



Captive Prince

C.S. Pacat

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Damen is a warrior hero to his people, and the rightful heir to the throne of Akielos, but when his half brother seizes power, Damen is captured, stripped of his identity, and sent to serve the prince of an enemy nation as a pleasure slave.

Beautiful, manipulative and deadly, his new master Prince Laurent epitomizes the worst of the court at Vere. But in the lethal political web of the Veretian court, nothing is as it seems, and when Damen finds himself caught up in a play for the throne, he must work together with Laurent to survive and save his country.

For Damen, there is just one rule: never, ever reveal his true identity. Because the one man Damen needs is the one man who has more reason to hate him than anyone else . . .

Captive Prince Details

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From Reader Review Captive Prince for online ebook

Whitney Atkinson says

The two main reactions to this book are "OMG BEST BOOK IN THE WORLD" or "this was gross and despicable and i cannot believe how people enjoy it." I'm somewhere in between there.

I knew going into it that there would be a lot of rape/torture scenes, but even so, I was surprised. I think if you read this, you need to know several things in advance just to make sure that you don't automatically hate it: 1) it's graphic book centered around sex slavery 2) major trigger warning for rape, abuse, and pedophilia 3) literally every single character in this book is gay or non-straight and 4) there are zero female characters. All of these things combined made the first half of the book almost unbearable, but there was one nugget of light that got me through it, and is continuing to push me to want to read the sequel: there is something about the characters, their depth and complexities, that makes me want to know their inner workings. The subplots and tiny character mannerisms in this book are absolutely fascinating, and it's like Stiefvater characters that you subtly grow to love, even the side characters you hardly see.

This book is very political and that part of it lost me (I'm not a huge fan of books like this, so it's just a personal preference), and additionally, I wish it was longer in order to explain the history of the kingdoms and give the reader some kind of context about the conflict(s) occurring in the world.

Otherwise, I couldn't put this down, even when it was hard to read. I can understand why people love it, I can understand why people hate it. I'm going to go order to sequels from Amazon.

Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

***ONLY \$1.99 TODAY AT AMAZON US! This is not a drill! 6/4/18**

<https://www.amazon.com/Captive-Prince...>*

This book owned me today, completely owned me.

I just have to give S. U. Pacat a huge round of applause. I was 100% drawn into "Captive Prince". It is going to be hard to write a review of just Volume 1 because I read them back to back like a rabid fan-girl so I'll just review them together. It was like my eyes were glued to my phone today. I wouldn't and couldn't stop reading.

I won't rehash the plot because the overview doesn't sound terribly interesting or new. It is the masterful, smart writing that sets this book apart. The writing is so crisp and fan-freaking-tastic that it gives each word the power that it is due. Details sing in all the right ways.

The way the author portrayed Laurent in the beginning made me think I could never sympathize with him. It is through truly skilled writing that little facts play out just as they should over time and reveal Laurent's character in new lights. We learn hard truths along with Damen and I felt my point of view morphing as his did. I was entwined with Damen and felt deeply connected to his story and his emotional and physical journey.

The book is a study in deception and human emotion. It grips you until the very end. Book 1 set the stage for book 2, which just brings everything to a head. There are no missteps. It is like a ballet dance of words, and I don't think I'm being too complementary or over-exaggerating. Book 3 will be my most anticipated release of

next year (if that is when it will come out)!

Catriona (LittleBookOwl) says

TRIGGER WARNING: rape, physical abuse, pedophilia

I am so excited to continue with the next book, the way things ended I can tell that things are going to pick up and get REALLY intense!

Aly's Bookish Wonderland says

DNF @ 30%

slow claps

My first DNF of the year and boy, is it a cracker.

I promised myself I wouldn't write anymore rage-ranting reviews about books because, although they might be enjoyable to write and read, ultimately, they left me feeling less than satisfied.

But I will make an exception. **For this book, I am making an exception, because I am sick of seeing this shit in literature and people praising it.**

Captive Prince is marketed as "slave erotica." I should've known, way before reading it, that it wouldn't be my cup of tea, but curiosity made me buy it, and I regret it immensely. It's a book about a prince who is sold by his half-brother to an enemy kingdom, and forced into becoming a slave to the Crown Prince.

That's not what sickened me.

What sickened me is the blatant disregard of men. Men, funnily enough, are human beings with rights and feelings and are not the monstrous, hulking animals they are made out to be. Now, I don't speak for *all* men, but let's please keep in mind that **women do fucking horrible things, too, okay?** And they are not crucified as much as men.

Damen, our 'captive prince', made to be a slave, is almost raped, is drugged and tortured and treated worse than an animal, all for the entertainment of nobility. But Damen is a man, so who cares, right?

REVERSE THE ROLES: Damen is actually Davina, a princess captured and sold to an enemy kingdom. She is drugged, tortured and almost raped, all for the entertainment of nobility. Watch the world explode in *outrage*. The possible romance she cultivates with the Crown Prince can't possibly be love if he let that happen to her! She was an innocent victim, abused and treated like an animal! She is a survivor!

WHAT MAKES DAMEN ANYTHING DIFFERENT? Because he's a man, he doesn't deserve the same amount of sympathy? How the fuck is this book popular? How DO PEOPLE SHIP LAURENT AND DAMEN? HOW CAN PEOPLE POSSIBLY SHIP SOMEONE WHO DRUGGED, TORTURED AND THREATENED HIS SLAVE WITH RAPE?

This is what I don't get about our world. Men are raped by both men and women *just as much* as women are. Men are abused, tortured, murdered *just as much as women*. But the comments, "He probably deserved it" are backhanded insults whereas the same sentence aimed at a victimised woman is the cause of outrage and campaigns. We scream for equal rights until our throats are fucking raw and bleeding, but when a book comes out where a man is repeatedly tortured, drugged and raped, we CELEBRATE it? What is *wrong* with this world?

Trusted reviewers have given this book 4 and 5 stars. They call Laurent brilliant, they call the romance a "slow burn" and **I am so fucking angry right now I can barely see straight**. All it took me was 30% to realise that no way was this going to be *redeemed*. I am a huge fan of anti-heroes and villains (and I am ALWAYS shipping the heroine and the anti-hero) but in this case, I can't. I CAN'T. There's a huge difference between an anti-hero and a fucking villainous asshole who humiliates and has his slaves raped for his own entertainment. That, right there, *that* cannot be redeemed. It just **can't**.

I am beyond furious. I am so angry right now that I could happily burn the entire world to the ground, because it's not fair. It's un-fucking-fair that if the MC had been a girl, the book community would've exploded and caused utter mayhem, but because he's a man... he, what, has to man up? Deal with it? Big boys don't fucking cry? Grow a pair?

Like, I'm actually in tears writing this. This world fucking sucks.

Claudia Ramírez says

More like a 3.5, I had some issues with it, but OMG. IT WAS GOOD! I'm gonna marathon the trilogy!

Virginia Ronan ♥ Herondale ♥ says

I'm aware that "**Captive Prince**" is a highly controversial book and I know that many people have a lot of mixed feelings about it. As it seems you either hate it or you love it. There is no in-between. I think most of that is due to the fact that it deals with subjects we feel very uncomfortable with. Our modern minds have a tendency to shy away from those kinds of things, but just because a book makes you feel disgusted and angry, this still doesn't automatically mean that it's a bad book. Sure, C.S. Pacat confronts us with a lot of heavy topics. (And I'm not going to sugar-coat them!!! Just to make that perfectly clear!) There is rape, slavery, sexual abuse, torture, violence and even the mention of paedophilia. Just to name a few of them and there are scenes that no doubt will revolt you immensely. (view spoiler)

BUT

In contrast to the generally prevailing opinion, she always touches those delicate subjects with care. Well at least with as much care as is possible in such a book... In my subjective opinion she doesn't glorify the conditions of the pets and slaves at Vere's court and she definitely doesn't sympathize with their tormentors. I think the fact we see everything through Damen's eyes, the eyes of a mistreated slave, is testimonial enough that C.S. Pacat is not okay with the things that happen to the slaves in the book!

You are permanently disgusted by us, aren't you?" said Laurent.

I guess that quote says it all! So yes, I do get why the topics in this book rub people the wrong way and I

know that “Captive Prince” might not be for everyone. I still want you to keep in mind that things like that are nothing new though. Throughout the long history of mankind those subjects have always been a part of our lives. There were plenty of wars and people have always been tortured, raped, abused and enslaved! Damn it! Who am I kidding? Things like that still happen all around the world. Just take a closer look at other countries (or even your own) and you’ll know what I mean. So yeah, I think what I want to say is that C.S. Pacat shouldn’t be blamed for mentioning those topics, because for some people they were actually reality (ancient Rome and Greece instantly come to mind) and in fact still are a part of some people’s reality. We should neither forget that nor ignore it. Whilst it’s true that Pacat sometimes has a tendency to exaggerate excessively and easily slips into clichés that doesn’t mean that all parts of the historical accuracy are wrong. ;-) The author obviously aims to provoke and we are supposed to feel uncomfortable when we read her book. I can only speak for myself but in my case it definitely worked.

Well, this said I’m glad that the world in Pacat’s book is just fictional and that I can finally get to the fun part: My actual review!

The plot:

Betrayed by his own brother and shipped into the lands of his enemies Prince Damianos of Akielos ends up in the foreign land of Vere. Brought as a gift for Prince Laurent he is supposed to be the young heir’s pleasure slave, a role that revolts Damen immensely and makes it exceptionally difficult to keep a low profile. Powerless and enslaved he has no other choice than to obey though, his hope to find a way to escape the only thing that helps him to endure. As long as no one knows about his true identity he has a chance at survival.... But sooner or later someone is bound to find out that he’s not who he claims to be. Will Damen be able to escape the corrupt court of Vere or will someone blow his cover before he even gets a decent chance to flee?

I know the story sounds so cliché and cheesy! And in fact it is! But damn did I enjoy this reread! *lol* I think it’s because I know what’s coming in the next two books and to be aware of the plot made this reread such an interesting experience. I noticed so many things I didn’t see the first time around and I have to give Pacat kudos for dropping so many subtle hints. XD I think she didn’t really know what she wanted to achieve with the first book and mainly aimed to shock her audience, but boy does it get better in “Prince’s Gambit”.

Anyway, let’s head to the characters section! I can’t wait to gush about those two! *lol*

The characters:

Damen – The pleasure slave

”Why not?” said Damen. “I don’t share your craven habit of hitting only those who cannot hit back, and I take no pleasure in hurting those weaker than myself.” Driven past reason, the words came out in his own language.

I feel soo damn sorry for what happens to him in this book! He doesn’t deserve any of the things that happen to him (not that anyone would ever deserve such things!!) and he’s such a precious and innocent soul. Even enslaved and in the hands of the enemy he still tries everything possible in order to help his people and to remain true to himself. No matter what happens to him, he always does what he thinks is right and if that means that he’ll take a beating for his convictions and beliefs he still goes through with it! I love that about him! He’s brave and honourable and at the corrupt and thoroughly tainted court of Vere to be like that is actually more than just an achievement! XD

”He wanted to face Kastor, his brother, and ask him, man to man, why he had done what he had done. But

life in Akielos went on without Damianos. These slaves had no one else to help them. And what did it mean, to be a prince, if he did not strive to protect those weaker than himself?"

"This place sickened him. Anywhere else, you simply killed your enemy with a sword. Or poisoned him, if you had the honourless instincts of an assassin. Here, it was layer upon layer of constructed double-dealing, dark, polished and unpleasant."

Laurent – The cast-iron bitch

"Laurent was indeed good at talking. He accepted sympathy gracefully. He put his position rationally. He stopped the flow of talk when it became dangerously critical of his uncle. He said nothing that could be taken as an open slight on the Regency. Yet no one who talked to him could have any doubt that his uncle was behaving at best misguidedly and at worst treasonously."

Oh Laurent! My ruthless and poisonous "nest of scorpions"! He's so damn cruel and obnoxious in this book, I can totally see why everyone hates him! *lol* My weird and crazy mind always likes a good villain though so it's no surprise I actually ended up loving him. XD Laurent is such a complex and well-thought-out character, it's a pleasure to read about all his cunning and almost artful schemes. Well, at least for me it was. I know one of my fellow buddy readers hated him fiercely! Haha! ;-P The prince of Vere isn't all controlled anger and hate though; he has a soft side too. Admittedly we really don't see a lot of it in the first book (which actually is the reason why it's the weakest and worst book of the entire series) but since I know that this is going to change I really can't wait to read book two. And yes, I admit it: Laurent's cunning and strategical mind is sexy! Don't blame me, just like Damen I stand by my opinion. ;-)

"I'll offer for you, if you like. When the time comes. I wouldn't want you in my bed, but you'd have all the same privileges. You might prefer that. I'd offer."

Laurent went very still; then he deliberately shifted in his seat and leaned in, bringing his lips right to Damen's ear. "I think I'm out of stabbing range, he's got short arms. Or perhaps he'll try to throw a sugarplum? That is difficult. If I duck, he'll hit Torveld."

Laurent took it without saying anything. He tucked it carefully into a fold of his riding clothes. Then after a moment, he reached out, and touched Nicaise's chin with one knuckle. "You look better without all the paint," said Laurent.

Nicaise – The pet

"I don't need you. He's promised. He's not going to give me up." Nicaise's voice was smug and self-satisfied. "He gives them all up," said Laurent, "even if you're more enterprising than the others have been."

I will always have a soft spot for Nicaise. I know he's bitchy and at least as insufferable as Laurent, I can't help but like him though. When it comes down to it, he's just a product of his environment and he's still so very young. I hate and despise the Regent for choosing him as his pet and the thought of them together makes me feel sick to my stomach. >_< It's obvious Nicaise and Laurent care about each other deeply, yet they have no other choice than to play by the Regent's rules. Poor, young and innocent Nicaise... Urgh... he was 10 when he started to serve the Regent... 10 for Christ's sake!!! I'll never get over that!

"Don't underestimate him because of his age. He has experienced things many adults have not, and his mind is no longer that of a child. Though even a child may learn how to manipulate an adult."

"He ordered everyone out of his apartments. I wouldn't try to see him."

“Why not?” Nicaise said. He looked past Damen towards Laurent’s chamber. “What happened? Is he all right?”

The Regent – Mr. I-freaking-hate-him-so-much

”Do you think it pleases me to discipline my own nephew? No uncle acts with a heavier heart. Shoulder your responsibilities – ride to Delfeur – show me you have even a drop fo your brother’s blood and I will joyfully restore it all.”

Did anyone of you ever notice that the people of Vere always consider the Akielons to be barbaric and brute? Considering what I saw of the Regents court I’d rather say it’s the other way around!! They hide behind their sophisticated demeanour and their complicated clothes but in fact they are the true barbarians of the story, none more so than the Regent himself!!! I despise and hate that man so much and I truly hope he burns in the nine circles of hell. Come to think of it, his actions might easily cause him to end up in all of them. *lol* So yes, the Regent is a villain I hate with a fierce passion and I can’t wait for him to get what he deserves!!!
grrrr

”Why must you always defy me? I hate it when we are at odds, yet you force me to chastise you. You seem determined to wreck everything in your path. Blessed with gifts, you squander them. Given opportunities, you waste them. I hate to see you grown up like this,” said the Regent, “when you were such a lovely boy.”

This said, I really enjoyed my re-read and I can’t wait to see the “true Laurent” in the next book! XD I think what made this even more fun was the fact that it was a buddy read with my two lovely girls! My adorable Gansey and mo mhuirín kept me entertained with their different opinions (and their strong emotions *lol*) and it was such a pleasure to be able to discuss this book! =)

I can’t wait to dive into “Prince’s Gambit”! ;-) Now it’s finally getting cute and nice! <3

Navessa says

WARNING: I’VE BEEN DRINKING.

hiccup

You know-

gestures with wine glass

sloshes some over the side

I mean, this book-

licks wine off fingers

tries to refocus

What was I saying? Oh, yeah. This fucking book, man.

takes another sip

There's Damen. A prince betrayed by his *bastard* of a brother. Sold into slavery to an enemy nation.

stumbles up to standing

And do you know what? You know who he's fucking sold to?

raises voice

To an even bigger bastard than his brother!

sits back down

A prince named Laurent. Who may or may not be the best written "villain" I've ever read. He's as beautiful as he is brilliant. As manipulative as he is sadistic. As enigmatic, as...

hiccup

I hate his face. I want to do terrible things to him. Dirty, lascivious, debauched, terrible, terrible things.

wanders off in search of appropriate meme

AH-HA! FOUND ONE.

The world surrounding these characters is just as harsh. Brutal, seductive, violent, depraved. I want to write myself into it with a sword and carve my vengeance from the flesh of Damen and - God help me - even Laurent's enemies.

brews pot of strong coffee

hiccup

starts second book

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Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

I don't read m/m fiction. It's not because I'm homophobic in any way (julio would beat my ass down if I were), it's just that it's not a genre to which I gravitate.

For example, I don't read new adult. I don't read chick lit. I don't read m/m. It's simple as that. I prefer the romance in my books to be something that I can relate to, and I feel that for me, a romance would be more realistic if it's m/f. A book has to be completely amazing to change my mind about an m/m romance, and this book, while not selling me on the genre, did a tremendous job of engaging my attention.

This is due to the fact that **the character building is so amazing**. Let's make it clear, this book contains torture, sadism, rampant displays of sex - generally things that I don't care for, because despite my rampant use of profanity, I am a prude at heart. *blushes* Despite those facts, I really liked this book. The characters are so well-written.

Damen is the Captive Prince. When his half-brother usurped the throne, he found himself a slave, shipped off to Vere. A prince, now a slave, he has to learn to completely change his personality, his will, his natural instincts, in order to be survive. He forces himself into submissiveness.

He knew what he had to do. Against every rebelling instinct, he forced himself forward, and dropped to his knees before Laurent.

'I fight in your service, Your Highness.' He searched his memory for Radel's words, and found them. 'I exist only to please my Prince. May my victory reflect on your glory.'

Laurent. Damn. What can I say about Laurent? Oh, how about the fact that **he makes Jericho-fucking-Barrons look like Prince Charming?**

'You look like a whore.' The soft words barely stirred the air by Damen's ear, inaudible to anyone else. Laurent murmured: 'Filthy painted slut. Did you spread for my uncle the way you did for Kastor?'

There are many words that can be used to describe Laurent. Words like **raging asshole, ginormous douchebag, sadistic motherfucker**, and other endearing phrases. The fact that I grew to like Laurent and sympathize with him is a testament to the author's skills.

No, I will not be reading m/m all my days. No, I still do not enjoy rampant amounts of sex and debauchery, but I enjoyed this book, and that's enough.

Victoria Schwab says

LOVED.

Jessica ❁ ⇨ Silverbow ⇨ ❁ Rabid Reads-no-more says

Reviewed by: Rabid Reads

If you haven't been seeing/hearing the buzz surrounding THE CAPTIVE PRINCE by C.S. Pacat, you've probably been living under a rock. I'd seen it EVERYWHERE, even before one of my favorite authors recommended it in her newsletter (<-----why I finally caved).

My impression before reading it was that it was some kind of pseudo-fantasy/MM/BDSM mashup . . . and that impression was fairly accurate.

Not my typical choice of reading material, but HYPE. And CURIOSITY. *shakes fist at curiosity gods*

As one might guess from the title (if one pays attention to things like titles *shakes fist at self*), the MC of this tale is a prince (Damen) made captive . . . A prince given as a sex slave to the prince and heir (Laurent)

of a rival kingdom, only they don't *know* he's a prince, but that's a good thing, b/c Damen did a really, really Bad Thing in the last war, and if Laurent found out Damen was actually the REAL Damen, and not just *called* "Damen" b/c Kastor (Damen's illegitimate usurping half-brother) thought Laurent would be amused by having a sex slave named for the man he most hates in the world . . . Well, that would be Bad.

Did all of that cross your eyes? B/c as convoluted as it sounds, it's deceptively simple.

What *isn't* simple is everything that came after the initial introductions, and how I feel about it.

Obviously, as a prince, Damen isn't too keen on becoming a sex slave. But who cares? B/c sex slave.

And even though there technically wasn't much sex (on page), the hedonistic attitude of the nobility permeated the atmosphere, and the threat was constant, like background noise. And YES . . . I do mean *threat*.

But in that weird, willful suspension of disbelief way that's exciting even as you're consciously uncomfortable.

Enter Nicaise, the thirteen-year-old "pet" of a dirty old man in Laurent's court. The thirteen-year-old who's been serving in his role as "pet" for THREE YEARS. Who is maneuvering to keep his position, b/c he knows--EVERYONE knows--that he has maybe another year before he outgrows his master's tastes.

So there are two things you need to know before picking up this book:

1. There's rape.
2. There's pedophilia.

I almost stopped 20% in, when Nicaise first showed up. I'm not sure what kept me going. Could've been the remnants of curiosity. Could've been the person who made an asinine comment on one of my status updates about how pedophilia isn't being endorsed by the book, which pissed me off enough to make me *want* to finish it, all the better to KILL IT WITH FIRE. B/c really? Show me a book that *does* endorse the sexual violation of children, and I'll show you a jail cell. #GTFO

Either way, I kept going.

And much to my chagrin, I found myself fascinated by Laurent.

He's a prince with the foul mouth of a tavern brawler. Hatred burns in his eyes, but he almost always maintains a perfect calmness that is infuriating. He's a brilliant manipulator who superficially appears to be no more than an indulged royal brat.

Beyond my newfound obsession with Laurent, I was reading not only to try to understand my prince, but in anticipation of other (despicable) characters' downfalls.

So I'm hooked. *shrugs awkwardly*

But if I'd known what I was getting into, I'd never have started.

A secondary issue was the thinly veiled attempt to elevate the book above the stereotypes of its genre.

I have an extensive vocabulary. I majored in English, but even if I hadn't, you can't read as much as I do and not pick up an impressive number of words along the way.

#thestruggleisreal

Even so, it's not unusual for me to make use of the handy, dandy word lookup feature found on all ereaders.

What *is* unusual is having to use said lookup feature every few pages.

It took awhile to catch on, so I missed the early ones, but after I grew wise to the tactic, I began highlighting: *appurtenances, peripatetic, damascened, febrile, machicolation*, etc.

I could go on . . . and on . . . and *on*.

After I acclimated to the overuse of words rarely (if ever) found . . . anywhere, I began to notice that many of them were frou frou stand-ins for more common words and phrases.

A man didn't frown. His "*smooth brow corrugated*."

A room wasn't ostentatious, it was, "*afroth with ornament*."

I was pretty sure "afroth" wasn't a real word. I was further convinced when the word lookup yielded no results. BUT. Word lookup isn't infallible, so I googled it . . . And discovered that it *was* a real word, but had been misused. Unless Pacat intended to say the ornaments in the room were, "*in a state of lively or angry excitement*."

[Afroth." Merriam-Webster.com. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 6 Feb. 2016.]

I usually applaud the Shakespearean tactic of adapting, evolving, *creating* words to suit your purposes . . .

BUT.

In this case, it felt disingenuous.

Like the author had hangups about the type of book she was writing--SMUT. Maybe intelligent SMUT, but still SMUT--and decided to overcompensate by impressing her readers with her intelligence and/or education via the implementation of obscure words that none of us have ever heard of.

Instead, it provided a distraction, b/c constantly having to lookup words.

SO. THE CAPTIVE PRINCE by C.S. Pacat is a *deeply* flawed book, despite its low page count. If you can handle rape and sexual exploitation as abhorrent cultural practices, then you, too, should willingly fling yourself into this deep, dark hole. If you can't, RUN AWAY. If you don't, you'll probably find yourself as entangled as I am, but you've been forewarned, so you'll have only yourself to blame.

BUT.

If book 2 isn't the significant improvement I'm promised . . . Heads. Will. ROLL.

SPOILERY final thoughts:

(view spoiler)

Emily May says

For Romance month at my blog, I decided to take the opportunity to read something I wouldn't normally pick - this highly-praised M/M Fantasy Romance.

The first thing you should know: **this is a character-driven story**. I think you will enjoy it as long as you don't go into it expecting a lot of grand world-building. The focus of this book - indeed, the whole series, it would seem - is on the relationship between two men, and their relationships with other royals, guards and slaves around them.

As romances go, it has everything I could ask for:

- 1) A really slow burn that makes a nice change from all the instant gratification NA romances I've read.
- 2) Characters that grow and develop with the plot.
- 3) Chemistry, both sexual and otherwise. Plus, a nice bit of hatred turned to reluctant partners in crime turned to...?

The main story goes like this: Damen is a prince and the heir to the throne of Akielos. But when the king dies, Damen is captured and bundled off to Vere, disguised as a slave, while his half brother takes the throne. Vere is an enemy to Akielos and Damen must continue pretending to be a slave if he wishes to live.

Enter Prince Laurent - heir to Vere and a pampered, spoiled and vindictive brat who becomes Damen's new master. Laurent is extremely unlikable at first, but Pacat manages to successfully grow him into a well-rounded and eventually likable character. **I loved how our perception of him changes gradually.**

Not surprisingly, the two princes despise each other at first. But what starts as an attempt to "break" one another, eventually becomes a reluctant partnership and a mutual understanding and respect.

The book is quite dark at times and is definitely an adult novel. The romance in this first book is pretty much non-existent but the tension is set up nicely to deliver on that in the next two books. However, romance/sex aside, the book contains some graphic descriptions, floggings and rape scenes that could be upsetting for some readers.

I enjoyed it, though, and will be picking up Captive Prince: Volume Two.

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Candace says

'Captive Prince' has been on my radar for a long time now. I have seen a plethora of glowing reviews from friends that have loved this series. As curious as I was, I kept putting off reading this series because M/M reads aren't really my thing. However, my curiosity finally got the best of me and I downloaded the first audiobook in the series.

The rest is history! I blew through all three audiobooks in a couple of days, listening to them back to back until I had devoured the entire series. This series was fantastic!

Since I finished all three books in the series before sitting down to write my reviews, I'll do my best not to give any big spoilers. The specifics of where one book ended and the next began are a little hazy for me. However, they were all worthwhile and highly entertaining books.

'Captive Prince: Volume One', introduces us to Damen and Laurent. The two are princes from rival kingdoms, only Damen's true identity is a secret to everyone in Laurent's court. If his true identity were known, he would surely be executed. Damen is surrounded by enemies, betrayed by his half-brother and sold into slavery.

Although the two are enemies, Damen and Laurent have many things in common. Both princes have fallen prey to family members who want to seize their crowns. Damen had his rule usurped by his illegitimate half-brother, Kastor, while Laurent is at the mercy of his uncle, who rules in his stead until Laurent is old enough to claim his crown.

That being said, it is hard to envision Laurent in the role of a victim. From the first introduction, his manipulative, and often cruel, nature is apparent. His treatment of Damen is deplorable as he strives to assert his power over his new, wild and unbroken pleasure slave. Laurent is clearly a character that enjoys head games.

On the other hand, Damen is a character that has instant appeal. He is put in an unspeakable situation and betrayed by the brother that he looked up to. My heart went out to Damen. I wanted to see him prevail.

Upon Damen's arrival in the Vere, he is thrown into a life of debauchery. The Verethian court is filled with hedonistic and taboo sexual activities. The members of the courts indulge in every depraved act you can imagine. Nothing is off-limits, with the exception of enjoying pleasure slaves of the opposite gender in an effort to prevent the conception of illegitimate children that would sully the Verethian bloodlines. Rape and pedophilia are a way of life.

Accordingly, this will not be a book for many readers. It is full of dark, controversial and offensive content. This is not a lovey dovey type of story AT ALL. You will be appalled.

In fact, that is a large part of the appeal of this story. There aren't too many graphic sex acts depicted, but the constant lingering threat of rape gives this book a very ominous feeling. I spent the entire time on the edge of my seat, waiting for the assault that I knew was inevitable. The anticipation, and resulting anxiety, was immense.

For most of this book, Laurent portrays a spoiled, bratty and cruel prince. He treats Damen harshly and is extremely abusive. However, there are brief glimpses of another side of him. I have no doubt that there is far more to Laurent than meets the eye.

This book definitely had my rapt attention. It wasn't like most of the books that I read, but I was completely

hooked. Without missing a beat, I dived right into the second book to continue Damen and Laurent's story.

Check out more of my reviews at www.bookaddicthaven.com

C.G. Drews says

Little flummoxed by this one. It's an epic fantasy but focuses more on sexual slavery than any sort of active plot. I don't feel the sexual slavery/rape culture was promoted as "good or acceptable" but just underlining the depraved society, buuuuuut. Mine eyes are too young for this. Plus if your master orders you *orally raped* and then later slave + master start having a *thing*...let us just say: no.

Maraia says

Slavery isn't sexy. Corporal punishment isn't sexy. Rape isn't sexy, and it certainly isn't entertainment. This book is utterly disgusting.

There are so many things wrong with *Captive Prince*, it's hard to know where to start. I'm having trouble understanding how this book can be praised by so many people, especially by those who promote LGBT relationships in books, consider themselves feminists, and are outspoken against violence against women being used as a plot device.

I love seeing LGBT relationships in books, but the characters in *Captive Prince* are either sex slave owners or sex slaves themselves. Personally, I don't think that's the kind of "relationship" we should be promoting, regardless of whether it's LGBT or not. I fail to see how a book with graphic same sex rape scenes is beneficial to the "We Need Diverse Books" campaign. We need positive portrayals of LGBT characters, yes, but we don't need degrading ones.

There has been a lot of criticism in recent years of gratuitous sexual violence against women in books, movies, and TV shows, as it is both offensive and harmful to the feminist movement. But apparently sexual violence is only a problem when directed against women, while it's fine to have graphic scenes that serve no purpose other than to "entertain" the reader, as long as men are the ones getting raped? (Although how someone could find these scenes entertaining is beyond me.) When I define feminism, I think of women being valued as highly as men and being treated with as much respect — not more.

Since I've seen people argue that the book isn't *that* bad because the main character doesn't actually get raped himself, I'd like to point out that **forced oral sex is still rape**. I'm not sure why this is such a hard concept, but my guess is that it's connected to the fallacy that men can't be raped in the first place. In *Captive Prince*, Damen has oral sex forced on him, and although he does have an orgasm, that doesn't change the fact that, as a sex SLAVE, the act is in no way consensual. It is rape, any way you look at it. Orgasming does not equal consent, and that's a dangerous idea to perpetuate.

Rape isn't the only thing trivialized by *Captive Prince*. I also find the portrayal of slavery quite offensive. As far as I can tell, all the kingdoms in C. S. Pacat's world support slavery, and the slaves are used for sex. At one point, Damen compares slavery in his home country of Akielos to that in Vere, where he himself is a slave. According to him, slaves in Akielos know that they're trading their personal freedom for "perfect treatment" by their masters, as if this somehow makes it okay. Not only that, but the life of a sex slave is glorified in the short story included in the paperback, which gives the background story of a minor character

from the book. Claiming that slavery is “not that bad” because the slaves are “treated well,” they “enjoy their work,” and it’s “for their own good” is complete bullshit. That argument didn’t work when the U.S. had slaves, and it doesn’t work here. Just like rape is rape, slavery is slavery.

The first two thirds of the book essentially has no plot, but instead features explicit rape scenes, alludes to even more, and throws in a beating or two to mix things up. All of a sudden, C. S. Pacat seemingly changes her mind and decides she wants to write a real fantasy novel, rather than rape erotica. At this point, the book actually does become captivating — the good kind. The potential for a solid fantasy is definitely there, I found the book hard to put down despite my revulsion, and I can see why people are quick to let themselves “forget” how the story starts. Unfortunately, no amount of engaging plot or world building can make up for the rape and sexual slavery in the first two thirds of the book, nor can a slave owner suddenly become a believable love interest for the slave. I’m assuming that’s where the story is headed, at least: Laurent has a tragic back story; he’s not really a bad guy, he’s just misunderstood; he doesn’t actually rape his slaves himself but lets others do the raping for him; he secretly has feelings for Damen, etc. Let’s stop right there. **Shipping Laurent and Damon is the equivalent of shipping a Nazi concentration camp guard with a Jewish prisoner.** I know this is a current trend in the romance genre, but how much (justified) outrage has there been at these novels? I fail to see how the upcoming “romance” in the Captive Prince trilogy is any different, and to be honest, I’m horrified by all the praise it has received.

The fact that *Captive Prince* is being touted as a romance novel is the worst of a long list of faults and is incredibly insulting and insensitive to real victims of both rape and slavery.

I’m giving this book one star, but only because zero stars would make it look as if I just forgot to rate it.

Lola says

I am firmly of the belief that this series will one day become a classic in the M/M romance genre.
