



# The Surrogate

*Ann Somerville*

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## **The Surrogate** Ann Somerville

*The Surrogate* tells the story of Nikolas as he is swept up into a dark world of slavery and abuse, where he might be the only hope of those trapped for a lifetime serving the needs of an evil and rapacious god. This story includes graphic depictions of rape and torture. Definitely not for the faint-hearted. *Reincarnate* is the sequel to *The Surrogate*.

Words: 124743 (approximate)

## **The Surrogate Details**

Date : Published 2010 by Ann Somerville

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Author : Ann Somerville

Format : ebook 374 pages

Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Sociology, Abuse, Fantasy, Erotica, Menage, Dark, M M M



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## From Reader Review The Surrogate for online ebook

### Carole-Ann says

What an unusual story !

Nikolas is such a good-hearted boy/man, you couldn't fail to like him - even though he was (and probably still will be) a little brash and blatantly honest.

The relationship between Jamie and Seve was heart-breaking, but I did like how it turns out in the end.

I have Reincarnate to follow up, so I hope it's a HEA for all three of them !

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### Nicci says

Surrogate is comprised of two stories:

The Surrogate - rating 3.0

The Reincarnate - rating 2.0

Together I would rate as 2.5

The first half of the story, Surrogate, kept me interested and wondering about the outcome of Jamie and Nikolas and to learn exactly what defined the Surrogate in the story. It became evident the title applied to more than one storylines. That Jamie and Nikolas pairing was less about romance and more about surviving the horrible situation Jamie in particular has endured.

### Reincarnate

Continues where Surrogate leaves off and it explores the story of Nikolas, Jamie, and Seve, a three-some. Jamie and Seve is the main pairing. The three men must confront the psychological affects from the events in Surrogate. This is where I lose interest. The story is far too long in the exploration. It's repetitious in emotions and thoughts. Recognizing in real life, recovery takes quite a while if ever. However, intimidating in fiction without including exciting details lend towards tediousness. You knew long before the end how the story would end.

The author tends to write more about character events and less on steamy erotica, which is fine with me because I do love reading character-driven plot with depth.

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### Ayanna says

Niggles:

"silver and metal collar"

...is silver now not a metal? Unless they were referring to the color? In which case, why can't it just be "silver

metal collar"?

Wait. Unless it's silver and some mysterious other metal. ...still feel like there's probably a better way of phrasing this.

Sassy MC is sassy :D

Overall...idk. I didn't think it was bad. I'm holding off on reading Reincarnation, so maybe I shouldn't put this in read yet, but whatevah.

I think it...I don't know. I didn't dislike it, that's for sure. More than that, I can't quite say. I'm a bit uncomfortable with the projected future (well, into Reincarnation) with the menage situation. It seems weird and like a bad reason for three people to get together romantically.

Yeah, universe was good, side characters fleshed out, etc. (There, covered my bases). Eh. I dunno. It was thought-provoking?

I was on tumblr earlier; I've run out of cleverly pithy things to say.

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### **Jennifer says**

SlashReaders: The back of this book doesn't really tell you a lot about it, I picked it up mostly out of curiosity. I have enjoyed some of Somerville's other works. Now, if you like dark, angst stories, you'll probably enjoy this one. At least, I couldn't put it down. Though, I must admit there were times when I wanted to lock all three characters in a room until they figured things out... Unfortunately I don't think that would have worked.

So, what is this book about? There are some general over all spoilers here but I tried not to include too many details.

(view spoiler)

Despite the fact that this was a dark book, that didn't gloss over the details. I enjoyed the fact that out of the darkness comes hope. Not right away but eventually. These characters didn't get away and magically everything was alright. Somerville, deals with the aftermath and the mess that comes of trauma.

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### **Daanquai says**

The Surrogate is actually two stories: The Surrogate and The Reincarnate. Two bad these books came together because I really needed to rate them separately. I would give The Surrogate a 4 and The Reincarnate a 1.

The first half of the story, Surrogate, was fantastic. The story was told from Nicolas POV and it was soooo heartbreaking. I would have given it a 5 rating but for one huge thing: Jamie simply used Nikolas in place of his lover, Seve, all the way to the very end. This made sense at the beginning, obviously, since everything Jamie was having to endure was for Seve. But I had hoped that at some point Jamie would realize how strong his feeling for Nikolas had grown. But the book ended with Jamie and Seve having somewhat of a HFN and poor Nikolas essentially being abandoned by both of them. Grrrr!! That made me so mad seeing as how Nikolas allowed himself to be tortured, raped, abused and crippled for both of them.

The second half of the book, The Reincarnate was a complete bore, from the very beginning to the makes-no-freaking-sense ending. The story continues where Surrogate leaves off (just a few months later where the 3 guys are living freely and comfortable). Jamie and Seve have their own cute little house and everything. That right there really confused me because the author had painted such a grim reality in the first story so I thought these guys would be hard up for a while. But nope. I was prepared to read about the guys struggling to re-connect after the horrors of the temple and where Nikolas fit in. The fact that the first book was all about Jamie and Nikolas had me hoping for some kind of love blossoming between them somehow. Jamie and Seve are the main focus in this story. And the entire book was how the three men dealt with the psychological affects from the events in Surrogate. This is where the book got boring. Obviously in RL, recovering from such a horrible ordeal takes major time, but in a book, reading about the recovery in such elaborate detail, well, it became extremely tedious. This story is mostly about how the three men struggled with their inner turmoil. It was very repetitious. And I knew long before I finished reading how the story would end. And again, as with the first story, I hated the ending. I got the impression that Nikolas continued to let himself be used, mostly again, by Jamie because Jamie pretty much admitted he could never love him as much as he loved Seve. At least Seve admitted to being in love with Nikolas as well as Jamie. That I could handle. I even finally admitted to liking Seve towards the end, but hated Jamie a little. And the whole scene in the end with Nikolas leaving for work for 4 months? My hopes got raised that he (by far the most interesting character out of all 3) would leave and find himself someone (and maybe get his very own book)but again, nope. He came back. So what was the point of him leaving in the first place? Very disappointed with The Reincarnate.

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### **Emma Sea says**

This is a beautifully-written book, with acres of character development.

Because I am shallow, libidinous, and slightly warped I was hoping for a lot more hurt and a little less comfort.

The first part of the book (95 of 249 pages) was great. Nikolas is chosen as a temple slave to sexually perform for the incarnation of a god. There's midnight tears, a secret, a betrayal, and abuse. While the abuse was graphic, there wasn't very much of it, it didn't go on for long, it wasn't truly horrible, and I would not class this as a darkfic. Actually I would have liked more abuse in the story (like I say, warped). This section wraps up awfully fast.

The second part of the book, the larger part, is the MCs from book one getting over all the hurt. There's frustration, anger, gardening, bitterness, lying, wild accusations, and hypocrisy. The MC's progress to recovery is slow. My progress was also slow: it took me 14 days to get through this section, which I think is a new record. However, I was never tempted to just quit reading, so it wasn't *bad*, it just wasn't what I was hoping for.

The actual crafting of the story is great. Somerville **never** tells; always shows. The settings are drawn vividly, and the plot in book one is unfurled at the perfect pace (letting me guess the secret before disclosure, which always makes me inordinately happy). Even secondary characters seem to have real lives, and I can happily imagine them going about their business until they encounter the MCs again.

I was not thrilled with the conclusion of the book, as other reviewers have already discussed.

If you're looking for sexually deviant violence and abuse to enjoy, look elsewhere. If you're looking for a slow examination of how to fix a broken love, this is the book.

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### **Kelly says**

\*Sigh\* Basically all I can say about this story.

It's a love/hate relationship:

I loved (as in adored, would read many times again) the Surrogate, which is only the first 95 pages of the novel. I hated (as in couldn't finish, so that's why I've marked this as abandoned) the second half, the Reincarnate.

It's a love/hate relationship:

I loved Nikolas from the get-go. He's personable, amusing, and honest. Truly, Nikolas might be one of the most refreshing characters I've read in a really long time. He's selfless and wants nothing but the best for Jaime, and he's willing to be hurt himself for it. Honestly, I think the greatest abuse Nikolas suffered was not at the hands of the temple, but at the hands of Jaime.

I loved Jaime at first. He was just the right amount of brusque and cold with just the right amount of soft gooey insides. I felt his pain, and I wanted nothing but his happiness. But then he did an about-face and I started hating him. He refused to see Nikolas as a potential lover, and he used the hell out of poor Nikolas. His obsession (really, that's what it is) with Seve is irritating and frustrating and made him quite one-dimensional.

And in the opposite corner: Seve. I hated Seve at first. He got in the way of all the warm fuzzies I was getting from Nikolas/Jaime. I acquiesced him his pain and suffering, but since I knew very little of him in the Surrogate, I didn't feel inclined to care too much. When I met him honestly, I can't say my hatred dissolved immediately. He seemed too... perfect? A common trope, I think : perfect on the outside, broken beyond fixing inside. However, as the Reincarnate progressed, I found myself liking him more and more. He was the only one who, I think, ever really appreciated Nikolas, because god knows Jaime didn't. And so as my feelings about Jaime soured, my feelings about Seve sweetened. Do I like him? Err, I hesitate to say yes, but at least I hate him less.

It's a love/hate relationship:

I love Ann Somerville's writing. It's beautiful. I've read several of her novels and have never been

disappointed, but this just didn't do it for me.

The abuse in the Surrogate was wonderful. Wonderfully written, wonderfully believable, and wonderfully powerful.

The coddling in the Reincarnate was galling. Gallingly long, gallingly slow, and gallingly boring.

Even if I knew that Jaime dies! and Seve and Nikolas run away together on a flurry of rainbows and unicorns!(which they don't, don't worry), I don't think I could bring myself to finish this novel.

Overall, I think I wish the Surrogate were a standalone. I wish it had been tied up a little differently (hey--open endings are great!) in order to keep the unsettling discomfort that the Surrogate forced me into while still making me feel like all was okay in the world, at least for another day, and left at that. I wish I'd left this story still liking Jaime and starting to like Seve and wishing the best for Nikolas.

I wish there hadn't been a sequel to attempt to tie things up because not every story needs a definitive conclusion. And sometimes, hurt/comfort is like love/hate: I only want the former.

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### **Len Evans Jr says**

This review is for both "The Surrogate" as well as it's sequel "Reincarnate".

Ms. Somerville has in these 2 stories managed to write one of the best gay romance stories I have ever read. The telling at times so vivid and gripping that the evil described in the 1st half was at times almost so too much to bear; yet even when at times I had to put down my E-reader; it was never more than 15 mins; and then I found myself drawn back needing to know and experience what was next. The 2nd part was just as impossible to put down however this time it was the heart-rending yet powerfully hopeful determined struggle of 3 tragically damaged men to trust each other, the unlimited power of love and that normal is whatever results in each of them healing.

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### **Andrea says**

1st book, graphic abuse and sadism at its best, 2nd book, comfort and very difficult healing. Beautiful writing!

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### **Alysa H. says**

Basically a very elaborate hurt/comfort fic, with three sympathetic main characters suffering from PTSD after going through terrible abuses. This book was not what I was expecting from the description, but it was a fairly pleasant surprise.

The supposed 'sequel' -- nearly double the length of Part 1 -- is included. In fact, the two parts don't seem ever to be sold separately; at least, I haven't found any evidence that they've ever been sold separately. So this is really just one long book, with *The Surrogate* functioning as a kind of long intro to get us to the longer *Reincarnate*, where Somerville spends more time exploring interpersonal dynamics.

The only functional way that the two Parts could be called different books is because of the POV change between them. *The Surrogate* really has two main characters, Nikolas and Jaime, and is told in the first person from Nikolas' POV. *Reincarnate* is told in the third person and switches main POV's between Jaime and Severin, who was barely glimpsed in *The Surrogate* although his presence loomed large. Once *Reincarnate* begins, we never get Nikolas' POV again. I rather missed it.

I found *The Surrogate* itself to be a page-turner. Jaime and Nikolas are trapped in an awful situation, and I really liked the pace at which the details of this situation are revealed. There are some aspects that were transparently contrived and unbelievable, but arguably not the actual situation itself (a credit to Somerville's skill at world-building). Although I enjoyed seeing these characters through the aftermath, in *Reincarnate*, it became quite tedious at times. A long, repetitive litany of guilt and blame and self-esteem problems. Alternately compelling and tedious -- a bit like reading/hearing about other people's effed up relationship problems in real life!

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### **Shanna says**

This is a wonderful story about the strength of the human spirit and even if life takes you to places you never wanted to go, you'll end up just where you need to be. The characters are wonderfully complex and very human. I loved how there were no easy answers and no quick fixes. The journey that these 3 men took was long and painful and Somerville held nothing back. This is a powerful book but it's very dark and very raw. I expect nothing less than great things from Somerville and she has yet to let me down. This is another exceptional novel from her.

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### **Tamela says**

I went in aware of the warnings, but found that I just couldn't go any further following the horrific beating Jaime was given. I may come back to this book at some later date, but right now it is just too much. The writing was very good, the world surrounding the characters was fascinating, and I liked the characters. Maybe that's why it was so hard to read about what happened. I believe this is a good read for some folks, but I'll wait until after the holiday season to tackle it again. I need something lighter.

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### **Jules says**

I bought this book for my Kindle so it came with the sequel, *Reincarnate*. All I can say is WOW!!! What a story! I don't give 5 stars lightly and I haven't found a 5 star worthy book in a while. Finally a book with a good, complete and deep storyline. No puffy, sickeningly sweet story here. There are two very brutal rape/torture scenes but if you can get through those, it's well worth the story (just skim the scenes if you can't read them) although they are a bit crucial to the story. LOVED the MCs and their developments. Great suspense and tense. Perfect!

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## **ErinSC says**

Like many other reviewers, I enjoyed The Surrogate far more. Reincarnate was a nice story, but to read it immediately following The Surrogate, I found the dramatic difference in the pace somewhat disconcerting. Maybe if I had not read them back-to-back it would have been better.

5 stars The Surrogate

3 stars Reincarnate

I absolutely fell in love with Nikolas, he is selfless, honorable and the sweetest man ever. I did not even get mad at him for being a doormat (which I generally have ZERO tolerance for, so bravo Ms. Somerville), it just made me so sad for him. Although there was little of Seve in The Surrogate, I really enjoyed his strength and fragility in Reincarnate and cared about his character. I had a hard time with Jaime. I understand that saying he had it rough is a huge understatement, but in comparison to Nikolas and Seve, I sometimes really hated him. His coldness toward Nikolas, and the way he lashes out so horribly with the slightest ding to his pride made him seem like a mean little child.

Overall, I really enjoyed the story, and highly recommend having a box of tissues handy.

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## **Anu Vaarama says**

Very unique story, thrilling if the reader loves to read a development story of very complicated persons. I loved this and I appreciate the author's skill to tell something this big. Also I understand if this is not everyone's favourite.

Erityinen maailma johon kirjailija on luonut omaperäisen tarinan temppelistä, jonka mutkikkaisiin kuvioihin kolme nuorta miestä joutuvat mukaan. Alkuosa kirjasta kertoo selviytymistarinan ja toinen osa mitä sen jälkeen tapahtuu... kun ensimmäisen selviämisen jälkeen pitää vielä rakentaa oma elämä uudelleen. Samalla rakennetaan tärkeitä ihmissuhteita, ja sen kertoja tekee hienosti ja henkilöiden tunteita syvään luodaten.

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