



## Under Her Skin

*Adriana Anders*

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**Under Her Skin** Adriana Anders

## **Her Body is His Canvas**

A darkly possessive relationship has left Uma alone and on the run. Beneath her drab clothing, she hides a terrible secret—proof of her abuse, tattooed onto her skin in a lurid reminder of everything she’s survived.

Caught between a brutal past and an uncertain future, Uma’s reluctant to bare herself to anyone...much less a rough ex-con whose rage drives him in ways she will never understand. But beneath his frightening exterior, Ivan is gentle. Warm. Compassionate. And just as determined to heal Uma’s broken heart as he is to destroy the monster who left his mark scrawled across the delicate tapestry of her skin.

## **Under Her Skin Details**

Date : Published February 7th 2017 by Sourcebooks Casablanca

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Author : Adriana Anders

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## From Reader Review Under Her Skin for online ebook

### Jennifer says

Under Her Skin by Adriana Anders is a great debut novel in her Blank Canvas series!

#### Reasons to read Under Her Skin

Ivan - bearded, blacksmith neighbor who looks dangerous but has a heart of gold

Uma - on the run from abusive ex but stays strong through her road to recovery

Ms. Loyd - old hag that needs love and friendship

Romance novel wrapped in mystery, suspense and the dark and light sides of love

Uma's past wouldn't have allowed for an instant hook up and I'm really like how the romance element was the main focus until about half way through the story. The romance between Ivan and Uma was a slow burn something both of them needed. These characters were hunted and tormented by their pasts and they really needed each other. Their connection was so beautiful.

The suspense of what could, would, should happen with surrounding the events of Uma's past kept me on the edge of my seat. I wondered when the shit would hit the fan. Would someone get hurt, die or kill someone. (You'll have to read to find out!)

Ms. Loyd is a perfect old hag that turned out to be an enigma wrapped in a mystery. She helped deliver some much needed humor (although dark) to Uma's life. She also worked as a safe place for Uma even when she didn't want to be in her house.

Ivan is all the things that Uma needed in her life after Joey. Kind, gentle, strong, sexy, protector (when she needed it) and allowed her to be strong for herself. A man who knows when his woman needed him to be a caveman and when she needed he to stand be side her and let her lead.

Under Her Skin was a great read and had me up way past my bed time to see how the story ended.

Read this review in its entirety at [The Book Nympho](#)

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### Sabrina says

*Under Her Skin* is the story of a damaged woman on the run from her past, and the man that wants nothing more than to discover the secrets she hides. It's full of intrigue, steamy scenes, and a romance that will make you swoon.

For me I really liked the story, but it was the characters that I had a hard time with. I just didn't connect to them for some reason so it brought my rating down some. I would still recommend this book though because

it was a very captivating story.

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## Wendy's Thoughts says

### 4 Self Healing and Discovery Stars

\*\*\* *Spoiler Free*

**My 2017 has started out with a bang...I have been reading a diverse group of books and every one of them brought something interesting to my reading table. With *Under Her Skin*, I was taken on a journey which surprised me. The author was new, the blurb intriguing and my involvement complete.**

**It was an experience which left me thinking of a number of things...**

Of how evil people can be in this world...and how easy it is to wish for something, become isolated and manipulated by them and then suffer the doubts, guilt and self hate after being victimized. I am very lucky; in all my years, I have never experienced any of the types of treatment women have endured through no fault of their own...

How incredibly strong and brave these same women are to find a way to take back their lives...to rediscover who they are and move forward....The determination and resistance to all the negative inner dialogue ingrained takes a Herculean effort, I would think... and I respect it immensely.

So with all of that said...I was able to dive in and take what was given to me on the page...

This is a story which is not the most comfortable...but there is also a relationship between two broken people who are drawn to each other, provide a safe place for both...and experience what each needs...

This relationship in the context of all that has happened with each of them... seemed to have a type of calling out to each other...For me, it worked and was a way for the woman to find herself. For him, it brought him back to feeling a connection to someone, more than just a caring or protecting...

Each was able to be free in the moments of trust... and the trust grew.

The premise is not an unusual one for a romance book... and this could have been like many I have read...But this had more in the way it gave me the inner workings of both main characters...I was able to feel the hopelessness and panic she first felt in the story. I understood the way she had to deal with her self loathing and fight to be brave and overcome small tasks to get through the day. I was there when she fought to make herself go forward and do things which would help heal her, no matter how difficult they were....

And when she allowed herself to experiment and take charge of her sexual needs...I got it.

Our fella was the perfect vehicle for her...he sensed right away how damaged and skittish she was...His history with his sister made him recognize what she was all about...But it wasn't pity...which caused him to care for her...It was something else for the both of them...an almost animal instinct of her knowing he was there and willing to be whatever she needed...

And he was.

When these two start to come together physically, it is a way for her to take back her power... she is surprised

with her actions and relishes the way she is able to control him and the situation. It is presented sensually, with care yet also with an honesty of how sex isn't always perfect and pretty...

For me, all of it worked.

There were others in this story...not all of them likeable...But they played their parts...Jessie, our fella's sister was given a hint of a back story with another engaging character...and since this seems to be a series...my guess is she will have her own book. I will be looking forward to see what comes next.

***I would like to suggest Madeline Iva's review. It brings a personal view to this book which is very powerful and insightful.***

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

*A gifted copy was provided by SOURCEBOOKS Casablanca via NetGalley for an honest review.*

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## **Ari Reavis says**

\*Arc received from Netgalley, in exchange for an honest review\*

2.5 Stars

Well it started off promising, but went downhill somewhere along the line. Uma is on the run and takes a job with an evil old lady. Now this old lady ended up having a very sad back story, that's revealed towards the end of the book, but to me that didn't excuse the way she treated Uma most of the story. The next door neighbor is Ivan. He was a genuinely nice and considerate guy, even if he had a bit of a temper. He was the highlight of the story, because (even I felt bad for her) Uma just got on my nerves for some reason. Even when she and Ivan were getting down and dirty (which was pretty hot at times) she was comparing him to Joey (the abuser). What Joey did before, what Joey would be doing, blah blah. It was reallllly a mood killer to hear about Joey in the middle of a sex scene. Another thing that killed it was that Uma was mostly in control during their sex scenes. Personally, this just isn't my cup of it.

What I liked was the ending and how everything turned out with the psycho who'd abused Uma. And that there was a happy ending.

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## **Mindy Lou's Book Review says**

This book was weird, yet good. Messy, not perfect kind of good. When I started it, the characters were very different and not what I was expecting. This story follows Uma who has been abused by her ex. You don't learn right away exactly what he did, but you start to put the pieces together. It's not what you normally read about in abuse victims. It's no less horrific, but it sure made me think about what I would do if it happened to me. I think that's what the author did really well in this story.

When Uma ended up In Blackwood, VA with no money, she takes a job as a live in helper for Mrs. Lloyd,

an elderly woman. My first thought of Mrs. Lloyd is that she was cray cray. Not really a place for a recently abused woman should be at. Then we meet Ivan. I really didn't know what to think of Ivan at first. He reminds me of one of those men who has spent too much time alone in the woods.

It's a weird mix of people, but the more you learn about all of them, the more they grow on you and the more you understand why they are they way they are. Like I said, weird but a good weird. Really my only complaint was one scene with another woman. It was a small scene and not major but that's kind of my point. It was unnecessary to the story and I'm not a fan of interference with other woman in books.

I am definitely interested in reading the next in the series to see how this author will top this book. ARC Provided by NetGalley.

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### **Marta Cox says**

Six months ago Uma ran away from her controlling and abusive boyfriend. Now she's hiding from him, knowing he's looking for her and that he has contacts in law enforcement. This all means Uma's old life is something she has to stay away from. Uma started out as a photographer but that's a far cry from what she's doing now, working as a live in help for a truly cantankerous older lady but some things are worth putting up with because Uma has plans. Her plans don't include a man because what hides beneath Uma's clothes is something she cannot bare not even to her own eyes. Yet the neighbour Ivan keeps cropping up. This giant with a good heart seems kind but Ivan has a dark past which has shaped the man he has become. Still, Uma can't stop thinking about him , listening to him at night working in his forge and then when she's locked out of the house it's Ivan who comes to her rescue in more ways than one!

Yes there's a romance here but it's the story of how Uma becomes her own woman again that pulled me in. I had seen wildly conflicting reviews for this so had to satisfy my curiosity. Yes she has been through a traumatic event and has genuine reasons to be afraid but she is an odd conundrum . Nervous yet fierce, wanting to be alone but attracting friendship and then there's her ability to change from a mouse to a lion that roars! The opening line to this book mentions the old hag that is looking for a home help and admittedly that surprised me but Uma takes on her employer to glorious effect but even then there's a twist I just hadn't seen coming!

The word dichotomy describes Uma, particularly when it comes to her interactions with Ivan. Without saying too much I think this is where we first start to see Uma gaining in confidence as Ivan lets her call the shots . I really liked that this man was man enough not to be phased by that and it made a wonderful change from all the macho alpha type males that often feature in romance that has a darker side . This is not in my opinion a dark romance but it is one with a heroine who has and indeed still actually is living in a dark place. Definitely a story of hope but the abuse mentioned is sickening . I would have liked to know more about her ex as his character just didn't feel real although I do understand that true evil and madness can often be found under the face of an angel . Yet Uma triumphs and regains that which is most precious, her feeling of self worth. Not a preachy story and it's definitely an adult one as Ivan doesn't just stoke the fires when he's working!

A copy of this was provided for me which I have voluntarily read and these comments are my own honest opinion

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### **Kate's Corner says**

**I really struggled with this book and as it started off really well and I was enjoying it I don't know where it went wrong.**

**Uma left an abusive relationship six months ago and what a horrible, abusive, disgusting relationship it was. She landed in Blackwood to get a treatment so that she could get rid of the marks of her past. I felt for Uma but I didn't like her. Yes what she went through was awful but I could connect to her as much as I wanted to. It wasn't her fault and these things usually happen gradually it was just as a person she did act like a survivor but she was getting there.**

**Ivan is one big Hero with a heart of gold who has picked up strays throughout his life. He has an anger management problem but seems to be doing alright. I liked Ivan he is a great Hero.**

**For me it felt as if Uma was using Ivan and he let himself be used by Uma: I don't like that kind of thing.**

**The main characters didn't have a connection in my opinion although the sex although hot at times and the author had it done pat I felt uncomfortable as the Hero submitted a lot to the heroine. That thing isn't for me. I need me an alpha Hero. I find it hard to explain.**

**Not to mention the fact that every time they did the nasty she would constantly compare Ivan to her ex Joey the abuser. Really off putting.**

**I skimmed and my mind wandered to other things which meant I had to reread a couple of times. I was close to giving up on it as well.**

**I reckon that this is a strong case of this is ME and not YOU!**

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### **Alleyne says**

A brilliant debut novel from a terrific new voice in romance! I don't write spoilery reviews, so look for the plot elsewhere. I'm only going to talk about what I particularly enjoyed about the book.

Everything! I loved the story -- the abused woman who takes her agency back with the help of a giant of a man, who is gentle with the lost and damaged but has a hard time controlling his anger at injustice. I loved the subplots, all of which showed Uma (the heroine) growing stronger and reclaiming her self-respect. Ivan (the hero) learns to put his fury aside out of respect for what the heroine really needs.

The thing I really loved was the writing. The words are both lyrical and gritty, which suited the book perfectly. If you don't like swear words, particularly ones starting with F, this is not the book for you. But the richness of the writing, the evocative setting and the care with which all the characters -- major and minor -- and handled, made this a book that will stay with me for a long, long time.

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### **Katie(babs) says**

Everything about Under Her Skin (Blank Canvas #1) by Adriana Anders made me want to throw it against

the wall. Writing a romance with a hero or heroine who has been through unspeakable abuse at the hands of someone they loved takes extreme care. In this case, *Under Her Skin* fails in so many ways, especially to those readers who have been in the heroine's shoes in some way or another. As soon as the first chapter ended, I had a bad feeling *Under Her Skin* was going to make me rage because of the actions of the heroine, and the over the top cruelty from other characters, including the eye rolling romance between the heroine and the hero that happens so fast, which doesn't make any sense, especially since the heroine was abused, raped and tortured by her former boyfriend. Why doesn't this make sense? Because less than 2 weeks after the extremely tortured and scarred heroine leaves her psychotic abusive boyfriend, she lands into bed with the hero and wants him to get her pregnant. WHAT??

Uma is on the run from Joey, her boyfriend who has horribly abused her. She was once a professional photographer who met him at a wedding. Because of his blue eyes, and Frank Sinatra looks, she fell for him. He then took over her entire world, going as far to put her name on his back, and visa versa with his name on hers. But then her fairy tale went down hill fast. Joey became controlling, so much so that Uma was smothered and decided to leave him. Joey, who is a big district attorney with the law on his side, ends up raping Uma, and then torturing her with a tattoo gun and tattooing her all over her body. Uma runs away after he finds her at a women's home, not even asking her mother in India for help because her mother wouldn't understand because Joey is handsome and well respected; he could never be an abuser.

Uma answers a sketchy ad in the paper to take care of an old lady, who's a hermit in her home. The old woman is just as cruel and mean as Joey, but uses words instead of fists. But Uma doesn't have much of a choice. She also meets Ivan, a not so handsome, bearded lumberjack type man who is a neighbor of the hermit old lady. He appears kind and gentle. He treats Uma with care. Soon she is meeting him at his house, and in less than 2 weeks they're making out and having foreplay, which leads to hot and heavy sex. After a few rounds of sex, Uma wonders if Ivan will make her pregnant, even though she has suffered a horrible rape and abuse at the hands of another man she had loved. She is suffering PTSD from her horror, but doesn't mind the intimacy or the possibility of getting pregnant with Ivan.

As Uma and Ivan fall in love, Joey is waiting for revenge for Uma leaving him.

*Under Her Skin* is a hair pulling read because it takes the abuse of a woman and writes it in a very unbelievable and ridiculous way. I've read many romances before with a heroine who has suffered mental and physical abuse from a husband or a lover, including rape, but usually the heroine takes much longer than 2 weeks to recover and jump into a bed with a man she knows nothing about, and who she can't trust fully. Also the woman Uma cares for is ridiculous in her portrayal, even when it's explained why she is such a wicked witch. Joey is laughable and one-dimensional because we're told, rather than shown why he's so evil and abusive to Uma.

*Under Her Skin* was insulting to me as a reader because of the portrayal of abuse Uma suffers, including her eye rolling actions with Ivan, which doesn't make any sense.

**BIG PASS ON THIS ONE!**

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### **Heather andrews says**

I really loved Ivan, I thought he was sweet, "I shouldn't have pushed you." His next words brought another wave of heat to her face. "You're so fuckin' hot, Uma. Got kinda carried away." Ivan does not hesitate when



his woman tells him to do something, “take off your pants, Ivan.” Uma had never seen Ivan do anything as quickly as he whipped off those jeans.” I liked this book, I loved the patience Ivan had.

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### **Caroline says**

On the run, Uma settles in a small town because of two reasons; an unusual help wanted ad which would let her work out of sight, out of mind and completely under the table; and, a tattoo removal clinic that advertised doing free work for those who suffered abuse. When she shows up at the house where she is supposed to work, she runs into ex-convict Ivan Shifflett. Ivan has a bad habit of bringing home stray animals. With Uma he sees in her the same fear that his abused dog had before he rescued her and he can't help but want to protect her. Although Ivan believes he is unworthy of Uma, he will do anything, even face down the ex.

Verdict: I don't like writing spoilery reviews so far before the publication date, so I will be as vague as possible while still trying to fully disclose what this book made me feel. So to start, having never been abused in any way, I can't really say what someone would do in Uma's place. However, I couldn't imagine the type of abuse she experiences or on what to do to overcome it. Was there some artistic license used to describe the extent of her tattoo torture session, yes. But that's why it's called fiction. I felt like the same artistic license was applied to the relationship that formed between Uma and Ivan. Neither time did I feel like the artistic license employed was a bad thing. Many times, romance books that feature a tortured heroine and/or hero often feel rushed because there just isn't enough space in the book to make it follow a more natural, true to life progression. If books really followed true to life we would be lucky if it finished up as a 1000 page book. And that just doesn't make for good reading. You would get bored well before anything actually ever happened. Just take a look at some of Kristen Ashley's books. Some of them just go on and on and on without much of anything happening beyond the heroine's internal dialogue. Not to say that I dislike Kristen Ashley, I love the majority of her books. I just can't claim I read every word in every chapter, because sometimes I find myself skimming until something a little bit exciting happens.

Here, I feel like both Ivan and Uma were given enough play time to fully disclose their issues and the crappy things life put them through while also getting enough romantic play time to make it believable enough for the ending to take place. So to summarize, yes, some leniency in the bending of the truth is necessary for enjoyment BUT I personally enjoyed Uma and Ivan story as well as many of the secondary characters who were introduced. On a side note, I can't wait to see if Ivan's sister and the bartender get their own book.

\*Thank you Edelweiss and the publisher for a copy of this book to review\*

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### **Elsa Bravante says**

Le doy con pena DNF en el 35%. Me gustan los personajes, e incluso la historia, pero no tanto el estilo de la autora, a veces se entretiene demasiado, da vueltas sobre lo mismo una y otra vez, ralentiza la acción y sin embargo me parece muy precipitado cómo la protagonista, víctima de abusos, confía en el protagonista masculino, no me lo he creído, así que lo dejo aquí y no le doy rating.

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## **Michelle [Helen Geek] says**

April 2017 -- 4 Stars

So, this will sound silly, but something I find terribly annoying ... I hate when a book includes so much of another book at the end. My Kindle tracks my progress, and so I think the book is so much longer and then, done. Over. And, my progress is at 66%. Ugh.

Okay, over that little miff'd point. I enjoyed this one. I guess what happened to Uma could happen. Seems a bit farfetched, but there are some real assholes in the world, so anything is possible. I really, really liked Ive. His anger, the reason for it, never really got told, so I still wonder. I didn't think anything in his life warranted the anger issues he seemed to have to deal with. So, you can tell, I have real issues with logic in a story. I try to tease the details out and just don't let it rest until I have it together. This one bothered me a bit.

I enjoyed the story. I applaud Uma's bravery. Cookie's more so. Ive is the person who cares and nurtures those around him. He is lovable. Uma deserves an Ive.

This book for me, would have been 5 Star, until the last 15% or so. It hurried to the ending and didn't close the tentacles in the story it developed. I hate when a book does that. So, my final rating is 4 Stars. Subsequent stories in this series are over \$6. I'm not pulled to pay that much. I'll wait and see what other think and/or for the books to go on sale.

Happy Reading!

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## **Madeline Iva says**

Like Megan Hart? You'll love this book. UNDER HER SKIN has a literary feel at times, especially in the beginning. Yet make no mistake--UNDER HER SKIN is clearly a steamy romance, with some great sex. It delivers all the feels we romance readers are addicted to. There's a deeply detailed gritty feel to Anders' book and the trauma the heroine has suffered.

Having gone through some serious abusive sh\*\* in my own life at a young age, I can say with absolute authority that one thing you get really good at is a cold read on people. It's pretty clear to the heroine fairly quickly that Ive, blacksmith and bearded hero, is a gentle soul who fixes things. He has a great deal of patience with wounded critters and wounded women, which makes his past all the more surprising.

When I was going through a lot of trauma, there was nothing I wanted more than to feel immediate-intimacy and closeness with a friend/guy I could really trust. I just felt so alone. This book offers the kind of fantasy I longed for--to form a strong and powerful bond with a soul mate almost from the get go. A man who is strong, but completely trustworthy. Anders delivers exactly such a fantasy in her book. The sex between the hero and heroine is an act of the heroine reclaiming power in her own life again: power over her body, over her relationships, and over her sex life. She chooses, she decides, and after her body goes through such abuse, she reconnects with her own body's sensuality, letting good sensations wipe away the bad.

Loved it! I loved the setting of Ive's forge at night too!

I also have to comment on how much I happily sank into the sleepy-steamy little Southern town. Finally--like another reviewer said--I am looking to the rest of the series to see if the defensive arts instructor Jessie gets it on with the bartender. I imagine their sex will be no-holds-barred and I CAN'T WAIT!

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### **Linda says**

Uma's life is in shambles, now she's on the run, hiding from her ex, when an opportunity she can't refuse has her in close proximity to him again. When her new neighbor shows a talent for making her trust again, Uma will have to make a choice..

Ivan put his life on hold when tragedy struck, but his content. Until Uma comes along and shows him a promise for more. Can he persuade her to stay?

Contemporary romance, feelings, and two broken people finding happiness again. <3 Loved it!

Disclaimer; I was given a free copy in exchange for an honest review.

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