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*Jacqueline Baird*

THE COST OF HER  
INNOCENCE



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# The Cost of Her Innocence

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## **The Cost of Her Innocence** Jacqueline Baird

*Shackled to her enemy!* As the prison gates close behind her, newly free Beth Lazenby vows that they are also closing on her past. Until she encounters the merciless lawyer who helped wrongfully imprison her all those years ago....

Still convinced of her guilt, Dante Cannavaro is stunned when his anger boils over into passion! There's no chance he'll allow Beth to escape—especially now she's carrying his heir!

Faced with a proposal that is more of a command than a request, will Beth ever be able to prove her innocence? Or will she be forever beholden to her enemy?

## **The Cost of Her Innocence Details**

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# From Reader Review The Cost of Her Innocence for online ebook

## Lyss says

This book is frikking UNBELIEVABLE. the hero is an absolute jerk asshole misogynist and the heroine keeps on "smiling" as he insults and puts her down and practically brands her a slut.

consider this:

"For a moment Beth was speechless and simply stared at him. 'You would actually ruin Clive Hampton, a man respected by all who know him, simply because you think I am a criminal low-life after your brother and his money?'

'I don't have to think. I know you are an ex-con, and I know you used your considerable charms to get young Bewick under your spell. Now you are doing the same with Tony. He is infatuated by you. As for the money...I can't be certain. But I do know Helen left you a house and a nice chunk of money. Maybe your talent for ensnaring men extends to females too.' He shrugged his shoulders 'Not my business. But Tony is. I stopped you once and I will again.'

He was so wrong that Beth couldn't help but smile. 'You make me sound like the Wicked Witch of the West,' she quipped."

She "couldn't help" but fucking "smile" after page after page he insults her. And this goes on and on. Beth, the supposedly self-aware, independent accountant, is an simpering idiot and this type of heroine is present in almost ALL of Jacqueline Baird's books. Dante whatshisname is a TOTAL waste of space, like every other Baird hero. GAWD.

Zero stars. Totally. I'm going back to Sophie Weston.

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## TheMadHatter says

I finished another book last night that was a bit icky in terms of the sexual sadism content. I really didn't want to go to bed with thoughts of abuse and rape in my head. So I picked up a quick fix, crappy romantic read to send me off into the land of nod thinking a little better about the world.

Well, it didn't quite work that way. The female lead in this was sentenced to 3 years of jail time for drugs. Convicted pretty much on the slyness of a cunning lawyer (although of course it was a set-up because in true form she was innocent and a virgin to boot as they always are!). She is released from jail, moves on with her life, gets a nice job, inherits a nice place and money from her dead cell mate (as always happens...so cliché right!). Anyway, she attends her next door neighbours BBQ and he just happens to be the brother of the lawyer (what are the chances?). Anyway silly girl loses virginity to sly lawyer totally forgetting for a minute that he robbed her of 3 years of her life. She gets pregnant. They get married. She swims out to sea to save a drowning girl. Loses baby, but shows him that she is a good person. He finds out she was framed for the drugs and she forgives him and they live happily ever after....whatever.

Me personally, I hold grudges. I would have totally destroyed that lawyer. Oh well. It did reset the images in my mind from sexual sadism to ways to destroy a lawyer and for the entertaining quick two hour read I give this 3 stars.

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### **Megzy says**

[Dante was the reason she ended up in jail and not only lost 18 months of her life but forever was known as a drug dealer convict. Upon seeing the picture of a beautiful/model type 18 years old girl, he decided the boy who was in the car with Jane must be innocent because it is obvious the boy who happened to be the head of the law firm son was infatuated by a fast talking, promiscuous femme fatale. He cam

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### **Vanessa says**

Dante believes that Beth is after his younger half-brother for money. He means to keep that from happening and it doesn't hurt that he is attracted to her. Dante uncovers her secret. That he had prosecuted her – on a set-up – years earlier. He threatens Beth to get what he wants and even gets a little extra on the side. Not a quick get-away though as he is caught because of his failure to suit up!

Yes, it's one of those books. It wasn't bad, just don't question some things because one has to wonder about some things that Dante says but claims he didn't say or agree to especially when you can flip back and see that he clearly agreed to them. There was another thing that bothered me about this attorney as well. He needed to refresh his memory about her case and he does, but then at the end he has to call someone else to verify things – what? He was the one that prosecuted the case!

Threats and blackmail come out again for this superior attorney and, of course, Beth gives in because ....well she wants him at all costs, right? She is quick to forgive him and begin their HEA. It wasn't a bad read as there was some great moments between the two of them, just don't hang on to some of the things he says as he twists them to suit his own purpose!

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### **KatieV says**

I don't know what's wrong with me. I read this because it was advertised as a serious wallbanger. It was up until the halfway mark when they married and he was a decent husband and so forth. After that, it was pretty boring. I think my threshold for crazy has gotten way out of control. I either need counseling or I need to go off HPs for a while.

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### **Krita says**

I found Dante to be overbearing in the extreme and Beth was a pushover.

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## Dalia says

3.5 stars

Jane has been an innocent 19 y old when she was wrongly convicted to 3 y of prison as a drug dealer. Dante was the lawyer who presented her to the jury as a heartless femme fatale who uses her beauty to lure young men to their doom. But Jane is not a pushover. When she got out of prison, she continued with her life becoming Beth, a successful accountant in London.

8 years later, she has the misfortune of meeting Dante again and its not a surprise that she still hates him after all these years. Their attraction is instantaneous. But he thinks she is a gold-digger after his young brother's money. A little investigation reveals to him who she really is.

Dante is arrogant and domineering when he is not a judgmental jerk . He uses blackmail and threats to get what he wants. Near the end, he has a not quite successful character transplantation. But I m glad to say that, when he discovers that all these years he had wronged Beth, he doesn't hesitate to grovel and ask for her forgiveness. But a little grovel at the end didn't help my sky- high blood pressure.. much.

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## Caro says

Ella estuvo presa un año y medio porque unos narcos le pusieron una trampa. El abogado que la manda a la cárcel, no sólo por pruebas sino por puro prejuicio, es el protagonista de la novela.

\*Sighs\*

Por lo menos esta autora no decayó en ningún momento, sus heroínas siempre fueron esa mezcla de mujer que querés matar y a la vez le tenés lástima. Todo lo contrario a Lynne Graham, que viene en picada desde hace mucho.

Este tipo de historias, generalmente, terminan en Caso Cerrado o en Investigation Discovery. No puedo imaginar una protagonista que sufra tanto, el aborto del final es totalmente innecesario y las últimas páginas parecen hechas a las apuradas porque ya no quedaba espacio. Pésimo plot.

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## Karen says

Worst. Hero. Ever.

If I could truly hate a fictional man, this'd be the one.

He steals over a year of her life by prosecuting her in a case where she was pretty obviously set up. When they see each other again, he's attracted to her, but threatens to ruin her life and the lives of INNOCENT people she cares for unless she stays away from his half-brother. Never mind that they weren't even dating or anything.

In the act of intimidation, he forces himself on her. Does she give in? Yes, but AFTER she tries to push him away several times. Pretty borderline - or beyond.

In his rush to take her, he not only finds out that she's a virgin, he also 'forgets' to use protection - so she ends up pregnant.

So now comes the blackmail... 'I'll sue for full custody if you don't marry me'. ugh.

After a miscarriage, they go their separate ways. He attends some sort of alumni dinner, where he finds out that the boy who set up the innocent teenage girl turned out to be guilty all along, and has now confessed to the dirty deed - almost 10 years later.

THEN this a-hole realizes she's not the horrible person he first knew, and he goes back to her - heart in hand. AND SHE TAKES HIM BACK!?

Ugh. I can't believe I read this whole book.

I'm sure it suits some readers, but definitely not me.

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### **Ada says**

Por qué cinco, porque es de esas historias que te hacen ir en montaña rusa, quieres gritar, reír, llorar, volver a reír y suspirar cuando todo acaba, y aun así no dudarías en volver a subirte en ella, si, es una historia romántica pero es muy buena, quizás es un cliché Harlequin, dramas, amenazas, amor, odio, pero me encanto.

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### **Roub says**

it would have been a 5 star for me if there had been more groveling in the end. beth should have been depressed and not ready to take him back. that would have put him in his place and served him as a good lesson for jumping to conclusions and thinking cheaply of others. that apart, it was a formidable book..never got boring and had the right pace. cute one:-)

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### **StMargarets says**

Oh, dear. Talk about tepid. The set up was fine. Hero is a hot shot lawyer who put the framed-on-drug-charges heroine away for three years. She got out after 18 months, changed her name and hair color and went on with her life. Four years later she runs into the hero again at his half-brother's party. He doesn't remember her, but he's so attracted he dumps his fiancée and runs a background check on her. He realizes who she is - so in order to keep his half-brother safe he threatens to expose her.

So far so good. Threats are good. Blackmail is better. Hatred and lust check and check.

And then . . .

Virgin heroine has sex with him - this is after two meetings and the hero being nothing but insulting. Sorry - no one has that much pull.

And here are the rest of the shocking events. All shocks are sarcastic.

Heroine is pregnant- shock.

Heroine doesn't want money or marriage from the H - shock.

Heroine marries hero - shock.  
Heroine has miscarriage - shock  
Heroine sends hero away - shock  
Hero finds out heroine was innocent - double shock.  
Hero grovels - I can't even be sarcastic shocked because his grovel was so lame.  
Heroine forgives and is full of joy - shock.  
Baby epilogue - shock.

I know I'm a jaded HP reader, but come on. Half of the fun is watching the heroine stand firm against a railroading alpha who has finally met his match. Not here - the heroine is a lamb to slaughter the minute she went to bed with him. She didn't even hold his guilt over his head at the end.

Usually JB can write a lot of intense emotions but not in this story. Even the drama of the miscarriage was understated. Guess I'll re-read some of her vintage stuff to get my angst and revenge fix.

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### **Christina (SteepedinBooks) says**

Why did I stick with this one until the end? Why? This was time I will never get back and it was wasted on this blackmailing, sexist, asshole pig of a hero!

First, he helps get her sent to prison for something she obviously didn't do. Then he treats her like crap when he runs into her again, threatening her and the people she cares most about just so she will stay away from his brother. She agrees to move away so he will leave her alone, but he doesn't leave her alone! She tries to kick him out of her apartment and he won't leave! She tells him to leave her alone and not to touch her and he forces a kiss on her! She tells him to stop and he doesn't. I won't even call what happened sex (the word I'm looking for here is rape) because she clearly gave in because he was pressuring her, kept threatening and intimidating her. Afterwards, she again tells him to leave her alone and that she never wants to see him again.

Guess what? He doesn't listen to her then either! He tracks her down a few weeks later, demanding that she stop everything she's doing so she can take a pregnancy test. When it's positive, he coerces her into marriage, using the pregnancy and her past prison sentence as leverage over her. For some freaking reason, she says yes to this blackmailing excuse for a human being.

Later, she loses the baby, which she actually wanted and is understandably shocked, depressed, and she pushes him away. Finally, finally! He listens to what she says and he leaves her - to deal with her anger, disappointment, and grief at the loss of her child alone. Yeah, cause that's what you do when you really love someone - you leave them in the middle of a tragedy because you got butthurt that she wasn't letting you walk all over her anymore.

Anyway, after he leaves her, he finds out that she really, really was innocent of the crime she went to prison for (Can't just believe what your wife tells ya, huh? No, you gotta hear it from some random person at a conference, so it must be true!) and rushes to tell her how wrong and sorry he was for misjudging her and for all the time she spent in prison because of him, sorry for the way he treated her when he met her again, everything, blah, blah, blah he's so very sorry and he really, really loves her and he doesn't deserve her (damned straight!) and will she please, oh, please take him back? And she just looks at him and is like "ok".

And I'm like:

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### **Jenny says**

Loved the angst and the chemistry between hero and heroine. My only problem was the ending was too short. They deserved more happiness after what they went through especially poor heroine!

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### **bookjunkie says**

Initially, the plot sounded similar to *The Judas Kiss* with the h wrongly sent to prison after being set up as a drug dealer and the H was responsible for putting her away. I was rubbing my hands because this setup just screams with the promise of angst. That other book, the *Judas Kiss*, was seriously a trainwreck of crazy with a heroine completely obsessed with getting revenge. She got plastic surgery and went straight for him after her release; she made him fall in love with her and got engaged and then faked her abduction and torture to drive him crazy, LOL wow I'm remembering just how insane it was.

Anyway! This story was much more restrained, with the h moving on with her life and just trying to put everything behind her. TBH, I preferred this approach. She wasn't eaten up with bitterness or thoughts of revenge, she was practical and did very well for herself. It was a nice change from the usual Harlequin heroine who's down on her luck and needs the H to sweep her away into a life of luxury. Beth (Jane before she changed her name) is actually successful and living comfortably, having worked hard to erase her past and make a good life for herself. Yay, go girl! I liked this heroine a lot, her interactions with the H were measured and cautious. I didn't find her to be more of a pushover than necessary for the story to move along.

Dante was aite. I mean, he was a jerk because he was the lawyer who put our nice innocent girl behind bars for 3 years, but I thought he groveled pretty well after he found out, and I'm like a connoisseur of romance hero grovels, so you can trust me that it was decent. He wasn't overly hateable, relatively speaking compared to other Harlequin heroes.

The reason the book didn't get more stars is because first, even though he groveled nicely, I wish Beth made him work for it more. Would it kill ya to make him show some walk behind the talk? Second, I thought it ended too quickly. I was invested pretty heavily by the end, and then... It's like hitching a ride and getting rudely dropped off a few blocks away from my destination. It wrapped up nicely, I *guess*, with a pat little bow and all, but it was just too quick.

Lastly, it under-delivered on the angst. There were a couple of titillating hints of how Beth's prison time traumatized her, like her claustrophobia and how she ALMOST GOT SHANKED when she first got there, but nothing really developed on that end. I guess it makes sense cos she was trying to move on and not dwell, but it would've made some good emotional scenes and gotten Dante to really wallow in suffering. I'm here for the emotional wreckage, why would you skimp on such juicy material! :(

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