



Spoils of War

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Jecks Cordant, High General of the Kabarian army was used to life being a certain way. Jecks knew things didn't tend to change when you were at the top of your career. He was wrong. In one moment, because of one small letter, his entire world tilted. Everything changed.

Being forced into a marriage he didn't want, with a prince he had nothing in common with, Jecks watched his life crumble around him. Yet, he could do nothing other than go along with the plans for the sake of peace and the thousands of lives at risk in both empires.

Calling on the support of his friends, he makes the journey to meet his fiancé. Along the way, he meets a man he never expected to find— one he could fall in love with. Battling the enemies intent on stopping the peace deal from going ahead, and his own heart, Jecks steels himself for what the future holds— a life of loneliness and regrets.

Forced to confront feelings he can't afford to explore, and fighting to bring peace to both lands, Jecks will stand together with his men and fight for what is right, even if it's sacrificing his own feelings. His duty to Kabaria is more important than the love of a man.

With enemies out to stop them, and danger meeting them around every corner, Jecks must learn to trust while ignoring the growing emotions he shouldn't feel. With their goal in sight, Jecks knows he must honor the duty given him, but once he arrives at the castle, he finds his problems have only begun.

Spoils of War Details

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From Reader Review Spoils of War for online ebook

Nocturnalux says

Ostensibly an effort in the fantasy genre, **Spoils** has little to no world building rendering virtually everything generic and bland. This includes the political intrigue that makes little sense and gets little attention as it is. Instead the focus of the novel is almost entirely on the romance between the leads, two seasoned warriors who act precisely like teenage boys. To have an idea of how inane it all gets, heavy swearing is very common and time and time ago it will turn into sexy talk. This would not be as grating if it was done sparingly but it is all over the story.

It is a wasted opportunity. M/m as a genre has an annoying tendency to simply reproduce very normative pairings that boil down to 'manly gyy' and 'fey guy', a dynamic that needs not necessarily be shallow but unfortunately is often a combination of clichés. But **Spoils of War** actually goes out of its way to establish romantic interests who are not contrasting in terms of body type, for once we have two strong military types, only to turn them into utter saps.

The dialogue, when it is not comprised of senseless swearing punning on sex talk, is full of flowery, absurd, long winded declarations of love. Which is annoying in itself but doubles up as an inconsistency in the inner logic of the novel as Jecks, our lead, is described as a man of few words.

But if there are moments of inconsistency that undermine the story at a fundamental level, there is a perfect confluence between the narrator's incessant praise of the main character and the rest of the cast's incessant praise of the main character. The several minor characters that are virtually interchangeable take turns reminding the reader about how amazing Jecks is, how self-sacrificing, how generous, how brave, etc etc. Even characters who have just met Jecks go on these spiels.

The constant banter between subordinates and Jecks adds another layer of artificiality to it all. The secondary cast seems to be self-aware that they are indeed background characters and true to form, are extremely interested in the main couple's relationship. They also act like giggly pre-teens regarding sex. Despite their all being soldiers and having lived in barracks and seen war, they still behave around anything remotely sexual with blubbing terrible.

The romance between Jecks, high general who is being shipped off to marry the prince of a rival kingdom to put an end to the war, and Dorane, a commander of said rival kingdom, is both rushed and drawn out. It is supposed to be forbidden love since Jecks is too honorable to cheat after marriage so a lot of their interaction consists of 'we can't do this', 'but you're so hot', 'no, you're so hot'.

The plot twists itself to provide scenarios that force them into close proximity and nakedness. At one point the novel reaches an epiphany of unintentional self-awareness when Dorane comments that fate is conspiring to bring them together. What could border on meta only brings into relief just how contrived the whole mess is.

Add to this the extremely one note villains that revel in being evil because they can and even go into the trademark explanation of their motives because what are bad guy if they don't fully reveal their plot, in detail, before getting defeated?

There are also twists that anyone can see a mile off, a character that is introduced and then almost dropped entirely from the narrative without an explanation, acrobatic sex involving an injured party and a resolution

that is rushed and exploited for extra faux heroics.

But not all is lost, this novel taught me a valuable lesson:
(view spoiler)

Tatiana says

DNF at 26%

Zero world building. Uninspiring writing. Cardboard characters.

Theresa says

Chick-with-a-dick lit.

Eleeze says

DNF at 24%
Completely uninspired.

Juxian says

Gorgeous cover but the book itself is seriously meh. With a blurb like that, you'd expect a lot more passion - but no. Characters have no personality. Everything flat and drab. DNF at 32%.

Achim says

2.5

There are fantasy stories that draw you in with their detailed world building, then there are those that caputre you with authentic characters and then there are those promising an interesting plot. The start of Spoils of War made me believe I'm reading a plot driven story because I couldn't see any real effort in world building and the characters felt a bit one-dimensional but there was the promise of a political intrigue and I would be quite okay with that.

Strangely it turned out to be some kind of character dominated story. While those characters still were one-dimensional and I didn't always saw the logic in their action at least there was a great chemistry between the MCs and I could believe in the friendship to some of the supporting characters. The political intrigue however just imploded. If you create your villain as some kind of comic book character without depth then at least make him cunning and evil and not only greedy and simple.

And Ms. Walker did again what also made her Dragonis series a hard read sometimes: excessive explanations and detailed reasoning in dialogues, not quite as endless as in her series but ...

Christine says

It was a Kindle Unlimited offering, so I thought I'd take a chance.

In order to make peace, Kabarian Gen. Jecks Cordant is pressured into agreeing to marry the heir to the throne of the enemy Tefausltians. As he journeys to meet his intended, he encounters Dorane, a respected adversary, who's been ordered to escort Jecks to the Tefausltian capital for the wedding. As Jecks and Dorane travel, they grow closer, and soon find themselves falling hard for each other; but even as Jecks yearns for more with Dorane, he knows he can't turn away from his duty to marry. However, soon they realize that they're victims of a plot that puts their lives, and peace, in jeopardy. Can Jecks survive long enough to find the future he wants so desperately?

I was hoping to like this book a lot more. The blurb sort of reminded me of C.S. Pacat's amazing "Captive Prince" trilogy, but sadly, the resemblance ended there..

The characters were just so very....meh. There's Saint Jecks, who's the Best General Ever..he loves his country, he's devoted to his soldiers, and even cares about his enemies. He's even prepared to marry one if that's what it takes to end the war. Yes, he's the hero -- he's supposed to be a good guy -- but all that saintly self-sacrifice just got a little old. It's hard to even see Dorane -- at least until close to the end when you learn more about him. There's absolutely no sexual tension at all -- so even when the guys get together, it's pretty tepid.

There are plot holes aplenty -- there didn't seem to be much attention paid to all the details surrounding the Big Conspiracy. And..the villains are outed and dealt with much too quickly.

There's absolutely no world-building at all -- so it's hard to tell if this is Sci-Fi, Fantasy, or what. Maybe it's like "Lord of the Rings," where it's just a place with lots of soldiers and fantastic beasts who can fly....except without the amazingly hot Aragorn....

So...lots of reasons for just 2 stars.

Vfields Don't touch my happy! says

I hate it when a book comes out everyone has one opinion of it and I end up having another. Spoils of War by Hannah Walker was not one of my favorite reads. In fact two minor characters Pasha & Hawk were far more entertaining than the characters I was supposed to love in love with. I didn't like the witty banter combined with the lack of world building for me were completely off putting. I am bummed out!

~☆~Døni(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~☆~ says

~3.5~

The world building was sparse and the political intrigue too easily solved, but the romance burned bright and hot. Jecks and Dorian had scorching chemistry.

I enjoyed the banter between the soldiers and the rather creative insults. I'm dying to call someone a "thrice-poxed fucker."

Daesy says

****Grammar****

The good thing is that you can always count on Hannah Walker to have a fluffy and steamy read. She writes well and also if she uses always too many pages to say one simple thing, in the end I always love her characters.

Jecks is the high General of the Kabarian army, he got his position only with hard work and at only 35 years he is one of the most powerful men in his country. He would do anything for his people and is for this reason that he accepts his King's order to marry the prince of the rival kingdom. If this will stop the impending war and bring peace, Jecks Cordant will gladly follow the order.

The only good thing is that he doesn't have to say goodbye to some lover, bcs for too many years he never had time to be in a stable relationship. All this changes when he meets the men that will escort him to his future husband.

Dorane is chief, or to better say, he was chief of the Wardens, an high military trained group of men that protects the royal family. His job was to explain the clauses of the peace treaty and then go back to his country, but when he heard that Jecks' king was giving only 3 men to the Genaral as escort he couldn't do it. The treaty is too important and nothing can happen to the man before he marries the prince. Or at least these are the excuses he makes for himself. He doesn't only want to protect the man bcs he is important, but also bcs when he met the other man's eyes, he felt something he thought was lost to him, passion. Jecks is an incredible man, he is handsome but his mind is the most beautiful thing. During their journey back to Dorane's kingdom, Jecks and Dorane start spending a lot of time together and in the end their attraction is too strong and they end up having sex. There are feelings involved, but both of them know that duty comes before love and when they will reach the capital, they'll end this relationship.

While we see them together, and yes there are a lot of hot scenes, we also see them talk about their past and previous experiences, and Dorane tells to Jecks about his death husband, a man he had loved an lost 10 years before (when he was probably 25/24 since Jecks and him have the same age)for a stupid illness, something that could have been cured if his husband had called for a doctor. For many years he had been angry with himself and his family and only then he had understood that the one he was mostly angry with had been his husband for not caring enough about himself and for not asking for help in time.

After the loss, he had been reckless, joining the Wardens and the most dangerous missions they had had for him. He had been sure that he would die on a battlefield like Jecks had thought many times, alone and without love left to give. All this before he had met Jecks.

They found in each other the perfect partner, but at the wrong time.

To make this shorter....

Dorane has some secrets (I already was sure about his identity), Jecks knows he is hiding something, but at the same time he knows that nothing will change the fact that he is soon going to marry the prince....he is

wrong.

We find out that Dorane is the oldest son of the king, that he gave up his right to the throne after the loss of his husband and that he is now regretting it bcs now his decision is biting him in the ass, making his brother, now the rightful successor, be the one to marry the man he loves.

Luckily with this author you know that the angst is not going to last too much.

The king was a good ruler and an awesome father and in the end he will help his sons, both of them since Dorane's younger brother was also in love with another man and didn't want to marry Jecks.

When the news of Jecks' king death arrives, our general is called back to his country to fight for the throne.

Now there is something I want to say about this part of the story. I liked the book but the action part was really too short. All the book was about the journey to the capital, where Jecks was going to marry the prince, and few pages were left to the main story. The "battle" for the throne, never happens, all is resolved too easily and yes Dorane gets shoot while protecting Jecks but we already know he is going to be fine. The bad guys are captured, thrown to jail and then 2 months later, in the epilogue, we hear that they have been executed.

We don't know if someone else was helping them, if there are more enemies lurking in the shadows and we can just presume that Dorane's brother is back being betrothed to the man he loves.

I wanted to know more....Idk, the book missed something and sure as hell the author had enough pages to fix this but didn't...anyway....

In the epilogue we see our MCs being happy and in love and going at it like rabbits. Jecks is now king and Dorane is his husband and together they are gonna rule Kabarian. Finally there is peace.

Said all this, I wanna add that I found Dorane and Jecks so damn hot together and I loved the fact that both didn't have a problem on being top or bottom depending on the mood.

{ "...I'm the only King that will ever fuck you, the only man who will ever fuck you. You. Are. Mine." Jecks snarled. }

{ "Yes, My King," Dorane groaned and pushed his pants down, turning to brace against the wall. "Hurry the fuck up." }

{ "Fuck, I love this. I love you."..."I love you too." Dorane tipped his head back and to the side, managing to give Jecks a sloppy kiss. "Now fuck me like you mean it, and do it fast, before someone comes looking for us."..."Yes, My Prince, my love, my husband". }

Like I said HOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOT!

Emma says

I really like the cover art for this book. Not because it calls to me or makes me want to read the book, but because as I read the book the cover made sense and helped me picture Jecks. Our hero Jecks Cordant is not a pretty man. He is a rough, strong, capable warrior. He can stand alone and does so. But he also has friends and loves his country and the men who serve under him. He willingly sacrifices for them. As he travels to the neighbouring land with a handful of his men he meets a man he connects with. Their dialogue is good and the connection felt real. However the mystery surrounding that man is hardly a mystery and the whole ending was too pat. There were some minor editing issues. Still I enjoyed it and would read other stuff set in this universe.

Manfred says

I immediately liked the cover of this book, which unfortunately often does not say a lot about the content. In this case, the blurb also sounded quite interesting and I can say that I was quite happy with this story. The beginning was more drama and suspense and I liked the setting among the soldiers, even if the cursing sometimes got a little too much.

Jecks - the high commander of the army was immediately likable, as were his friends.

Dorane, a warden from the country they were at war with, was also an interesting character and they had nice chemistry and later on really hot sex.

The suspense plot was not really too difficult to see through, it did, however, add some tension and kept the story going (although it took Jecks way too long to figure out who this warden really was).

Towards the end, the whole story got an extreme sugar coating. It was quite sweet already, but what happened in the grand finale was almost too much to stand - like biting in a sugar cane when you already suffer from a toothache...

Jecks transformed from sinister warlord to angelic saint, who singlehandedly saved half of his nation from starving, unemployment and probably the plague in the past, as we learned.

I love a HEA, but this didn't fit the story in my eyes.

It didn't really ruin it for me, but I would have wished for a more appropriate ending, with a little less pathos. Still, I enjoyed reading this and had a good time, so I would rate it slightly above average at 3.5 stars.

Cadiva says

Brilliant historical fantasy novel

I've never read Hannah Walker before but I suspect that will change quite quickly following this book.

This is everything I love in a fantasy novel just minus the magic. It has a feudal style medieval feel to the worlds, it has hot alpha men, powerful but also compassionate and loving and it has a great plot.

Both the MCs in this one are men who know their own worth but are still humble enough to courageously put their kingdoms before their feelings.

I loved the friendships they have with their fellow soldiers too and the sneaky political plotting worked well to drive the tensions in the romance.

I know this is marketed as a stand alone but I'd love to read more of this universe as I want to know more

about the rest of the gang.

Also truly gorgeous cover, one of the reasons I picked this out to read.

Steph ?? says

Well...

I think I may be the odd person out here, but IMO this book was just 'okay'. To be honest I was more interested in the whole sabotage/assassination plot than I was by the relationship between Dorane and Jecks.

Adrienne -kocham czyta?- says

Ugh, one of the most disappointing books I've ever read. I had such high expectations from the first chapter, the very high rating, and others' reviews, but very early on things start to bug me, and it just continued in that manner.

Bad dialogue--especially flowery, silly crap during the sex scenes that didn't feel like it would be consistent with their rather grizzled characters, reused and recycled insults even though much ado was repeatedly made about each others' creativity with insults, plot twists and turns that I saw coming from the first chapter or two, a lot of telling instead of showing and **talking down to the reader** by over explaining and repeating so many things...

"He watched as two young children sprinted across the space, a harried young mother chasing after them as they squealed in delight. The sight made him smile. They were part of the reason he was going through with this marriage. Of course, not those children in particular, but all the children across the two empires." No sh*t. I didn't think for one second that it was because of those two random children whom Jecks didn't know, in city he'd never been to, in a country he'd never been in, that were the reason. Author, you don't have to explain it as if I were moon-touched!

...and just so many things that made me scan sections, roll my eyes, and look forward to finally being done with this read. Plus, all the grammatical errors bothered me, like the frequent use of "was" where "were" should have been. (Author, please see an example of the corrected usage above.)

Also, I wish so much that this would have been slow-burn, with the wanting and wishing building up, and with long, scorching looks and tortured longing wrenching my heart instead of them getting together so quickly [even though Jecks is engaged to someone else (major spoiler-->(view spoiler))] and them being totally upfront and long-winded repeatedly about how much they want...no, *need* each other. *rolls eyes*

I gave it three stars because of the decent world-building, that I was curious enough about how things would work out to skim/read to the end and not stop and return it early on, the insults and camaraderie between the characters were fun, and I liked their creative names.

Overall, it was a huge letdown from the time Dorane came in until the end. Not really recommended, but hey, I am in the minority. *shrugs*

P.S. Here's an example of the ridiculously overdone, flowery dialogue:

(It's from towards the end of the book, so please pay attention to the spoiler tag.)

(view spoiler)
