



Captive of Sin

Anna Campbell

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He pledged his honor to keep her safe.**

Returning home to Cornwall after an unspeakable tragedy, Sir Gideon Trevithick comes upon a defiant beauty in danger and vows to protect her whatever the cost. He's dismayed to discover that she's none other than Lady Charis Weston, England's wealthiest heiress—and that the only way to save her from the violent stepbrothers determined to steal her fortune is to wed her himself! Now Gideon must hide the dark secrets of his life from the bride he desires more with every heartbeat.

She promised to show him how to love—and desire—again.

Charis has heard all about Gideon, the dangerously handsome hero with the mysterious past. She's grateful for his help but utterly unwilling to endure a marriage of convenience—especially to a man whose touch leaves her breathless. Desperate to drive him mad with passion, she would do anything to make Gideon lose control—and fall captive to irresistible, undeniable sin.

Captive of Sin Details

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From Reader Review Captive of Sin for online ebook

D.G. says

This author really had something in this book: a tormented hero - with a really original affliction - and a strong heroine that confronted her problems. Whenever there was the two of them, I forgot about the cookie cutter villains, the asinine plot, the over the top prose, the bad editing or the author's predilection for her thesaurus (tocsin? cicatrices?)

Don't get me wrong, I enjoyed the book and would recommend it to anybody who likes angst in their stories...but I think this book could have been so much more.

Verity says

I don't know why the books featuring "Gideon" often turned out to be 4 – 5* winners for me (even tho' the hero's name is far from my "Fav names" list), e.g., Amanda Quick = Ravished – 5* ; Jane Feather = The bride hunt - 4* ; Anne Gracie = The perfect rake – 5*). COS is no exception. Mayhap 'cuz I tend to gravitate towards dark, brooding, taciturn, tortured, spy hero who has survived unspeakable horrors, has to constantly battle his inner demons upon his return to human race, blessed w/ a talent for foreign language, is over-protective of the damsel in distress, thinks he should keep heroine @ foot's length, tries to send her away for her own good (why do dudes always think they know what's best for their chicks ?) & is afflicted w/ a triple whammy (agoraphobia, claustrophobia & PTSD). I wanted to take Gideon into my flat bosom & never let go. I lusted Charis' unconditional love & steely determination to seduce & weaken his seemingly-impenetrable barricade. It's prolly my 2nd or 3rd fav book of the year, after Meredith Duran = Written on your skin. I was once again hypnotized by AC's evocative prose. She just can't write a bad book IMHO. This was definitely what "To desire a devil" shoulda been. The execution is the difference here. H/H meet from the 1st page & spend almost the entire book together (except for a v. brief separation). Bonus points for internal conflicts (I just adore heroes who acutely feel their unworthiness & fear of hurting their heroines) & evolving relationship. I could see why they gradually fall in luv as they get to know each other, even tho' Charis has lusted him from the start & keeps telling him to free himself from his inner guilt for having survived his ordeal when his comrades have perished. Her healing touch is exactly what he needs even if none of the doctors have prescribed luvmaking as a surefire remedy. He keeps backing away from her pursuing love but despite his resistance, he finally comes to terms w/ his feelings. His heroic deeds have catapulted him into a national celebrity status, he chafes @ his label but is not above using it when it comes in handy in protecting Charis. He inspires admiration & loyalties from his BFF & inferiors for his bravery during his harrowing captivity (I'd need lifelong therapy if that were me) & who could blame Charis for developing a case of hero-worship for the martyr-like chap. I was captivated by the beautiful portrayal of Gideon's inner struggle & sexual healing. Aside from Gideon's dubious miracle, the intense, perilous journey towards HEA simply wowed me. AC sure does know how to pen the best tortured H/H in romancelandia.

On a side note, I was kinda bummed when I got my copy in the mail & the last few chapters were damaged by the deluge (been raining like there's no tomorrow, U'd think the clouds have commuted from Seattle) & sloppy delivery < V shakes grubby paws @ USPS & Mother Nature >, but I was glad it didn't ruin the entertainment value. Just like the flawed H/H, this physically-flawed copy of mine will stay on my keeper shelves forever =)~

Ana says

I'm a sucker for a tortured soul story, but with this book I got more than I bargained for. I wish the recovery was done a little slowly and there really was no need for the kidnapping bit at the end. Still, this was a good book and I was invested in the character's happy-ever-after.

Rane says

Finally coming home after being through horrors and tragedies Sir Gideon Trevithick comes across a badly beaten woman and pledges to make sure she is safe but is surprised when this woman is none other than Lady Charis Weston the wealthiest heiress of England and on the run. It's up to Gideon to keep her safe from those who wish her harm but Gideon is also endanger of losing his heart and soul to Lady Charis.....

The Queen of Regency noir does it again with Captive of Sin with shades of her earlier novel Untouched, creating yet again damaged and imperfect characters that pull on you heart strings as you read their unfolding story.

Lady Charis stumbles into a stable after being badly beaten by her stepbrothers who wish to use her money to pay off their gambling and other debts, finally seeing an escape Charis runs off into the unknown with only the ragged dress on her back. When she meets a soft talking and beautiful stranger Gideon Trevithick she doesn't want to put him into any more trouble, but needs up needing him more.

I wavered throughout the book between liking Charis and getting tried of her, between her courage of fighting off her stepbrother, then her hero worship/love of Gideon. Charis was sometimes a hard character to like, but her love for Gideon grows from hero worship to real mature love, as she starts to break down the walls around him and starts to see the broken man with a kind and beautiful heart.

Gideon tugged and pulled at my heart strings until tears came to my eyes with the horrors he endure in a torture prison. Strong with a huge heart, with the torture he under went, he has painc attacks when someone touches him and in small places. Gideon gave up ever having a normal life after being set free, when he meets Charis his heart almost beats out his chest, but he fights his attraction to her due to demons that haunt him. Willing to do anything for her though, Gideon loves her, but wants her to have a better life then someone whom has so many troubles stacked against them. Gideon isn't ready though for Charis bullheaded her way into his life and making him face his demons with her love. While Gideon's over-protectiveness of Charis well-being toward the end go on my nerves, this was pretty much short-lived when he sees he can't go on without her as he protects her against her stepbrothers.

The pace of the story is on the slow side but slowly picks up as Gideon and Charis starts to find out more about each other. The love scenes between them are slow on the uptake with Gideon having to deal with no-touch phobia he takes a few tries to get it right and when it does watch the fireworks go off! WHEW! They're smoking hot!

Greed yet again (shades of Untouched again) makes the baddies of this story mega a-holes and it was great seeing the stepbrothers taken down by Gideon and his friends.

The trouble I had with this book mostly was the pace and up and down between Charis and Gideon as they

try and protect one another from their said demons or stepbrothers. But mostly how quickly Gideon overcame his phobia so quickly, not that it can't be done, but I think AC wrote it that it was the first step to finally putting the past behind him and moving on.

Overall: at times a heartbreak story of two people as they heal not only the wounds on their bodies but on their hearts and souls.

Milica's Bookshelf says

Pri?a po?inje sa heroinom, Lady Charis Weston, u begu od njene brutalne polubra?e, koji su pokušali da je slome da prihvati bra?nu ponudu jednog od njihovih saradnika. Pretu?ena i o?ajna, Lady Charis nailazi na heroja, Sir Gideona Trevithicka koji se nedavno vratio u Englesku nakon godina provedenih u službi Isto?no Indijske Kompanije. Gideon je izdržao pakleno mu?enje u službi i proglašen vitezom za svoju hrabrost, me?utim on sebe nikako ne vidi kao heroja.

Za Lady Charis, Gidion je njen princ na belom konju, ?astan muškarac koji joj nudi zaštitu i uto?ište od njene polubra?e. Gidionu je Charis podsetnik na sve što on ne može imati, tako fizi?ki i psihi?ki uništen. On ?e u?initi sve da je zaštiti dok ona ne napuni 21 i dobije svoje nasledstvo - sve, uklju?uju?i i brak, ali samo na papiru.

Završila sam knjigu u par sati, zaista sam uživala u ovoj pri?i.

Topla preporuka svim ljubiteljima istorijske romanse. :)

Fani *loves angst* says

Captive of Sin is the first book of Anna Campbell that I absolutely enjoyed and devoured. The premise is very interesting, with Lady Charis running away from her evil stepbrothers and stumbling on Sir Gideon, a hero of the realm who decides to be Charis's defendor even though he has his own demons to battle: namely, he can't touch another human without getting violently ill. With the evils stepbrothers in tow, the only solution they have for Charis to keep her fortune is for the two of them to marry, something Charis isn't as reluctant as she you'd think since she's very attracted to Gideon from the beginning. But then, she has no idea what Gideon's demons are...

I really loved this book, especially after those two decide to get married. The fight against Gideon's inner demons seemed way more plausible than the way Hoyt approached the same subject in Wicked Intentions, even if after the bumpy beginning, Gideon's transformation happened much faster than I would have expected. But I loved the chemistry between those two and both their characters tremendously, so it didn't much affect my overall appreciation of the book.

The ending however was a little too fairytale-*ish* for my taste as well as (view spoiler).

Still, it's one of the rare historicals I've enjoyed reading so much lately, where the heroes talk like men and not besotted fools, where the heroines don't go jumping on handsome bachelors' beds without second thought and where the characters' actions actually fit their personality and were compatible with their way of thinking. Tight plot and beautiful writing make this a must read for romance readers looking for something

darker in their fare IMHO.

Eastofoz says

Out of the four books I've read by Anna Campbell I'm two up (way way up!) and two down (deep deep down!). "Captive of Sin" is in with the downs :-/ I hated this book. It is so horribly stale and boring with an irritating try-too-hard gothic feel that it just never worked for me. I think the worst though is that it never ended. It was the same thing rehashed over and over again with annoying characters. The scenes are vivid enough but the whole thing is just at a standstill once you see where the story is supposed to be headed.

It starts out with Charis (whose name bugged me) the heiress who's on the run from her abusive brothers. They're forcing her to marry some creep that they owe a truckload of cash to. She refuses and she makes a run for it. So far the story is good. Her escape is way too long though what with the disguises and mishaps and when she meets up with the reclusive Gideon (the hero) it's downhill from there. Gideon is a much celebrated war hero who suffered unspeakable torture in India. It was so bad that he can't bear to be touched by anyone so crowds and social settings in general send him over the edge. He tries to help Charis "one dark and stormy night" by offering her protection which she accepts because she doesn't have much choice. Charis starts to fall for him because she sees him as her savior but he keeps telling her to back off basically because he's not fit for anyone. She's going to do her damndest to change that. And the story stops even though you're only a quarter into it up until the end when he finally accepts her and he deals with his problems.

I'm not a lover of the broken hero who can't fix himself and this guy is busted up really bad. If you liked Untouched (that's the other Campbell down for me) you'll likely enjoy this guy. I'm also not a fan of the hero who regrets going at it with the heroine even if they had a smashing time, even if she likes it and even if they went at it like bunnies in the spring. He kept creating problems thinking she was better off without him so it's this endless circle of her saying "I can help you" and him "No you can't", around and around with the odd intermission because the brothers track them down or he tells his war story.

The heroine is another kind of character I don't like. She's a crier, second-guesses herself too much and she's an idiot as well as one of those women hell bent on fixing the man she loves and insists loves her. Move on! She lived pretty much cut off from the outside world and here she is all knowledgeable with certain things and then a total dolt when it comes to sex, I don't know but it didn't work for me. Their "love story" seemed highly unlikely.

Gideon's story was very moving, the brothers were really mean sobs and like I said the scenery/atmosphere was quite vivid but that's not enough to hold a book together. As for the steam when it *finally* makes an appearance it's endless. I just started skim reading having had enough of all these "extremes of passion". That's pretty sad for a romance novel when the plot generally leads up to that part and you've usually been waiting for it too. I just didn't care anymore. It was a "yeah, ok, hurry up already". It nearly came across as the stereotypical romance novel that's often made fun of.

So this book is painfully slow, overly dramatic at times and nothing but a chore to read - **BUT** - I'm not giving up on Anna Campbell because she was a true wizard with her first book *Claiming the Courtesan* and the genius behind good ol' Justin the Duke of Kylemore :D Go-go Justin, you psycho you ;D (but I digress, I know ;p)

Min Li Li says

Kitaba tek kelimeyle BAYILDIM.

Katie(babs) says

Lady Charis Weston is England's wealthiest heiress. Seems there are a lot of these woman heiresses in regency England, who although obscenely wealthy, are on the run from some family member who wants to kill them for their fortune. In Charis's case she's hiding from her horrid, abusive step brothers who have beat her into near submission. They want to gain her fortune for their own means and try and force Charis to marry a man they owe a great deal of money to. All this must happen before her twenty-first birthday in three weeks when she will finally have access to her inheritance. Charis is able to escape from Hubert and Felix, the step brother duo who are oh so powerful. Again, it seems there are many of these evil powerful gentlemen also running around England hurting young women of various means.

Charis is hiding in a stable in the middle of winter and found by a stranger who frightens her because as he sits high upon his beast of a horse, she thinks he could either send her back to her step brothers or rape her. The gentleman concerned for this shivering and scared woman is Gideon Trevithick who has returned from India where he worked for the East India Company because of his talent in speaking many languages. But that's not all, for Gideon was also a type of spy. Yes, yet another English gentlemen who's a spy, but at least on another continent and not as a part of some underground London order where they wear robes, masks and hum the words, "Om". At twenty-five Gideon has been through many unspeakable things, one-hundred times worse from what Charis has suffered. Something happened in India that makes Gideon standoffish and cold and even after he aids Charis, with the help of his friend Akash, Charis still feels Gideon will harm her. She lies and gives them a fake name and says she was set upon by ruffians and now is on her way to her aunt. Gideon doesn't believe a word and because Charis is so fragile and bruised, he will protect her from whoever wants to harm her.

A few times Charis runs away but Gideon is able to catch her without ever laying a hand on her. Because she has no funds and knows her actions are desperate and foolish, she accepts Gideon's offer of sanctuary after she tells him about her birthday deadline and what her step brothers forced upon her. Gideon wants Charis close, but not too close because for her to touch him is torture. Gideon cannot stand the touch of another even if it's Charis who he's falling in love with. Charis is annoyed that Gideon runs so hot and cold. He always wears black gloves and anytime she comes too close or lays a hand on him, he asks disgusted and becomes enraged. She begins to question her own appeal as a woman because she wants to be close to Gideon even though he keeps his distance and acts as if her touch makes him sick.

Each day closer to Charis's birthday is very welcomed, but then Hubert and Felix come to Gideon's estate because there are witnesses that place Charis with Gideon after he saved her from a group of nasty men. Gideon is a hero in the eyes of the people of England and keeping Charis a secret can't last and he may end up arrested. Gideon has a solution to Charis's problems that will test his endurance and means letting go of his unfortunate past and those memories in India where he feels like less than a man.

Captive of Sin has a feel of a luscious and all consuming romance. Unfortunately, I found it hollow and flat.

Charis's too stupid to live actions and Gideon's growling one minute, protective and kind nature the next made my head spin. Nothing says cliché like a historical romance where you have the heroine scared of the hero from the beginning, but then suddenly out of the blue on page 36, for no reason I can think of, Charis forms lusty feelings for Gideon who almost made her faint in fear, and not because of the abuse she sustained from her one-dimensional villainous step brothers. Charis can't understand her own strange attraction she now has for Gideon. Could it be because he rescued her from "discovery and disaster"? Or maybe it's his regard towards her, where he's full of desire, with his "carved saint" look and his "burning eyes that have no sanctity but are filled with suppressed passion, pain and anger"? As I read this passage, the song "Hot N Cold" by Katy Perry ran through my head and stuck with me for the next 350 pages or so.

Gideon has all the attributes of a tortured hero who longs for touch and love. I felt the build up of passion between Gideon and Charis was too cut and dry. Not enough long stares or pleas were found within these two and I couldn't find any emotional connection on my end. Even when Gideon and Charis have that moment of clarity, where everything comes together, I still felt something was missing.

I will give Anna Campbell credit for writing some really hot love scenes and she is still one historical romance author I turn to because her writing does grab you even though her characters may not. Not every author can have a winning book every time and *Captive of Sin* is such a book.

∅???? [Punya Reviews...] says

My review contains spoilers and they're mostly my thoughts as I went with the book...

I ALWAYS love a dark, brooding, tortured hero and a story with angst and emotions. This book had it all but in so many ways, it went wrong for me that I hardly know where to start. The background and the starting of the book were interesting enough but I didn't really adore Charis and fell for Gideon. The chemistry between them most of the times felt forced, not something that's coming from within. I didn't really think they belong to each-other in that sense. I truly wished this wasn't the case but in the end, I just couldn't love the book.

Sir Gideon, 25, has a dark, haunted past. It all happened in India where he worked as a spy and was tortured by the Nawab of Rangapindhi. Man, what he went through, I simply couldn't stomach the situation. It was too sad; I thought, just too unfair. He was young and brilliant, only about 18 and the studious sort. Some of his interesting abilities such as: to be able to master a language, led one of his professors to refer him for the job. Gideon's family life was in shambles. His father, like any other wastrel lord, did nothing good and died drunk. His brother, the heir, took the same path. Gideon would've loved to know his mother but she died giving birth to him. Poor guy sort of grew up all on his own, always in the scrutiny of his debauched father who thought him a wuss for being interested in books and not drinks and whores, the 'manly ways' of life! Anyway, Gideon's life irrevocably changed in India. Not only had he learned about the wilder sides of life, such as sex but also, to live with danger, in every step of the way. He worked there for quite a long time before he was betrayed and 'paid' for a year in a dungeon in Rangapindhi. Now, it's been a few months that Gideon's been back in England but he can't mix with people anymore, he can't touch anyone without being horribly sick. He was on his way to his childhood home in Cornwall, Penrhyn, when he met Charise.

Charis, an heiress, was running away from her brutal and greedy step-brothers, who were also her legal guardians; until she marries or turns 21. And, she'd be 21 in about three weeks. Her step-brothers just beat her within an inch of her life so that she marries a wastrel and hand her money over to that man and

ultimately, to them. Charis was badly wounded but still managed to escape and was trying to get to Portsmouth to hide (I was a bit confused about the great-aunt story, so not sure where) 'til she turns 21. And, in the inn stable, where she was hiding, is where Gideon comes to her rescue. He and his Indian friend Akash (later known as the Viscount Cranbourne) with the help of Gideon's man-servant Tulliver, Charis was taken with them. Akash took care of her injuries. (FYI: Akash also took care of Gideon in India, then he met Tulliver on the ship back to England, who's been taking care of Gideon ever since.) Charis lies to Gideon about her identity and situation, I understood why. But what I didn't understand that how, in the state she was in, could she start fantasizing about Gideon?! And, it went on for about 1/3 of the book and then it got weird. So, she's now a bit miffed that Gideon won't touch her or carry her when she needed to be carried. She tried to runaway once again in Portsmouth, knowing if Gideon learns about the truth, he might become one of those men who turned greedy with the mention of her money. When Charis got herself in trouble, Gideon fights for her which made Charis more intrigued about him.

Meanwhile, Gideon is also attracted to her, despite her bruised face and so on. I don't know, everything seemed to leap too fast, except the story itself. It dragged on and on; I grew bored at one point because nothing interesting was happening, AT ALL except for Gideon's rude behavior towards Charis, his rebuffing her attempts to be close and she turning out to be some persistent wench! It's Gideon she wants, it's Gideon she'll have! I should've found this interesting but sadly, not in this book. Because of Gideon's past and his revulsion of human touch, he kept pushing Charis away, even though his body wants her. It's all psychological. I would've applauded Charis's attempts to reach him but at some point I thought, she should let him be, hoping it'd give him some incentive to think matters through himself. But later on I felt, if Charis gave up, Gideon mightn't have picked up the gauntlet. And, it's NOT a very nice situation for a romance novel. I would've loved to see him trying to break free of his fears. No, I'm not judging him for what he became; I can't even begin to imagine the things he'd experienced there but when she's trying so hard (even went as far as being quite pushy, hiding her embarrassments and humiliations) and if you really want her, why not at least TRY?

But, he didn't, for a long time. Not even when he proposed a marriage of convenience to save her from her step-brothers, who found out where she was. I didn't like the conditions he put forth for this marriage. I knew Charis had no other choice and the fact that she'd already fallen in love with him (seriously?! I simply couldn't believe it and 'til the end I had this feeling that it was an infatuation) didn't make it easy for her. She even tells him that, which Gideon dismisses as a case of 'hero worship', even though his heart wants it to be true. But, Charis is convinced she's in love. Me, growing bored and hopeless by the minute! Then they make plans and get away to some other place to get married. Even knowing Gideon's abominable conditions, Charis went through it. I was seriously curious as to how the wedding night goes. I mean the marriage had to be consummated. Gideon said there'd be this one time and somehow he'd manage. In midst of it, he goes out because he was confused about his 'performance' and thought of trying it on a whore! Oh God, if he went through the plan, I would've knocked his bon-bons off, really! I didn't even like this incident. But, the wedding night wasn't anything out of the ordinary. Gideon was feeling sick, yet managed it without hurting Charis much. This little experience made Charis *a crazy kitty cat* for Gideon, as now she wants more of 'it' and him. And she does that, being naked later and making him angry (because he was again trying to ignore his wants and thinking 'this is for the best' crap), which incidentally made him forget about his 'demons' of the past. In return, she got a 'royal f*cking'! (...that's exactly how Gideon phrased it afterwards and man, I loved it! :p). Funny thing is, in neither of the acts, Charis found her release. I'm mentioning it because later on, when she convinces him that this might work (she thinking she's thought out some 'miracle' resolution to his problems and Gideon thinking he might not, after all, resign to a celibate life... oh joy!), Gideon promises to show her all the pleasures he can give. Then it seemed like his troubles went away, at least when it comes to Charis. He could touch her and the two had sex like bunnies for about 2 weeks afterwards *snorts*. No, I found Gideon kinda sexy, even though he's a bit of a blockhead but his thoughts on 'this is

for the best' simply made me nuts.

Charis is so in love with her husband and grateful for the privilege of touching him, the fact that she can't vocalize her feelings was driving her crazy. She'd already said it once and was rejected. She knows he's a good man, trusts him with all her heart. After everything he'd done for her, how can she not love him? ('hero worship', anyone?) Even now, when it seems things are looking better, Gideon keeps his emotions bottled up. Well, you should've known that woman! Didn't you see how he was? I mean, her thoughts and actions, a lot of the times, didn't cooperate- something that just grated on my nerves. Problem was, I couldn't even call her TSTL outright because even in all these, some of her of the things she did were commendable. Like, her persistence on winning Gideon; when even I thought at times she should just give him her back, she didn't. It was something of a read!

So when, after this blissful interlude, Gideon went back to his: *I should live apart as the original plan and let her f*ck some other guy and live in London because no one would want to live in this Godforsaken Castle with me* [note: a castle that overlooks the beautiful Cornish sea]. *It's for the best!* crap, I felt like strangling him, seriously! As I mentioned before, I would've LOVED to see him TRY and tell her, *I want to see how it works between us* or something like that. Charis was hurt because, obviously, she didn't at all expect him to revert back to his original decision. They fight over it, which resulted in a strain in their relationship. On their way to Penrhyn, they were accosted by Charis's step-brothers. After much shuffling thoughts and word exchanges, Gideon was taken hostage for her money. And, this hostage situation did something for him; Gideon had the time to think and come to terms with his 'demons'. Finally, when he was rescued, he could let the past go and was able to mix with people around him. The whole thing was supposed to mark a momentous situation for the book but it came too late IMO and I had already lost much of my interest. All those tossing and turning, back and forth, had its toll on me. So later on, I decided on 3 stars because it wasn't a bad book but just not enough to keep me glued to it. As a whole, I was distracted and annoyed far too many times to have truly enjoyed it.

Kübra Ya?mur Aslanhan says

Neden son okudu?um historicallar beni bir türlü tatmin etmiyor?

Alaine says

The story of these two lovers took me in from the very first pages. Gideon is a tortured soul that you will never forget and I was constantly amazed by the captivating way in which the author told his story. Gideon's character had more depth and was more intricate than any other romance hero that I've ever read - not only did Charis fall in love with him but you as a reader certainly will too. The author created a bold backstory for the hero that included scenes of unimaginable torture and she let these instances shape not only the emotional but also the physical makeup of his character.

The heroine, Charis, is fearless in her pursuit of rescuing the hero but at the same time she is also being pursued herself. She is exceptional in her strength and determination and she is completely stubborn in the face of hopelessness. Although these traits are common of romance heroines these days, the author gave this personality type a fresh take by pairing her with someone who unwittingly needed her help.

Kim H says

60% *slightly* above average writing, 40% overblown melodrama. It's a shame, really. This had the potential to be great, but the prose is so eye-rollingly over the top corny, I could barely read most of it with a straight face. A tortured hero with a martyr complex meets a doormat heroine, and love miraculously, incredibly, conspicuously, conquers ALL. It has some very well-written moments, but there's just not enough substance there to overcome the silly, melodramatic prose.

Grade: C+

Sensuality Rating: R

Zoe says

I wavered between 2 stars and 3 stars for this book but decided on 3 stars in the end to pay respect to Anna Campbell's writing.

Anna Campbell has a style, like many of the writers. At the end of the days a review becomes very much a reader's response to a writer's distinctive style. Anna Campbell favors sexually denied heroes and heroines and the Cornish storms often play as a catalyst for passion in her stories.

By default I do not respond well to stories which center around sex. Not that I am pining for clean romance, but I tend to lose interest easily if the focal point/major conflict of the relationship is about sex. Gideon is the sexually deprived hero to Charis's damsel in distress. That pretty much sums up the entire book. Charis was running away from her evil stepbrothers. Gideon saved her and ended up being attracted to her. But poor Gideon suffered greatly in India and could not tolerate being touched by other humans. Now now, he saved a beautiful woman in need of a hero. A marriage of convenience, must consummate marriage so that damsel was no longer a virgin. Poor Gideon, what to do, what to do?

This book reminds me The Highwayman, by Kerrigan Byrne, which everybody loved and I hated. Not that they are very similar but the heroes suffer from the same predicament: they had suffered greatly in life and could not tolerate human touch. And I raised the same question when I read The Highwayman: so if he didn't want people to touch him, how did he manage intercourse? Call me an unromantic, but the practical woman in me wants to know: how, dude? Maybe it seems incredibly romantic to others that a guy would deny himself carnal pleasures because of some phobia, could only liberate himself with the heroine. Well, it doesn't do anything for me.

Nothing romantic happened in the first 50%. It was setting up for the inevitable marriage of convenience. Charis's trouble came to light. Gideon gallantly offered to marry her but refused to be a real husband, citing his "problems". It all seemed rather melodramatic to me, I must admit, the conflicts and the emotions, just seemed unreal to me. In the second half it was just a whirlwind of crazy and rather violent sex. A sexually deprived man living in isolation with his temping innocent wife. What could happen, come on, ladies? Rough sex because he was all hot for his bride and did I mention that he had not had sex in a long time?? Then he felt remorse because he felt he had treated his bride like a savage. Wait, but I thought that was supposed to be titillating?

I apologize if I sound bored. But bored I am whenever I read an "erotic" story like this. I understand its appeal to readers who have an appetite for such themes. Erotica has its charms, I am certain. It is just I am not charmed.

Gilgamesha says

This book reminded me of the last book of Maiden Lane series...where the author tries for a dark and scarred hero but everything seems so contrived and unnatural that you fail to relate to characters. The writing was also very repetitive...I just couldn't understand the hero's reasoning at the end and even the climax was very anticlimactic.
