



The Treasure: A Novel

Iris Johansen

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An ex-harem slave...

A reformed assassin...

*A race to find the most powerful
religious artifact of all time...*

New York Times bestselling author Iris Johansen returns with her first historical romance in a decade, a new novel of passion and exotic adventure that leads two unlikely and unforgettable treasure hunters on a perilous journey—and into the heart of one of the most captivating mysteries of all time.

Lady Selene Ware had been nothing more than a harem slave when Kadar Ben Arnaud—a man once trained in the black arts of death and seduction—helped her escape to the safety of her native Scotland. But even a world away she still wasn't safe from the sheikh who claimed her as his stolen property—and who now forced both her and Kadar to return with a chance to win their freedom. There is, of course, a catch. First they must find the legendary religious relic that men of power have searched for from King Arthur's time to the present.

For Selene and the ex-assassin, it is a dangerous odyssey that begins in erotic captivity and leads to an encounter with the mysterious and reclusive Tarik, who now possesses the treasure. But the truth is far more explosive, the stakes far more deadly, and the closer they come to discovering the secret, the closer they will come to losing each other—and their lives. For even as Selene grasps the key to this age-old mystery, Kadar may have to step over the fine line separating the dark path from the light to save her.

From the Hardcover edition.

The Treasure: A Novel Details

Date : Published (first published December 2008)

ISBN :

Author : Iris Johansen

Format : Kindle Edition 434 pages

Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Historical, Fiction

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From Reader Review The Treasure: A Novel for online ebook

Susan J. says

This is a poor sequel to the historical romance novel Lion's Bride. It's been a while since I read Lion's Bride, but I remember it being rich with historical detail--the first book I read that included the Knights Templar--and character development. The Treasure reads just like Johansen's contemporary suspense books...chapter after chapter of clipped dialogue. She can get by with that style in contemporary books, but that is not the way to write historical books, particularly if you're going for romance.

Holly says

I've never read an Iris Johansen book before and this one doesn't especially make me want to read another. As far as historical fiction/romance goes, this was no Outlander.

Leslie says

I recall enjoying Iris Johansen books when I was really into historical romance novels. She then took a turn to writing contemporary romantic suspense which isn't a genre I've ever really latched on to. Having tried both her recent efforts, contemporary romantic suspense and historical romance, it's safe to say I'm done reading her novels.

In Treasure, which I picked up solely because it was a historical romance and I recall Johansen's historicals to be good, the dialogue is horrible and stilted. The first 60 pages read as though you fell into the middle of the story, with poor background. Both the protagonists are one dimensional (and they could have been GOOD, that's the sad part!). I don't know if the book improves- I felt like I was wasting my time and wasn't going to spend 350 pages finding out if it got any better.

Not sure what the deal with some of these "churn and burn" authors are- publisher pressure leads to soft work, or the author simply becomes a brand and doesn't even produce the main content? Curious, especially with authors who at one time were producing solid efforts.

Leia Kolet toledano says

a lot of adventures but no real sense or depth to characters.

Becky says

Definately not my favorite. It was okay, and I didn't have a problem finishing this book. I'm actually having a harder time trying to write my review.

This was much different than I expected. I'm not sure what I was expecting, but it wasn't this. Selene and Kadar are interesting characters, but the whole plot was just hard to digest. The being safe at their home castle, but not safe outside the castle walls, and then Selene's bravery in the face of danger didn't really work. Considering her upbringing I expected her to be a little more timid.

Then, Kadar's easy acceptance of Tarik and his role in the locating of the treasure was too easy. While I actually liked Tarik, and his eventual role in the story, I think Kadar and Selene really went there too easily.

The ending was actually a little similar to Deadlock's end. It had a christian twist that actually worked better in this one than in Deadlock. (That was a complaint of mine in my review of Deadlock.) Overall it was okay, but don't put down anything else that you're reading to pick this up. Even if you're a fan of this author! Hang on for the next Eve Duncan coming out in October...Blood Game.

Karen Boruff says

Far fetched story, that isn't always logical. I really got bored in places. I also kept loosing empathy for the characters. I took forever to finish this book. I would not recommend it, unless you don't mind complete fantasy.

Jessica says

Ever finish a book and go "what the fuck just happened?" Yeah that's what happened here. I'll admit although i love johansen when i saw this was historical i was skeptical. then i was more skeptical when this seemed to be a tad supernatural-y. turns out i was right to be skeptical because this was awful. Not writing wise because johansen is brilliant but literally nothing else about this was good. Let's start with the blurb...Selene was not a harem slave. I didn't read the first book but I can promise you she wasn't because she was a virgin in this book and harem slaves are NOT virgins. While on the subject of their pasts neither character had a very developed one. I don't know if it was developed in book 1 or if we were just supposed to assume their pasts but it made it impossible to understand the character's motivations. But back to the blurb...then there's supposed to be some sheikh who "claimed her as his stolen property" but as far as i know the villain wasn't a sheikh and he definitely didn't claim her so much as he used her captivity to make the hero do what he wanted.

Now on to the book itself. oh my FUCKING GOD it rambled on and on and on and on. Endless pointless rambling about seemingly nothing. then out of almost nowhere a happy ending but not really because we don't get to really resolve some of the biggest plot issues. I wasn't particularly fond of either character. The heroine was stubborn to a fault and frequently ventured into TSTL territory. Her turnaround to trusting the hero had no catalyst and made 0 sense. The hero was nice to the heroine most of the time but otherwise he was a little too "ooooh i'm an enigma with a shady past" for me. maybe if that past had been developed even a little i would've liked him more but neither one of them had any substance beyond their annoying surface

traits and supposed love for each other. But lets talk about that love because its kinda creepy. He talks about how he always loved her but they met when she was like 8 or 11....super gross. Even in present day im pretty sure she's only 17 which is historically accurate i suppose but still skeezes me out. They love each other from the start but i never get a real sense of why other than because otherwise this wouldnt be a romance i suppose. The sex scenes basically all happened behind closed doors which was weird because she didnt pull punches in the gore arena and was rather disappointing. The plot tried to be lofty but then there was so much filler that the suspense/adventure part of the book got lost in translation.

All in all a disappointment from a really great author...but really a waste of two nights of my life. Johansen is many things but a historical/paranormal/romance author isn't one of them. A hint of romance works in her thrillers but a fully developed one...or rather not in this case is just not her forte

Pepe says

I love Iris Johansen's books. Usually. I read this, but really didn't enjoy it as much as I usually enjoy her works of fiction. I don't think it's because of the time, but perhaps it was the characters. I just didn't really like them too much. That's me, though. If you like romance thrillers set in the past, try it. This one might be good for you.

Chitra *CJ* says

“The Treasure” is the story of Selene and Kadar.

The sequel to Lions Bride, the book picks up a few years later. After everyone from the first book eventually escape to Scotland, they now live and do business there. Selene is now 17, and yearns for Kadar who continues to push her away- until they give into passion and are eventually kidnapped by Kadars enemies- Nasim- who want him back for a mission and take Selene as a safety measure.

The book then becomes all about the secondary characters- the mystery behind what's in the treasure box, Nasim the evil dbag, Tarik and his ex wife Layla and heartbreak for our main characters.

The plot in this book is weak and the characters barely develop. One minute Selene has trust issues, next the thing is completely abandoned as she is whisked around the globe and seduced with the blink of an eye. The hero seemed inconsiderate at the best- a contrast to how Kadar was portrayed in the first book. (view spoiler) There's a random magical element to the plot which didn't make much sense to me, because it added nothing to the story at that point.

End was disappointing.

Not safe by definition (view spoiler)

1.5/5

Jenna Skarzenski says

For me, this book was literally an ehhhhh kind of book. It's not difficult to read at all. In fact, the story is a bit annoying at times. I wanted to say to the book, "I get it, Selene is willful and bold and Kadar is distant and mysterious. Please get on with it!". But unfortunately, that's what most of the novel is about. Other than that the story was a bit much at times. It just seems so forced and awkwardly connected that it's almost unbelievable, but not in the good way.

MelissaB says

The Treasure finally tells the long awaited story of Kadar and Selene, who we met in The Lion's Bride. I am not quite sure what I feel about this story. On one hand, I enjoyed finally seeing Kadar and Selene's story. On the other hand, Selene was way too over-bearing and the story focused way too much on the mysterious treasure rather than a love story.

The story begins at Ware and Thea's castle in Scotland five years after the end of The Lion's Bride. Kadar and Selene both know they are meant for each other but Kadar will not marry Selene yet because he doesn't think she is ready for him because she still doesn't trust him. Selene grew up as a slave in the House of Nicolas, a silk embroidery house where she learned not to trust anyone except her big sister Thea. Kadar freed her when she was eight years old but her inability to trust still remains. I am not sure I bought this plot point, it seemed to me that she should have learned something about trust in the 9 years she spent in freedom. But I guess not.

In the Lion's Bride, Kadar promised Sinan, the mysterious Old Man of the Mountain, that he would perform a task for him someday if he let them live and leave his fortress. A ship shows up bearing Sinan's men, who tell him that Sinan has called in the favor and wants him to return to keep his promise. Kadar does not tell Selene that he has to leave but he finally gives into his passion for her the night before he is leaving in a very anti-climatic scene on a hill outside the keep. Not the most romantic deflowering ever.

The men who came to get Kadar were actually sent by Nasim, who was the power behind Sinan. The leader sees Kadar with Selene and decides to abduct her to make sure Kadar comes along willingly. Selene is pissed at Kadar for not telling her he was leaving, despite a promise years ago not to leave without telling her. Once they arrive at the fortress, Nasim tell them he wants Kadar to retrieve a treasure for him from a place in Italy but will not tell him any more details. He also makes Kadar do certain "dark" things for him, including taking Selene to a tower room and making love to her. One big problem I had with this book was that the love scenes were not detailed. I want detailed love scenes in my romance. Especially when the author states that the hero knows all kind of ways to make love, then pretty much fades to black except for saying he was inside her. How freaking anti-climatic.

After a few weeks, Kadar and Selene travel to Italy to steal this mysterious treasure for Nasim. They are accompanied by some of Nasim's men to make sure they accomplish the task. Once they arrive, the story pretty much turns to Kadar interacting with the mysterious man who owns the treasure while he is trying to figure out what the treasure actually is. Kadar is a very curious man, so the mystery intrigues him. Selene is pretty bitchy to Kadar during the entire stay, she decides he isn't allowed to make love to her anymore and pretty much just yells at him all the time. But only because she doesn't know how to trust - see the theme? We know that she needs to learn how to trust.

We finally learn what the treasure actually is and why Nasim wants it. I thought it was interesting but I don't really like the idea of it because I could see lots of problems down the road. There were a lot of mystical elements to the story, but we also saw some of that in the Lion's Bride with the magical banner. The rest of the book pretty much centered around the treasure.

My overall impressions of the book was that the story itself was interesting but the romance was too stilted and cold. Selene was a bitch - yes I said it and I mean it. I didn't hate her but I wanted her to chill out. She

spent a lot of time being overbearing to everyone around her, trying to boss everyone around including Kadar. She spends most of the book pushing him away then running back, but he does some of that himself. She is very obstinate and wants her own way all the time. I think the author tried to portray her as strong but went overboard. If she just would have thawed out about halfway through the story, I wouldn't have had a problem - but she never thawed out except for a little bit at the end enough to admit she loved Kadar. Too much of the story was told from her point of view, I would have liked to see more of Kadar's thoughts because he is a very intriguing and likeable man. He let Selene get away with too much, I wish he would have called her more on the way she acted rather than just accepting that impulsive single-minded behavior was just her personality.

I did accept that Kadar and Selene were supposed to be together but I felt that Kadar might have gotten the short end of the deal unless Selene learns how to be a less overbearing person. The romance was lacking in this book because they spent almost no time happily together. He is either pushing her away or she is pushing him away for most of the book until the end. I like some fuzzy happiness in a romance but that was in short supply here. The love scenes should have been way more detailed, did Iris Johansen forget how she used to write? She wrote some pretty erotic scenes in her older historicals, which is why I was even more disappointed. The other aspects of the story were interesting enough but I felt more like I was reading historical fiction with a side of romance rather than a romance.

Overall, I enjoyed The Lion's Bride much better. It was a very good romance with interesting characters and a great setting. The Treasure was worth a read to me because I got to see how two of the characters from other book got together but the romance just was not good enough. The story was still good but it could have been much better.

My actual rating would be: 4 stars for the story, 3 stars for the "romance".

Lisarenee says

Steamy historical Romance. Two lovers are tricked into a deadly quest to find and retrieve an ancient artifact that could be the holy grail which contains the power of immortality. Ex-assassin Kadar Ben Arnaud thinks he is being summoned by his old master to collect on a promise he made years earlier. When his love, Selena Ware is kidnapped, Arnaud finds himself forced to once again don the cloak of his former life as an assassin to save her.

Jenny Rebecca says

I'm not sure why it took me so long to finish this. It was a book I would pick up, read for a bit, set down. Forget about. Then remember and pick it up again. I wanted to finish it, I just took my time about it.

One of my favorite books is "Lion's Bride" so I was excited to see Kadar's story. It was o.k. though I think the thing that bothered me the most is that we never had Kadar and Sabine to ourselves. They were always in imminent danger, which made it hard to get into their love story. Plus, things came way too easy for them. There wasn't enough sexual tension. I don't know. I almost feel like I should give this another read, and try to do it all in one setting as opposed to the 2 months it took me to finish this.

Virginia Tican says

It was way better than the dime a dozen forgettable Regency and Historical Romances that turn up every month with the same plots or some with even plagiarized plotlines and too many were Americanized when the setting was supposed to be Regency England ~ with the word OKAY and this age's common phrases scattered all over the pages. Ms. Johansen is American, but that fact does not come out off her pages, only the characters' words do. Don't get me wrong, there are American authors who do pay attention to their stories and thoroughly research their historical materials and write good and creditable Regencies like: Sabrina Jeffries, Lisa Kleypas, Julia Quinn, Mary Jo Putney, Brenda Hiatt, and the late Bertrice Small to name just a few.

The Treasure was a good ride in terms of entertainment, fantasy romance and danger. A pretty good mix. A perfect Goodread.

Susan says

What a pleasure to find that this book followed along with characters from another Johansen book I read long ago. It is a real page turner! As always, this author uses strong women, clever dialogue, constant action, and a sprinkling of the mystical. It was nice to see a return to a setting in the past after many contemporary novels.
