



Escape

Maria McKenzie

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Daniel and Lori love each other, yet to live as one in 1856, they must escape from the unyielding society that imprisons them.

Lori was born a slave in North Carolina, yet by chance was raised alongside Daniel in a wealthy abolitionist household. The sudden death of Daniel's mother catapults Lori back into bondage.

Relegated to chattel on a rice plantation, Lori lives in constant fear under the tormenting scrutiny of Daniel's wretched Aunt Lucinda.

After Daniel fails to convince his relatives to free Lori, he is compelled to devise a daring escape. Although a life threatening endeavor for both of them, Lori's freedom is priceless to Daniel, and he's willing to pay such a price for her love.

The Story of the The Unchained Trilogy

Fade to white...Just who do you think you are? Steven Jordan thought he knew, until his grandmother, Selina Manning, threw a grenade that put his identity in question. She reveals a secret: her grandmother was a black woman, born a slave. Yet Selina has lived her entire life as white.

Will Steven ever accept this root hidden beneath his family tree, or choose to leave it buried? Uncertain of what he'll find, he delves into the past to learn where the secret began.

The Unchained Trilogy is an explosive three book series of love, deceit, emotional destruction and in the end, forgiveness. It spans a time period of one hundred and forty two years, with Escape (Book One) opening the series in 1856, and Revelation (Book Three), closing it in 1998. Time does move fast in this family saga, and since there are several years to cover, purposeful time gaps exist to move along the narrative. For a brief overview of the entire trilogy, here's what to expect in every story:

Book I, Escape: The year is 1856. Lori is a black woman, born a slave, but Daniel Taylor, a young abolitionist from a wealthy merchant's family, falls in love with her, and risks his life to help her in a daring escape.

After overcoming torturous trials and challenges, Daniel and Lori have a family. However, their youngest daughter, the beautiful and treacherous Lavinia, chooses to pass as white. But will she ever find true happiness while hiding behind a mask?

Book II, Masquerade: Lavinia runs away from home at age seventeen to pursue a life of decadence as an actress. Married to a powerful showman in New York, Lavinia weaves one lie after another, doing whatever it takes to keep the truth about her "Negro" mother a secret.

Selina Standish, born during her mother Lavinia's second marriage, learns the truth about her ancestry as a young girl. But Selina is convinced by Lavinia never to acknowledge her "Negro blood." However, Selina finds this difficult after meeting her "Negro" relatives, whom she comes to love. Eventually, Selina makes a

choice that binds her heart and troubles her future.

Book III, Revelation: In 1998, one-hundred year old Selina Standish Manning reveals a secret that she's carried for nine decades like a painful chain bound around her heart. Now, near death, Selina tells her family the truth about her black ancestry.

Her relatives are surprised by this revelation, and her grandson, Steven, struggles to accept that black blood courses through his veins. One moment he's an average white guy of European descent, and now this! Despite Steven's initial misgivings regarding the secret, he and the rest of his family are eager to hear what Selina has to say, and their lives are forever changed as the past is revealed...

Author's Note

Unchained was conceived in 1998 as I thought about how sad it would have been if my husband and I had known each other 150 years earlier. Then, being an interracial couple, we couldn't have gotten married. The rest of the story snowballed from there, and eventually swelled to over 700 pages! I worked on it off and on until finally completing it in 2008.

After seeing the movie Titanic, I decided to use flashbacks. I originally opened the story in 1998 with Steven learning the secret at the very beginning. Then the narrative moved back in time through flashbacks. However, after letting it sit in my drawer for while, thinking it was too long to do anything with, I decided to turn it into a trilogy. Now flashbacks will only occur in part three. I hope you'll enjoy this ride through time and see how one family faded from black to white!

Maria

Escape Details

Date : Published August 20th 2012 by Maria McKenzie (first published August 19th 2012)

ISBN : 9781477409152

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Format : Paperback 334 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Romance, Historical Romance

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From Reader Review Escape for online ebook

Patty says

looks and sounds awesome cant wait to read it!!

June says

Escape

I got this from Amazon a while back and have been planning on reading for a while. I was surprised by how much I enjoyed the writing and the plot. Just not sure how accurate this novel may have been. Nevertheless there were moments of suspense. This is more about an interracial relationship. My only grouse is that the last third of the book seemed rushed and most of the characters were pretty bland and not nuanced enough. Overall a decent book and I'll be going on with the rest of the series.

Linda Marie Marsh says

This is book one in a series involving a family saga. And it is the love of Lori- a slave, and Daniel- an abolitionist in the 1850's, that starts that story.

I thought it was well-written...I think the author actually cares about the characters she's created...and the reader can't help but get drawn into the book.

The only small drawback is that i did get so involved that i wanted more...i wanted the gaps filled in...a drawback yes, but a compliment to Maria Mckenzie for making the book come to life so much so that i felt that need!

Karen says

really good book!

Yashari Glenn says

Nice story about love and faith

This book is not only a book about slavery, but one of trusting in the Lord and love for each other. I really enjoyed the twist towards the end.

Desere says

When you first start to read this book you think OK he loves her and will do anything to free her and be with her for the rest of his life kind of romance book.

That unfortunately is not really the case, the author had a good plot and strong characters. The book interested me enough and overall really had a few pages here and there that were very well written,

Having not read anything by this author before I went in open minded but came up short in the end. The author somewhat ventures of the original path of what she starts out with.

It was a little like one minute I am reading about these two characters in this setting and these circumstances and the next it was ,wait did I just pick up the wrong book .

I do see definite potential for the author to be one of the brilliant authors of our time but I think she needs to consider adding in a little more passion into her work as in the end it felt like I was reading a drama and not a romance.

3/5 star review

Nicole Samuels says

Great Read

This was a great read, I was happy to find out this was one of 3 books. Emotionally charged so be prepared.

Debbi says

3.5 stars. Lori is a slave in the pre-Civil War south. Daniel is the abolitionist nephew of the man who owns her. They are in love and Daniel will do anything to free Lori and take her for his wife. This process takes up most of book #1 in the "Unchained" trilogy. It's not like most "plantation" stories as it only begins there. The couple face obstacles as you can imagine being an interracial during that time period. The only thing I really didn't like was the amount of time that the author skips at times. At one point in this book so many years had gone by one time Daniel and Lori were living in California with three mostly grown children you never heard of.

Terri says

The theme of the book.....a slave women runs away with a white man with abolitionist sympathies seemed like a good read. At the beginning of the book we are introduced to the plantation slave environment. I felt once Daniel and Lori decide to leave the plantation and run away to Ohio that the storyline is expressed forward without any substance. The writing is a bit simplistic and many details are omitted. This is the first book of a trilogy. I don't believe I will continue on with the last two books.

Genevieve Woods says

Happy I read the reviews

I have just discovered Mrs McKenzie and I love it. But I must say her into earning of the time gaps and the reviewers despair because of them, prepared me so I was ready for the next-generation. I loved it.

Maria says

Escape is a romance novel, but it's no escapist fairy tale. The obstacles that Daniel and Lori have to face to be together are daunting to say the least. Lori's a slave and Daniel's a free man with abolitionist leanings. Their fight to be together makes compelling reading although some of the obstacles they face are quite horrifying. Yet the book is a joy to read. What warms the heart is Daniel and Lori's simple love for each other and their strong trust in God. It literally shines through Maria's writing. It's not a fairy tale read, yet it manages to be realistic and hopeful at the same time.

What's horrifying for me to read as a Christian is how many so-called Christian people used the Bible to justify slavery and the abuse of people of African-American origin. It is good to know that there were Christians then who truly believed that there is no discrimination in God's eyes.

Well researched historical novels like this are truly educational; they can teach us much about the mistakes of the past. Even in the world today there are people who dare not fall in love with each other for fear of dreadful and horrible retribution.

A very simple, compelling and historically authentic read.

I must add that this book is a romantic story, but it is also part of a bigger, wider, family saga spanning several generations. If you walk into this expecting a category romance with the de rigeur happy ending, you will be disappointed. It is actually part of a trilogy THE UNCHAINED TRILOGY. The story goes beyond the happy ending and we see our main characters dealing with the reality of an inter-racial marriage and the harsh realities of raising mixed race children in a society where the laws may have been changed to suit the times, but where people find it difficult to let go of their prejudices and narrow minded tendencies. Like I said earlier, it is an enjoyable read but not escapist fiction. Yet the author manages to give us a slice of grim life without destroying our sense of hope. There were no hot love scenes although we knew our characters were having a sexual relationship. But the truth is, such scenes were unnecessary. We don't see our friends and neighbours in their bedrooms, nor would we want to. As I said, it's not a category romance. But it's still romantic and beautiful.

Teresa says

Could not keep my attention. Author may have some goof potential but needs to work on developing her story northern and sticking to what the began to develop as the story line. Be definitive not all over the place . Needs some help but there I'd potential either openness and clarity in the writing.

Tynika says

A Good Read!!!

I'm a sucker for forbidden love stories. Lori & Daniel's love was unconditional and it only intensified with each obstacle they faced. I love that the ending of this book took an unsuspecting turn with Lavinia's runaway marriage to Vernon. I can't wait to read part 2.
