



## Wicked Loving Lies

*Rosemary Rogers*

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**Wicked Loving Lies** Rosemary Rogers

**In the sweeping tradition of *Sweet Savage Love*, *New York Times* bestselling author Rosemary Rogers takes readers on an epic journey that spans continents and explores the depths of human passions.**

Born of scandal and denied his birthright, Dominic Challenger took to the sea, charting his own future. A true rogue, Dominic answers to no one, trusting only himself. *Until Marisa.*

Born of wealth and privilege, Marisa is a prisoner to her father's expectations. When the sanctuary she has found behind the walls of a convent is threatened by the news that her father has arranged for her to marry, Marisa flees...right into the arms of a pirate.

From the safety of a sheltered convent to a sultan's harem, from the opulence of Napoleon's court to the wilds of the new frontier, Marisa and Dominic brave all that they encounter in this thrilling age: intrigue, captivity and danger. And above all, an enduring passion that ignites into an infinite love.

## Wicked Loving Lies Details

Date : Published July 25th 2002 by MIRA (first published 1976)

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Author : Rosemary Rogers

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# From Reader Review Wicked Loving Lies for online ebook

## Amanda says

Absolutely horrible. Easily one of the worst books I have ever read.

- 1) There didn't seem to be any actual love.
- 2) Dominic was an abusive rapist.
- 3) Marisa didn't even remotely care about her kid.
- 4) just completely unrealistic, even for romance novels.

It seemed too much like it was trying to be Gone With The Wind, but it failed completely,

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## Mermarie says

I have no idea why my review isn't posted. o.o I have no idea where it disappeared to. LOL I guess I'll give a few comments until I can either find the other on my HDD, or feel the fucks to re-write it.

Rosemary Rogers is a brilliant master at storytelling. Nothing is taken for granted. She drops clever lil' sprigs of clues along the way, filling the space with constant suspicion and nefarious subplots. When you finally feel like you're catching onto the clever wordplay - your conclusions may be founded, but she adds the kicker to drop you on your ass. A good stout mason jar of moonshine, and she's the sour cherries, or unripened apples you thought you'd built a tolerance up for. She's marvelous. One of the scenes in the Opera, EVERYONE was shifty eyed and all cloak&dagger! I was downright nervous, wondering just who was setting the stage, nevermind the Opera stage itself! It's not your typical, "Zomg, I saw so-in-so with his mistress at the Opera!" from your normal read. It's the freakin' death at a funeral mode, and everyone's guilty of *something*.

Comparing some old 'heroes' with questionable morals;

Dominic Challenger..... Sean Culhane's younger, less purpose driven brother. Where Sean was comfortable in his deviation, Dominic really had no purpose, and his entire premise was based on sheer whim! THEN...to conveniently justify it, he uses SUSPICION and PARANOIA to validate his actions thereafter. LOL

**Sean Culhane:** *Lambsoft bitch.*

**Dominic Challenger:** *Hate's as strong an emotion as love, my sweet gypsy bitch. Show me how much you hate me.*

And finally, I sort of felt like their gettin' together was inevitable, because frankly, there weren't anymore cousins/relatives, in either one's family, left to sexorz.

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## **Nona says**

Wicked Loving Lies was my first Rosemary Rogers adventure or should I say roller coaster ride? I have heard the hype, read the discussion boards and laughed at the updated status of her readers so I thought I was ready, are we ever truly ready for her though? I thought WLL would be the best first choice to start with Rosemary thinking Sweet Savage Love and Dark Fires being linked may be too much for my OCD as a first time read. Enough about why I chose the book right!?

Ok from the get go I didn't really care for Marisa, she seemed immature, weak and a trifle annoying. I might mention that I love spitfire heroines not the meek TSTL type. Anyways so I immediately started to doubt my choice but then the arrogant female user and abuser Dominic shows up and steals my ever loving heart and tramps on it! Yes he did exactly that when he abducts her, rapes her and then pulls the age old disappearing act. I wondered why Rosemary would do this to us?! Follows this is Marisa's decent into the wickedly famous ways of the French, the simpering English and the bold Moors and suddenly little Marisa is all grown up. Dominic made appearances through out these times, even raping and branding her but I never truly felt sorry for her in her experiences partly I guess because I didn't really like her from page one. Dominic though had me on the edge of hysteria at times with his hard cruel masculine pride and alpha male chest hitting ways! I thought the lead up to him being who he is as an adult was as good as could be imagined and his severe mistrust was sometimes blinding but given the history accepted. The ending was well led into but I felt the last two or three chapters ended it abruptly where we had graciously strode up to that point but I liked the ending all the same.

My only real complaint was the chemistry, I like the whole I hate you you SOB but at times was overbearing and misleading or maybe it's because I read this right after The Silver Devil so I was already borderline overdosed on the dominating hate train. Again it could have been me but I thought there would be more positive chemistry with all those raging emotions. Still I think it was a great read and look forward to reading more of her stuff!

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## **Vivisection says**

This is the first graphic romance novel I ever read. At the precocious and curious age of 12, I "borrowed" it from the mother of a friend. By "borrow" I totally mean I swiped it. I kept it between my mattress and box spring and read it by flash light under my covers. Oh, the sheer excitement of reading something sooo forbidden. It was better than the dirty parts of Judy Blume's Seventeen or Wifey that we would high light and pass around like contraband in 6th grade. It put words to of all the budding passion and bodily urges I had been feeling but of course would not discuss with any adult I knew.

Still young enough to actually play with dolls and toys, I named one of my Breyer model horses Dominic Challenger. I'm sure therapists everywhere could add a chapter to a book on that action alone...

None the less, I was hooked. I went on to read manymanymanymanymanymanymore bodice rippers and formulated some very odd notions of love as a result. I have spent the better part of my adult life unlearning them.

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## **Willow says**

This book is wild and filled with nonstop action. *Wicked Loving Lies* takes you halfway around the world and puts the heroine through a slew of outrageous situations. Marisa spends time in Napoleon's court, a Turkish harem, a Louisiana plantation, and even gets taken by Comanches. In fact, I don't think I've ever read a book that covered so much area in so little time. This book has enough action and plot for ten books.

And strangely, after 676 pages, the characters were still pretty one dimensional.

I definitely enjoyed it though and was never bored.

This book has three (almost four) jaw dropping scenes that surprised me and blew me away, and let's face it, most books don't even have one. For that alone I'll give a good rating. Talk about a bodice ripper, this is like the Queen Bee of bodice rippers.

You can't take this book seriously though. It's just too silly. Both Dominic and Marissa have way OTT histories, especially Dominic. There is no way he could do all the things he supposedly did in his short young life. It's just impossible, and Rogers just kept tacking on new things. (view spoiler)

Is there rape? Hell yes there is rape! I lost count how many times Marisa gets raped (most of them are by Dominic.) They can't have a spat without her getting raped. Dominic even rapes her to save her from being raped. In fact the rape is so excessive, I'm convinced Rosemary Rogers has a rape fetish. I kept wishing Marisa would get seriously pissed and pull a Lisbeth Salander on Dominic, but she doesn't. Instead she falls in love with him.

As for Dominic, I seriously despised him. He's a total and complete douche. And Marisa's got a brain full of rocks for falling for him. Toward the end, Marisa meets this truly kind man, a respected, young and handsome. He knows she's ruined. He knows she's an idiot. He loves her anyway and he helps her. He offers her a good life. Do you think she even considers this? Hell no, she wants to live with Mr. Douchebag. I suppose there's no accounting for taste, but I have to admit that women's lib speech Marisa gave at the end of the book was a bunch of bull if she's planning on staying with Dominic.

After reading this, I feel like women have come a long way since the seventies. While I do get tired of the politically correct attitude that novels have today, I find the attitude that prevailed in this book very sad. The idea that Marisa should change her behavior and become more passive to her abusive, rapist husband is so appalling. Is this what women used to believe? That if a relationship was failing, it was the women's fault and she should change. Men don't need to apologize because they are just being manly? I just want to knock some of these guys upside the head with a frying pan.

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## Noelle says

Wow, what an adventure reading this book was. It really defines what a bodice ripper is, to me anyway. I mean where else could you have the heroine go from soon to be nun to a gypsy to the goddaughter of the first lady of France. Then to a harem girl,(the favorite of course),then back to Paris to be Napoleons mistress. Then off to Louisiana to be a plantation owner, oh but wait it turns out she's really the daughter of a slave so she's sold into slavery, and then to an Indian squaw.

Oh and the sex, I have never read a book were the heroine is raped soooo many times by the hero before they have consensual sex. While she was in the harem she was only taken in the ass so that Kamil could keep some sort of vow.

Domanic (H) raped, branded, and slapped her. He was mean and would call her a whore. It wasn't until he was near death and chained up that he could figure out his true feelings for her, that he loved her.

\*\*\*\*sigh\*\*\*\* LOL

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## Kerrie says

Where to start? This book almost defies description.

Although apparently not as notorious as Stormfire, it certainly deserves its reputation as a wince-inducing Old Skool bodice-ripper. It has everything - rape, sodomy, torture, a harem, infuriating alpha-to-the-nth-degree hero, and casual brutality against women.

It was this last feature that jumped out the most at me, and no doubt what makes modern readers blanch when discovering this book, either by accident or on purpose. Despite the OTTWTFFery of the plotline and the astounding number of coincidences that drove the story along, it was the stifling chauvinist attitude that Marisa found herself running up against at every turn that seemed the most realistic to me. With a little more restraint and less melodrama, women of the late 18th and early 19th centuries (and let's be honest, throughout history up until the late 20th!) have had to deal with that harsh reality. The only choice they have had is how they react to it - either fight it and face the consequences, or acquiesce and, hopefully, make it as bearable for themselves as they could. Marisa does both at various turns, and unlike more recent romances, she is not respected or admired for her spirit when she rails against the status quo, but rather silenced, beaten, and denigrated.

I find it no coincidence that this was written in the 1970s, when the feminist movement was making big noise about women finally having a say over their rights and their bodies. However, poor Marisa is like a voice crying in the wilderness; she does not stir up the other women into revolt, but rather is told by said women that she's being stupid and needs to shut up. Honey's better than vinegar, they say.

What kept me from giving this the full 5-star treatment was Rogers' writing and character development. It always seemed she was going for word count, and there was much that could have been edited out. Sloppy writing abounded - brown eyes on one page suddenly became blue on the next(did the editor go on vacation?). Kamil was supposed to be sympathetic, and he seemed to be because Rogers told us so, but he didn't have the fullness of character that Bertrice Small gave to Khalid el bey in Skye O'Malley. Marisa was the most fleshed-out character, but there were many instances in the story when I wondered why she was doing this or that - she seemed to be schizophrenic.

Dominic was never given any depth until about 100 pages from the end and I couldn't explain why I suddenly felt sorry for him - nothing up to that point accounted for the switch in reader empathy. We're supposed to swallow the fact that he only acted the way he did over the course of 550+ pages was because of his male pride? "I can't ever crack my male exterior to show love, so I'm gonna rape the living snot out of her." Nice.

Their relationship was also just as inexplicably schizo, and as I read, I imagined that if Marisa and Dominic lived today, they'd be shackled up in an Ozark trailer park. Dominic would occasionally show up after getting bailed out of jail, find out Marisa had taken up with a neighbor because she didn't have any money for Marlboros and Bud Light, and in about an hour Cops would roll in with all the video cameras to capture Marisa screaming "YOU LOCK HIS ASS UP!" before immediately crying and flinging her arms around him as he was pushed into the fuzzmobile. In a couple months, the entire cycle would start all over again.

But I kid Rosemary Rogers. I'm very glad I finally read this Old Skool classic and will seek out her other historical titles.

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## **Willow says**

This book is totally nuts. *Wicked Loving Lies* takes you halfway around the world and puts the heroine through a slew of outrageous situations. Marisa spends time in Napoleon's court, a Turkish harem, a Louisiana plantation, and even gets taken by Comanches. In fact, I don't think I've ever read a book that covered so much area in so little time. This book has enough action and plot for ten books.

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## **Tutti Dolci says**

Well butter my butt and call me a biscuit.

This book has been the MOST EPIC (and I'm not sure that such term is wholly positive) Bodice Ripper that I've ever read, I think. TONS of intrigue, politics, drama, hate, world-trotting, in addition to the usual BR fare.

*Disclaimer: I love Bodice Rippers, so this "review" is not a HATERade but just my opinion of one particular book. - capisce?*

Anyway...lord have mercy! This one had me feeling kookoo for Cocopuffs with all its ups and downs.

Did I like the book? I'm not sure. It's got its positives, for sure, but it wasn't a "romance" by *my* standards. In fact, the romance aspect was really missing for me. I get the 'hate you until you love me' thing; hell, it's something I actually enjoy reading. But maybe I missed the boat here because I got the hate alright, but it was hard for me to 'get' the love between the story's protagonists.

However, I have to admit that I could NOT tear myself away from this book. Sorta like witnessing a scary car accident where we see one car flip over and eject its passenger to his death before our very eyes. Jah. Shocking and fascinating all at once! 0\_o

So, I'm gonna sit on this review for a few days before assigning a star rating, as I'm not sure if and/or how much I liked this book. But I will say that if you want to read an epic (and I mean E-PIC) adventure and can look past the ca-razy shit that happens, then you're in for one heckuva ride.

All that said, I think I've thoroughly popped my Rosemary Rogers cherry and can easily be done with her books for good. Been there, tried it, read the books, DONE. *That is, until a certain K-Wiki can convince me otherwise ;)*

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## **Julz says**

I just finished the last lines of this book. Incredible! This story is why you just can't hand out 5 stars to every good book you read. Some stories are just that much better than the rest.



This was like several stories in one and each one grabbed you, sucked you in, and kept you on the edge of your seat hoping for or dreading what was going to happen next. Every scenario had scenes that evoked emotions from one end of the continuum to the next. I often found myself crying and heartbroken, sometimes for who you might consider the "bad-guy".

I was often dumbfounded or just plain horrified by some of the things that happened in the story. This is not a easy read. If you like fluff, well, I would pass on this one. Some of the most horrible things that happen in the book were perpetrated by the hero...over and over and over again (and over again ;). Despite his crimes...and her's, you continue to root for them to find their happiness with each other.

If you have a strong stomach for controversial topics such as rape and violence, then this is definitely worth the read.

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### **Kit★ says**

First off, I have to laugh a little, because I read this back in December, and am just now typing up my (handwritten) review, and the details of this book are already pretty foggy in my mind. Dunno if that's anything to go for recommending this book ;) Onto the review:

I picked this book up mostly because of its notoriety, I wanted to see for myself what this story was all about. It was the winner of a 'Pick My Next Read' poll in the Western and Medieval Romance Lovers Group... so it was time to get on with reading it. To be honest here, this book was a *struggle* to read in places. Don't get me wrong, I grew to be invested in the heroine, Marisa, rather quickly, and wanted to see her end up happy, but whenever the 'hero' Dominic appeared, it was sometimes hard to keep reading the abuse he heaped on her. It was a constant barrage of totally wrong accusations, name calling and other forms of verbal abuse, and of course, the notorious rape... again and again. It's a wonder the poor girl's parts were even functioning by the end of the book. Thankfully, for a good portion of the book they are separated, or I might not have been able to finish.

So the premise is - poor young Marisa has been raised in a Spanish convent ever since her French mother and nursemaid were killed in the French Revolution when Marisa was just a child. She's a little bit wild and headstrong, but determined to become a nun. She vows she'll let no man touch her, since she witnessed the brutal gang-rape of her nurse as they fled the Terror in Paris. So one day, she gets news from her father (who's been living in Louisiana on his huge plantation all this time) that she's to wed Don Pedro Arteaga. She also overhears Don Pedro himself talking bawdily with his friend, and so she swears she will not marry him. Instead, she decides to run away with her Gypsy friend Blanca, whose caravan is leaving for France. Disguised as a Gypsy girl, she's unfortunately caught out alone one night at a festival, and it's here she officially meets the male lead of this tale, Dominic Challenger, who was shown earlier in the novel to have had a pretty damn rough life so far... He's hated by his (secretly) homosexual Duke father (who may not really be his father, due to the fact that Dom's mother was abducted from their plantation property back in America by a group of raiding natives, and supposedly fell in with a wild frontiersman) who ships him off to Ireland where his mother came from. Here he gets involved with the rebellion, and is captured, and brought to the Duke, who imprisons him and tortures him before packing him off to the Royal Navy as practically a slave. So anyway, this is where our lead characters meet, and he and his friends assume her to be a Gypsy and force her to go along with them, despite her protests and attempted escape. Dom really shows himself to be a dick here for the first time, treating her roughly and being rude. But of course he just thinks that she's a worthless Gypsy girl, and she doesn't tell any of them her true identity because she doesn't think they'll believe her anyway. By the end of the night, she's been intoxicated and hauled off to someone's house, where Dom rapes her, quite roughly, and even worse because she's a virgin. It's only the first in a long line of rapes

for Marisa. The next morning finds him all pissy because she didn't tell him she was a virgin, and he tells his man Donald to give her some coins and take her back to the Gypsies. However, the caravan has moved on. She begs Donald to help her get to France, where she has a wealthy aunt and a powerful godmother. So Donald smuggles her onto Dominic's ship, which just so conveniently happens to be heading to France. Of course it's not long before Dominic discovers her presence and makes her a captive in his cabin, raping her a bunch more times, degrading her at every turn, forcing her to remain naked most of the time despite her discomfort. So of course she hates his bloody guts, and tries to fight back in any way she can, but being all small and tiny female doesn't help. At last they reach France, and she makes a wild escape, running and falling bedraggled into the arms of Philip Sinclair, who just so happens to be ol' Dom's cousin. After hearing a slightly edited version of her story, he rushes her to the palace of Napoleon Bonaparte, whose wife Josephine turns out to be Marisa's godmother. Marisa is reunited with her and also with her aunt Edmee, and it's not long before she's introduced to society and quickly is a beautiful and sought-after woman. Philip becomes her favorite companion and they spend a lot of time together, she fancies herself in love with him, his kindness and gentle way of treating her a **huge** contrast to Dominic's abuse. However, the happy bubble is not to last, and Dominic reappears, as her aunt's lover none-the-less. At least he doesn't rape her during this time, but he does take his chances to berate her some more. Soon Napoleon has his eye on Marisa, wanting her for his mistress, though she really doesn't want to be. One night she and Philip go for a stroll in the gardens while at a party, and they are caught alone together, though they weren't misbehaving or anything. Dominic quickly steps forward and tells the gathered crowd that he's had his way with Marisa loads of times, and therefore will marry her himself. She's outraged, but her aunt and everyone else thinks it's a splendid idea, even though she told her aunt that it was Dominic who had raped her before she made her escape. On her wedding night she's supposed to remain under Napoleon's roof, but Dom steals her away to a secluded villa, where he proceeds to yell at her for forcing him to marry her (which *really* ticked me off seeing as how the bastard volunteered his self for whatever reason!) and heaps some more name-calling and verbal abuse on her. She yells at him for being a rutting beast, and so he rips her gown off and carries her upstairs where he actually doesn't rape her this time, but uses some foreplay and such and shows her pleasure. For about a day they start to get along, and even sort of seem like they might start to care for each other... but one little comment by her about his previous treatment of her sets him off again, and he's back to being King Bastard of Dickwad Hill, throwing accusations of being a lying whore in her face and all that good stuff. After getting one more nice good extra brutal rape in, he leaves, taking all the servants and supplies with him, leaving her completely alone in the house save some halfwit peasant dude. When she awakes she's not feeling so hot, and collapses in a haze of pain. Seems she was pregnant from her time on Dom's ship, and his most recent brutality upon her person has caused her to miscarry. She send the peasant guy for help, and when she awakens again her aunt, and Josephine, a Jo's daughter are there to comfort her. After some time passes, she accompanies her aunt back to Edmee's home in England where Marisa has been set with the task of gathering info from French emigres about possible Royalist plots against Napoleon. She's also reunited with Philip and accepted into society, and eventually meets Dominic's father the Duke, with whom she forms an uneasy sort of alliance. She decides to become Philip's lover, and while on their way to Bath, they are set upon by what seems to be highwaymen. Philip is tied up and forced to watch while one of the men rapes her and brands her with a hot iron on her inner thigh. She's given a warning to give up her spying and whoring. Once the mystery man leaves, she unties Philip, only to have him, excited by watching her get used roughly before his eyes like a prostitute, fall upon her and have *his* way with her. Then they make haste to Bath where her aunt calls a doctor and tries to console her. Marisa's not upset with Philip for his actions though, and they become lovers in full. Soon however, Dominic makes his return to London and she's forced to play the obedient wife. He keeps his hands off her for awhile though, until one night when they argue and he proceeds to get drunk and decides to 'punish' her again. Her traitorous body unfortunately responds though, and she ends up, well, not hating it. The next morning she decides to run away with Philip. They wind up at the Duke's house, where, unbeknownst to her, the Duke and Philip have arranged an attempt on Dom's life. However Dom doesn't die, instead, the Duke does... and when Philip tries to shoot Dom in retaliation, the

gun explodes and kills him. Immediately Dom rounds up Marisa and they are on the move. Dom confesses to being the mystery rapist who had branded her, as well as confessing to killing her father through injuries acquired in a duel (before he ever met Marisa). He books them on a ship to Spain, but before they get there, they're set upon by pirates and taken captive, along with the other passengers on board. Marisa tells them who she is, and that they'll get a hefty ransom from Napoleon for her return. She and the other two captured women are taken to stay at the house of Kamil, an important Turkish military man. He has sworn off traditional sex with a woman for a period of time, something to do with his career in the military, but convenient for him, he really enjoys the company of young boys, as that form of sex is not forbidden by his vows, and it's not uncommon or strange where he's at, so he's not deprived of all sex. It just so happens that Marisa isn't a curvy girl, in fact she's rather slim and could easily pass for a boy, especially with her newly cropped hair. It's not long before Kamil is all hot for her, and they become lovers... but due to those pesky vows, he can't do her normal style, he's gotta do her the other way, like... y'know what I'm saying? But he's kind to her, and shows her loads and loads of pleasure in their romps by night, and by day she goes about garbed as a boy, accompanying him everywhere, riding, patrolling, etc, learning and reveling in the freedoms she gets. All too soon though it becomes apparent that she's pregnant with Dominic's child, and she fears Kamil won't like her anymore if she starts to look more womanly. He consoles her though, and offers her a way to be rid of the pregnancy, but she decides she wants to have the child. Kamil promises her that he'll let her keep it, but his real plans are more cruel. If it is a boy, he will sell it to one of the many pleasure houses to be trained and used for bad things. If it is a girl, he may let her keep it, but only to eventually sell it off as a young wife to someone else. When the baby arrives, it is a boy and is secreted away in haste. They tell her it was a stillborn (girl if I remember right), and since her attendants had drugged her during labor, she knew no different. She's depressed by the news, but Kamil promises her that when his vow period is up, he'll give her many more children. He's decided not to ransom her after all, and wants to marry her instead. But it's not to be, as war with America seems to be looming. He is called to a different town, and his scheming jealous sister arranges for the bashaw to ransom Marisa back to France, and so she's off again. Dom in the meanwhile has found shelter with a tribe whose leader he saved. He joins up with a group of American soldiers, and finds a way to kill Kamil and rescue his baby son and his nurse Selma, who was one of the other captured passengers. Back in France, Marisa at last becomes Napoleon's mistress, for a few months anyway. After that, she heads to New Spain to be reunited with her uncle, a very important man in the Church. She thinks she wants to become a nun after all, but he tells her she needs to experience more in life first. So he sends Marisa off to meet her father's widow Inez, and to see the plantation and lands her father had left to her (M). Her escort to Louisiana turns out to be Don Pedro, who it seems hasn't lost his desire to wed her. For awhile he seems ok, a gentleman for the most part. When she reaches Louisiana, she finds her stepmother is just as much of a bitch as she had envisioned her to be. Marisa's quickly accepted into the local society, and they attend parties and balls and all that. Ah, but kismet shows its face, and it turns out that Dominic's here in Louisiana too, and engaged to a wealthy plantation owner's prim and proper daughter. While out riding, Marisa has the misfortune of running into him without the protection of other people around, and of course they set to fighting, and well, as we know Dom, he pulls her off her horse, throws her down, and rapes her. But having been well-taught about pleasure now, she responds and it becomes a heated thing. When she returns to her stepmother's home, she's berated by her and Don P. Then she learns Dom has a son who is about the same age as her child would've been had it lived. She begins to get suspicious and confronts him about it. He confirms that it is her child. She says she will do anything to see him, and they go to a room above a tavern where he demands to know why she thinks she deserves it after having abandoned the boy. She tells him the truth about having been told it was stillborn, and amazingly he believes her, but they're arguing anyway and he gets mad when she mentions Kamil, so he flips her over onto the bed and takes her the way Kamil always did, but without the benefits of oil and massage and all that stuff that makes it a bit more pleasurable. He then tells her he won't let her see the boy after all, and she returns home desolate. Stepmother decides it's time to head to the family plantation. When they arrive though, she learns of Inez's dastardly plans. Seems Inez has 'discovered' that Marisa's mother wasn't actually her father's 1st

wife, but a quadroon slave, the same woman who was Marisa's nurse. The story, which may or may not be true, is that when the wife's baby died, Marisa was passed off as the daughter instead, having been born at nearly the same time. Since her mother in this version of events was a slave, though she had light skin, well, that makes Marisa a slave as well. Inez quickly sells her off before any scandal can arise, and Marisa is shipped off for some more abuse. Dom ends up buying her, and to work off the money he had to borrow to do so, he is sent into New Spain to capture wild horses. He takes her along, but leaves her alone until one night she decides she can't take it anymore, and she sorta seduces him. This begins a new chapter of sorts for them, and they actually start to talk and get to know each other and all that good stuff. She even realizes she's in love with him. Ok, I'll interrupt my narration here to say that amazingly, I grew to like Dom in this part of the book. All up to this I hated him, but here he shows his human side and I'm almost ashamed to say I kinda liked him. So yea, they capture the horses and prepare to head back. Alas, Don P. has decided he'd like to kill Dom and his troops are heading to their encampment to capture the American spies. Dom decides he has to send Marisa away so she won't get killed, and since he was adopted by a Comanche tribe he tells her to go with them and they'll ransom her off to the gov't of New Spain, but she has to be raped by a member of the tribe first, it's a rule. Of course she argues about the decision and he decides to do the rapin' himself in front of his men and the natives, and then off she goes with the Comanche, where she's ransomed to kind Capitan Higuera who takes her to San Antonio to stay in the convent she'd been at before when traveling with her uncle. Word is sent to her uncle in Mexico City, but it'll be months before he can get to her. Marisa is desolate, believing Dom was killed by the Spanish troops. Having learned it was Don P. who led them, she vows revenge. She becomes Higuera's lover, as well as to the governor, in order to get Don P. called to San Antonio. He comes, bringing a tortured group of captured Americans with him. She plans to kill him, but when he tells her he has Dom, and she sees for herself his battered condition, she has to save him. She pleads with Higuera and the gov' but they tell her nothing can be done. Then Don P. says that if she marries him, he'll arrange to look the other way while Dom escapes, but if she refuses, he'll torture him some more. Having discovered earlier that she's again pregnant with Dom's baby, she agrees. He takes her to the dungeon to see him, and in a power-trip a-hole move, Don P. throws her down and tries to rape her with Dom chained up to watch. Before he succeeds though, Higuera comes in and fights with Don P., and Dom trips him, causing him to fall down one of those really deep torture holes and die. But there's still nothing to be done to save Dom from his sentence, at least until her uncle arrives with the viceroy and his sentence is nulled due to the fact that Marisa is carrying his child, as well as her uncle's position. Their son is sent for along with Selma, and they are remarried and set off with her uncle to start anew in California, where their new son is born.

Ok, so this was a hard book to like. But I did... sort of, really only once I got to the last third of the story. The first two-thirds was just hard to take the abuse. I think Dom did learn to be a bit of a better man by the end of the book, but it was a hell of a battle. Took starvation, torture, and more torture to get him to realize 'Hey, maybe I shoulda been a li'l nicer to Marisa'. My problem wasn't with the author's writing, the book was well-written, and the plot and such made me want to keep reading, but it was just the barrage on the poor heroine! I'm not sure if I'll try anymore in this series or not... it's a hesitant maybe. But definitely not for a good long while. I need to let this one fade a little. I'll definitely be reading something lighter to cheer myself back up after reading this.

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## **Carol Storm says**

**Dominic And Marisa -- Blazing A Trail Of Fiery Desire Across Three Continents!**

I've chatted about this book with a number of Goodreads friends ever since I first came on this site. But I feel compelled to share a very kinky secret I've never admitted to anyone before! You see, it's not the brutal rapes

and the multiple scenes of degrading violence that Marisa endures that make this book so compulsively addicting to me.

No, the thing I like about this book is that, in a weird way, it's almost hands down the most luxurious and languidly paced story I've ever read. What I mean is, when you read closely, Marisa is always being whisked off to one exotic locale after another, only somehow, she's always being pampered and waited on and allowed to sleep late and sort of just reclining in luxury in an almost dazed state as she waits for the next roller-coaster ride of sexual excitement to begin.

Did you ever notice how many times in this book Marisa is "dazed" or "exhausted" while something big is happening? You can always count on her to be dozing when her carriage is abducted by rapists or when her sweetheart has just begged her to elope. And her default mode when it comes to getting some down time is to "sleep till noon."

Is this girl channeling Scarlett O'Hara, or Homer Simpson, or Garfield?

As each new chapter in her life begins, she's always sleeping till noon. Dumped in Paris among strangers? Sleeps till noon and awakens in a strange house. Kidnapped by a desert sheikh? Has fabulous butt sex with a man she barely knows? No problem, she gets to sleep into the afternoon the next day. Trapped in a steamy plantation mansion with a nasty stepmother who really hates her? Sure, it's upsetting, but she still manages to sleep until noon.

This books should be called WICKED LUXURIOUS LIFESTYLES.

And that's why I love it!

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## **Karla says**

Rape is bad, mmkay?

Bad in real life, but a fact of life in the old bodice rippers. If it's something that bugs you, chances are the whole book would suffer from its inclusion and you'd probably be better off not bothering to read it. Especially a book like this one, where rape occurs multiple times (and mainly by the hero).

This is the first Rosemary Rogers book I've ever read, and I'm glad that I didn't gobble this up back in high school along with Bertrice Small and Johanna Lindsey because, like other people, I might have focused solely on the sexual violence Marisa suffers and therefore ignored the other elements in the book. The adventure and crazy action is tops, of course, but the primal scream of female suffering comes through real loud and no doubt struck a strong chord back in 1976. It still resonates, and putting it in a historical perspective, the brutality Marisa endures from all quarters - even by those who profess to love her - is part and parcel of depicting a brutal time. Despite the Enlightenment and a professed dedication to Rule of Law, some parts of life were lawless, and a woman's body was unprotected territory. By the 1970s, much progress had been made, but the double standards were still there, the salving of male pride still an unspoken "duty", and several of Marisa's tirades are essentially a worn, frustrated "Enough is enough! Grow the hell up! Why do you fault us when we want to be all we aspire to be? *Why are you so afraid?*"

These alpha heroes and spitfire heroines and the nasty things they do and suffer through are perfect fits for the settings of the old rippers. There's Old World decadence under the veneer of gentility, and New World blunt, raw brutality as frontiers are tamed and a whole race is grist for another's mill. There's contradictions to navigate and fail, like mixed blood being fashionable in France but is grounds for enslavement in America. What one takes for granted is stolen away in an ocean's breadth. The world is still like that in many respects, and the unidealized atmosphere and characters in this book and many others of its time never fail to make me react and think.

Like any book, though, there are some weak moments. I thought the character of Dominic was too flat for most of the book. Only at the end did he have an awakening of sorts, and it was too little too late, and the eventual HEA with he and Marisa came too closely on its heels. Still, I give the book 5 stars because the final act still had my interest and a good pace. Unlike Stormfire which, while it had a far better hero in Sean Culhane, had a long, dwindling final act that seemed unnecessary as soon as it started and the book didn't satisfy me overall as this one.

This is a true bodice ripper classic, and if you don't mind squirming a bit in discomfort in parts, it's definitely worth the read.

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### **Marissa says**

I'm reading this because I was named after the main character. Well, not really, but my mom read this book, didn't like it, but really liked the name Marisa, only with an additional s. So far, I can see why she did not care for it.

Okay, I've read it. It's difficult to rate this book because it's an old-skool bodice ripper, written when rape was a common trope. More than 35 years later, I find it next to impossible to look at it objectively. But, beyond the fact that the heroine falls deeply in love with someone who abuses her horribly, there are other issues:

- 1) It's epic, I get that, but really? Napoleon's mistress? Spanish Inquisition torture devices? I give kudos to Rosemary Rogers for her no-holds-barred writing, but I was waiting for the kitchen sink to make an appearance.
- 2) Particularly towards the beginning, far too much backstory is told by characters explaining things in what would be a very weird conversation with another character. I'd almost rather the author include a Greek chorus, as it would be a little more believable.
- 3) Marisa tends to lose consciousness whenever there's a significant change in locale. One starts to get the impression that the author just didn't want to write transition scenes.

That said, damned if I didn't end up completely compelled by the Dominic/Marisa saga and read the second half of the book in one sitting. For that alone, I couldn't give less than three stars.

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### **S. Noël says**

Congratulations. The worst book I have ever tried to read. She makes Anne Rice sound like Jane Austen. Fit only for women who hate themselves Yes, that's how I really feel. Yuck, yuck, yuck.

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