience true love from anyone.

4.5/5 stars

I received an ARC of this book from The Author in exchange for an honest review.

Naksed says

Great start, sappy ending. Glad to have met my first Middle-Eastern Harlequin heroine though. Even if she comes from a fictional land :)

Leona says

I really enjoy Annie West's work. I think she is one of the better current HP authors out there and her work appeals to me. This book was no exception. This story is about a young woman who is abused at the hands of her step-father and sold into marriage to a stranger who wants to further his personal ambitions. She agrees to the marriage as a way to escape the tyranny and abuse from her step-father.

The chemistry between the H/h was hot and had me sighing. Watching her begin to place trust in the hero and allowing him to help her heal was very touching.

I only have two negatives, thus the 3 stars versus 5 stars.

1) The writing style. There seemed to be a lot of internal dialogue that moved the plot forward rather than the actual interaction between the H/h. I haven't noticed that before in any other AW work, but it was very prevalent here. Unfortunately that style of writing doesn't work for me.

2) The ending was just too abrupt. I know there is a page limitation. I know there are deadlines. However, I find this happening a lot, not only in my HPs, but other current work. Needless to say, it is frustrating. After investing so much time to read the book, I would like to see an ending that matches the intensity of the rest of the book. In this case, she forgave him too easily. For someone who had suffered such cruel abuse, it just rang false. He needed to work much harder to EARN her love and trust back.

Jenny says

The heroine agrees to marry the hero as a means to escape her horrible stepfather who has abused her for years. The hero sees her as a trophy wife and thinks she is just another spoilt rich heiress. He doesn't want kids or emotional entanglements. But soon after their marriage he realizes Leila is a strong intelligent woman who has suffered a lot in the hands of her father. The hero is caring and treats Leila with love and respect but he is of course too stupid to realize his feelings and he ends up pushing her away when he finds out she is pregnant.

Heartwarming romance! The connection between Joss and Leila was deep and the chemistry sizzling. Loved both characters. Leila especially was a true survivor, a compassionate admirable woman whose courage and determination to overcome obstacles made me tear up.

Alex is The Romance Fox says

A beautiful love story by Annie West.

The classic arrange marriage trope with a fresh take that makes it such a delightful read.

Joss, an Australian billionaire alpha male has negotiated an arranged marriage to Leila, a woman from a small Arab country. He wants the oil fields that she inherited from her deceased father and she wants to escape the prison she has been living under her abusive stepfather.

Whilst she knows the reason for the marriage, he, however is unaware of her reasons to agreeing to it.

I adored Leila from the very beginning. A woman traumatized by past events in her life, struggling to overcome so many obstacles she's faced with such strength and courage was truly remarkable.

Although I was not that crazy about Joss at the start, he really grew on me to such an extent that by the end I was totally smitten. The sensitivity and caring he showed in helping Leila face her demons was really amazing. At the same time, he also had to jump over his own "hurdles" in coming to terms with his past and understanding why he cut himself off loving anyone.

The story also touched on the sensitive subject of bulimia/anorexia in a much understated manner.

Two tortured and sad souls finding each other – slowly getting to know each other, finding their HEA together. They just pull you into their lives and keep you wanting to see them being happy.

A well-written, poignant and emotional and uplifting story that shows you that LOVE CONQUERS ALL!!

Susan (susayq ~) says

Oh my stars. I absolutely loved this one! It was angsty and romantic and there was a wonderful groveling scene (and boy, Joss needed to grovel. A lot). Both Joss and Leila had rough childhoods that led to some major problems - for her it was anxiety and fear and for him it was emotional. But, they helped each other face those problems and overcome them. This was just great!

Fanniny Moreno Zavaleta says

As my memory and nothing are the same... I don't know if GR erased my review or I forgot to review it.

But I loved it both times, of that I'm sure. I was going to skim it to be able to do the shelving but sooner than later I started reading it and enjoying it because #TeamLeila

More on the story and my feelings **exactly** in Alex is the romance fox's review

Dee says

I would have rated this higher if it hadn't been for the ending, everything was going really well until we got to that part :(...I know there are a limited amount of pages in these books but it really could have done with a bit more fleshing out!
