



## Notorious Angel

*Jennifer Blake*

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*All is fair in love...*

Eleanora returns home to New Orleans as heroine of an ill-fated military invasion of Central America, angel of mercy to the wounded Americans in Nicaragua, and widow of a Spanish grandee. She is wealthy, a privileged condesa. But in the war-torn land she left behind, she was the mistress of an officer who thought her a camp follower, one who must never guess the secret she holds in her heart.

Colonel Grant Farrell learned respect for tempestuous, red-haired Eleanora the hard way, by losing her to a man who valued her more. Though the lady has reason to despise him, he will follow her into the jaws of hell to taste her kiss one last time....

## **Notorious Angel Details**

Date : Published November 17th 2012 by Steel Magnolia Press (first published 1977)

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Author : Jennifer Blake

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## From Reader Review Notorious Angel for online ebook

### WhiskeyintheJar/Kyraryker says

FREEBIE!

Free right now on Amazon! Another one of my favs is free and I want the whole world to know :)

Amazon Link

\*This was originally published in 1977 so beware but I also reread it last year and still shamelessly loved it, bodice ripping and all :)

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### Marcy Clay says

#### Historical Romance and a good stoty

This was better than many of the romances I've read. It is based on real events. General William Walker and his army presided in Nicaragua. The heroine followed her brother there after he sold the family home to fight with Walker. The author writes well. Although there are intimate scenes, she describes them suggestively and gracefully, without having to use blatant language. I would like read more by this author.

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### Regan Walker says

4 and 1/2 Stars - Unusual and Exciting Bodice Ripper Set in Nicaragua

I struggled with my review of this one only because for much of the story the "hero" appeared the villain and the heroine weak, not my favorite combination, but the second half of the tale (which I think the best) is different. I would give the first half 4 stars and the second half 5 stars—and there is a great ending that will bring tears to your eyes.

Set in Nicaragua in Central America during the years 1855-1857, this is the story of Eleanora Colette Villars from an aristocratic New Orleans family who, because of her brother's folly, loses her home and ends up following her brother to Nicaragua where he has joined the mercenaries serving William Walker, an American who is trying to take over the country.

Colonel Grant Farrell, head of Walker's private military, using her brother as hostage, forces Eleanora, an innocent, to pose as his mistress. Then he rapes her and holds her prisoner in his home, without even clothes to wear. When she has the chance to escape, she does not take it (this more than once). She even begins to make excuses for the colonel (he's a half-breed Apache with a poor childhood). It reminded me of the Stockholm syndrome, where hostages feel sympathy toward their captors.

Once her brother is released and she is free, Eleanora doesn't tell her brother she was raped and, when her brother wounds the colonel in a duel, she returns to Colonel Farrell's house to tend his wound. While tending

the colonel, Eleanora introduces herself as his mistress, apparently resigned to the role. (He has such a low view of women he will not offer her marriage).

Impressed with Eleanora's medical knowledge, the local doctor invites her to tend the wounded American mercenaries. She takes on the task and, for her valiant efforts, is dubbed "the colonel's angel." But she has rivals, the mistress of William Walker, and the former mistress of Colonel Farrell, both of whom seek Eleanora's demise.

In an intricately woven plot, Eleanora rises to every challenge as she is rescued from peril only to face further hardships. The scenes as they tramp from Granada to the coast through the jungles and rivers are very well done, and very realistic. The characters are richly developed, too. (Her savior, Luis, was one of my favorite characters and one could not help but feel his pain for his love for Eleanora.)

The writing is excellent. Blake really makes you feel like you're in the hot, dusty streets of Nicaragua in a tumultuous time. I could suggest you might want a map, too. Blake has obviously done much research for the book and it is seamlessly woven into the story. (There is also a worthy Author's Note at the end that gives you more.) It is all told from the heroine's perspective as were Blake's other early novels (NOTORIOUS ANGEL was first published in 1977).

This one will capture you, I promise.

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A few notes: The eBook cover has the heroine with blonde hair; it is actually red. And this is part of Blake's Love and Adventure series, part 2 (SURRENDER IN MOONLIGHT, NOTORIOUS ANGEL and GOLDEN FANCY).

## **Vicki says**

### **A wonderful story with lots of adventure**

This story has do much detail about a time if war. With spying and blackmail and dangers all around a man and a woman find each other. It was a very compelling story.

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## **Hazel McEllis says**

### **INHALT**

New Orleans, 1855. Eleanora Villars geht erzwungenermaßen mit ihrem Bruder Jean-Paul nach Nicaragua, da er sich als Soldat verpflichtet hat und auf Ländereien hofft. Als sie dort ankommen, stellt sich jedoch heraus, dass Jean-Paul betrogen worden war: Er und Eleanora stehen plötzlich mittellos da. Eleanoras fragwürdiger Umgang führt schließlich dazu, dass Colonel Grant Farrell sie für eine Mätresse hält - und sie kurzerhand mit zu sich nimmt...

### **MEINUNG**

Ich möchte die Romane von Jennifer Blake bisher. Diesen Roman habe ich zuletzt vor etlichen Jahren gelesen und konnte mich kaum noch an die Geschichte erinnern.

Beim Lesen störte mich vor allem der hohe Anteil politischer Zusammenhänge, ehrlich gesagt. Für mich waren die vielen Beschreibungen politischer Zusammenhänge einfach nichts.

Daneben empfand ich die "Romanze" zwischen Eleanora und Grant irgendwie zu ... nebensächlich. Wenn man bedenkt, wie sie sich kennenlernen bzw zum ersten Mal intimer kennenlernen und wann und unter welchen Umständen sie sich daraufhin treffen, dann finde ich das Ganze fast schon melodramatisch aufgebauscht. So richtig gefiel mir das eigentlich nicht...

Richtig gut gefallen haben mir allerdings die Geschehnisse mit Louis! ? Der Charakter war mir sehr sympathisch und eigentlich hätte ich mir ein happy end von Eleanora mit Louis gewünscht. ^^ Und ich glaube, der Roman liefert viele Passagen, um "zwischen den Zeilen" zu lesen - das möchte ich auch. :)

## FAZIT

Wer historische Liebesromane mag, bei denen Politik einen wichtigen Teil einnimmt und die nicht so "seicht" daherkommen, wird mit "Ruchloser Engel" vermutlich sehr glücklich. :)

Ich habe festgestellt, dass mir der historische Background in dem Fall nicht so sehr zusagte. Deshalb kann ich "nur" 2 ?? im Sinne von "It was okay" vergeben. :)

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## **FeliciaKaren says**

“Mattered?” he said in a strange voice, his dark eyes resting on the rose flush of her cheeks. “No more than losing my heart and soul. You are the beat of my blood and the air I breathe. You are my greatest strength and most feared weakness; the only joy I have found, and the only pain. I love you, Eleanora.”

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## **Caroline says**

### **Wonderful!**

This is the kind of Jennifer Blake novel I grew up reading! I am so happy to have the pleasure of reading this book once more. Her newer novels are politically correct, while this one burns with the honesty of the era it portrays. It may not sit well with some, but I adore it!

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## **Nenia ? Queen of Literary Trash, Protector of Out-of-Print Gems, Khaleesi of Bodice Rippers, Mother of Smut, the Unrepentant, Breaker of Convention ? Campbell says**

This book is the same as the NOTORIOUS ANGEL you can buy in the Kindle store, as published by Jennifer Blake. Jennifer Blake is the pseudonym of Patricia Maxwell. I've tried to figure out whether there's a rhyme or reason to which books get paired with which name and as far as I can tell, it's just an age-thing. Older books were published under this author's real name, and then all later books and rereleases under the pseudonym, Jennifer Blake. I'm obsessed with Jennifer Blake, okay? I built up quite a collection of her work because she often makes them free in the Kindle store, but I'd never actually *read* any of them, apart from some of her Gothic romances. A few months ago, I decided to try one of her bodice rippers, and I've been hooked ever since.

Her books can be hit or miss but when she nails the formula down, Jennifer Blake/Patricia Maxwell's bodice-rippers are among some of the best and are as addictive as an entire bag of flavored Lays potato chips. You can't stop at just one; you keep going until the bag is empty. I liked this one almost as much as my favorite of hers, ROYAL SEDUCTION, which probably isn't surprising because it has a lot of similarities to ROYAL SEDUCTION.

NOTORIOUS ANGEL starts off a bit rockily with the sibling duo, Jean-Paul and Eleanora selling their home in New Orleans to their relations and leaving for Nicaragua. Jean-Paul plans to become a "soldier-colonist" under William Walker, actual white dude who marched into Latin America citing Manifest Destiny and tried to create slave colonies. Oooops.

While in Nicaragua, Eleanora, as a single woman, catches the eye of one of the Colonels there, a cruel man nicknamed "Iron Warrior" named Grant Farrell, who assumes that she's a lady of the night. Despite a moral sanctimoniousness that would make Claude Frollo from *Hunchback of Notre Dame* proud, he finds himself attracted to Eleanora despite himself because obviously. He ends up using her brother against her in order to blackmail her into making an appearance as his mistress for one night to appease his boss, but to Eleanora's horror, he intends on consummating that relationship, too.

This being a bodice-ripper, the first couple scenes between the hero and heroine are not consenting. If that bothers you, you probably shouldn't read this book, as the hero is pretty cruel about it, even going so far as to imprison the heroine in his rooms and deny her clothes. The hero in ROYAL SEDUCTION was cruel, too, but he had better lines. Grant is more terrifying, which makes sense, because he's a high-ranking official in an oppressive martial regime who also heads the firing squad and doesn't shirk from duty, no matter how unpleasant. It is during one of these naked incarceration sessions that her relationship with the other man in this book, a flamboyant soldier named Luis, starts to blossom and they form a sexually-charged friendship that creates all sorts of tension with the highly jealous Grant and comes to head later in the book when he ends up breaking her free from jail.

In some ways, this book reminds me a lot of SWEET SAVAGE LOVE by Rosemary Rogers, with some key differences. Grant doesn't tomcat around. He ditches the woman who was previously angling for his

attentions as soon as he gets his hands on Eleanora and remains faithful to her over the course of the novel. Eleanora also doesn't stray, although she is sorely tempted at one point and nearly does, but because of the circumstances, you can really understand why and it's heart-wrenching rather than frustrating. I also think that the action scenes in here are really well done and even when the hero and heroine are separated (and they are for a significant portion in the last quarter of the book), I was still very interested in the events going on. There is a flight through a jungle that had me gnawing on my nails figuratively, desperate to see what kinds of horrors were going to go down.

Eleanora is also a much better character than Rosemary Rogers's Ginny. She actually has a female friend in this book, who is an actress, and this friend plays a significant role in the narrative. There are two women rivals in this book, both women of color, both also mistresses, but I feel like Eleanora's thoughts towards them - particularly later in the book - were more evolved than you typically see or expect from novels of this type. Both Juanita and Nina Maria were fascinating characters; I really enjoy seeing ambitious women portrayed in fiction. Eleanora wasn't quite ambitious but she could be cunning, and even cruel, and I really liked that, as well.

I bumped this one up the old priority list because I remembered one of my friends, Whiskeyinthejar, telling me that this was her favorite Jennifer Blake book. I can see why. It's an epic, well-written romance featuring a cruel hero with a hell of a redemption arc, an interesting heroine who goes through some very terrible things and strange adventures, and a really rich and vibrant setting. If you think you can stomach the dubious consent, you should definitely pick up this book. It's action-packed and darkly romantic and breathlessly exciting and I'm already planning my next Blake read.

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4 to 4.5 stars

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### **Cindy Woods says**

#### **Very good**

I HIGHLY recommend this very interesting and well written book. I rarely have read a fiction book where the plot is so well constructed interspersed with factual historical account. This is a romance that begins on a very fragile foundation..but it has the feel of truth to it...in other words, it is a believable story. The relationship between Eleanor and Grant is stressed from the outset, and Eleanor is understandably enraged and bitter by her circumstances. As the relationship evolves, this author does a credible and the difficult task of turning those enraged feelings into love....not easy to do. I definitely learned much about William Walker's campaign in Nicaragua. I plan to read more by this author on the future.

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### **Fera Flies Free says**

Wow, kayaknya ini baru pertama kalinya deh aku bacah Regency Romance yang settingnya selain di Inggris atau Scotland atau Irish, melainkan di Amerika. Sedikit terbawa sama keadaan perang-perangnya padahal aku jarang banget malah mungkin ini pertama kalinya, baca historical romance yang berhubungan dengan perang civil, bukan perang yang antar klan-klan kayak di Inggris sama Scotland gitu ya, tapi perang antar manusia memperebutkan daerah kekuasaan seperti kota atau negara, dan bukan atas nama tanah atau klan. Feel-nya lumayan beda banget. Aku menikmati bacanya sih, walo yang kuharapkan dari setelah baca sinopsisnya ternyata bukan fokus utama ceritanya dan cuma terjadi di akhir-akhir buku. Tetapi 3.5 bintang soalnya okelah~ :D haha

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## **Misfit says**

**Review edited 12/1.** I pasted the wrong quote yesterday.

A couple of **slightly spoilerish** cautionary warnings before I get into the review itself. 1) the description on the back jacket is very deceiving since it sounds like the bulk of the story takes place in New Orleans, but those events take place at the very end of the story. The second cautionary warning is a reminder that this book was first published in the late 70s, a period where the rape/forced seduction trope was fairly common, and this book is no exception. I understand there are readers who draw a hard line in the sand with this, and if you are one of those readers (nothing wrong with that), then this book is probably not the book for you.

That was rather long-winded, so I'll try to be brief. Basic set-up is gently raised Eleanora Colette Villars and her younger (and very foolish) brother are pretty much out of funds. Her brother signs up for William Walker's military campaign in Central America in the hopes of gaining land grants. He also foolishly lets himself get swindled, so they're pretty much down on their luck when they arrive in Nicaragua. Colonel Grant Farrell doesn't realize Eleanora is a lady, and he...well...I won't go into details to avoid spoiling, but it isn't pretty.

Complications abound, and take the reader on a rather wild journey. Duels, dirty dealings, spies and counter-spies, a mad escape through the jungles of South America, a prison camp, death by firing squad, you name it, Eleanora goes through it.

*“Forgive me, gentlemen,” Eleanora said, “but I think I ought to warn you that I do not automatically go to the victor.”*

Thumbs up to Blake for getting her older books back in print in the digital age, as well as for the detailed author's notes on what events and people were real and who were fictional. An interesting footnote in history, I hadn't realized what a hot-bed of intrigue Central America was at that time.

My favorite quote, and from the end so might be a bit spoilerish, although you always know there's a HEA in a JB book. (view spoiler)

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Sigh...

## **Julia says**

### **Good story, but...**

Not sure how I finished this, but I did. It was somewhat hard to read. Very wordy. For example:

"Glancing around at the elegant room as he walked down it, at the pale-green striped silk walls, white brocade settees, Aubusson carpet in a design of cream and green and rose, and rose velvet drapes, he lifted a brow."

A bit much for me. Lots of skimming. The romantic scenes were very short and not detailed at all (if you catch my meaning). Also, you'd be in a detailed scene and the next paragraph would start in a completely new place, some time later. It should have been a new chapter. Very odd and it happened often. So points for an interesting story, but it could have used a better editor.

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## **KatieV says**

I hesitated between 3 & 4 stars because I like the writing, and the history was rather fascinating. I also loved Eleanor. Blake knows how to write a strong heroine with human flaws. **HOWEVER**, this is the first time when I felt like the h should have ended up with the rival for the H's affection. It was more like a tragedy about the horrors of war, subjugation of the Indian's, and the hypocrisy of a more powerful country coming in to spread 'democracy'. Overall it was very hopeless. Not a feel good read at all.

The love story seemed secondary. The H/h were separated too much. I also thought he let his pride stand in the way FAR too much. Grant (the H) never came after her. She had to make all the concessions. I wasn't real sure why she loved him beyond the sex, but realize people can find themselves loving the wrong person. Luis was so likeable (although tragic and flawed himself). He played the hero much better than Grant did. He also sacrificed MUCH more for the h and was definitely the one who was there when she needed a savior. Grant was too tied up with his insecurities. I know he had a rough childhood, but no one's life is perfect - deal!.

The thing I've loved most about a lot of Blake's heroes is the unbelievable lengths they'll go to in order to get the h back - blackmail, highly morally questionable plots, daring rescues, hijacking the h's wedding etc. Grant did none of this aside from force her to be his mistress in the beginning. After that, he played it safe and waited for her to come to him. Not what I look for in a romance. However, the story was good and I was very emotionally affected. If something you read affects you that much, you have to respect it, even if it doesn't go the way you think it should have.

ETA: Don't listen to the Audible edition. The narrator is horrible. The H sounded like Dudley Do Right and the heroine who was probably 18-20yrs old, sounded like a 40 year old smoker.

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## **Theresa says**

### **Good novel, but flawed.**

Fictional characters are woven into well-researched historical events to provide a story with good characterization, excellent setting and period description and gripping action. Notorious Angel kept me interested from first to last even though I thought the pacing bogged down from time to time.

So why didn't I give it five stars?

As another reviewer mentioned in her very well written reaction to the book, the heroine, Eleanora is held captive and raped by the hero, Grant, very early in the novel and that this kind of event was a familiar trope of 70s-80s romantic literature. However, this sexual encounter isn't the highly romanticized "shy, reluctant-woman-resists-strong-domineering-male-when-she-really-loves-him" encounter. They are virtually strangers, she's a virgin and it's just plain rape, ladies and gentlemen...rape. He justifies his actions because she'd been traveling alone and keeping casual company with a prostitute. Permission to rape by association, if you will.

Yes, I know that women were considered little more than intelligent cattle during the period of this novel (1850s) and that women of that era, conditioned to the dominant preeminence of men, may not have had quite the same reaction as a woman today might. That said, Eleanora's reaction to the rape still troubled me. She seemed to 'get over it' too quickly on her way to falling in love with Grant. It never seemed to be an issue between them and was never mentioned again until later in the novel when a Grant asks her if she betrayed him because of "what he did." Honestly there were many occasions of ill treatment on his part that it's hard to know if he was referring to the rape in that circumstance.

Bottom line: the book is well written, the history is fascinating, and the plotting is gripping. I just couldn't connect with either Eleanora or a Grant and I just wish the whole rape sequence had been left out or treated differently.

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### **Beverly McCall says**

This is one of the books in Jennifer Blake's Love and Adventure Collection. I truly enjoyed this historical romance wherein Blake interweaves historical events into the lives of her fictional characters. The female protagonist is Eleanora Collette Villars of New Orleans. Blake makes her a strong protagonist who is believable because of her sense of loyalty and her flaws.

The setting switches from New Orleans to Nicaragua where our female protagonist lands when she accompanies her brother who enlisted in an ill-fated military invasion of Central America. During the months in Nicaragua, we encounter an American revolutionist (based on a real life person) who leads the war efforts. We suffer with Eleanor as she endures crisis after crisis. Through her efforts as nurse, she earns the title of angel of mercy because of her treatment of wounded soldiers.

The male protagonist is an American Colonel named Grant Farrell. He is the second in command and takes Eleanor under his protection and in the process she becomes his mistress. Their relationship is a lively one which at times has very tense moments.

The secondary characters are well written and play pivotal roles in the rise and fall of the plot. One such character is Farrell's friend, Luis, a Spanish noble who ventures to the New World to escape the sins of his past. When Farrell is away on a military campaign, enemies seize on an opportunity to dispose of Eleanor. Luis comes to her aid and they escape to the tropical jungle. However, they are captured and before his execution, Luis marries Eleanor and provides her with financial security and respectability as well as his title. Blake does not end this tale here, but, throws in a few more twists. You have to read the book to find out more.

