



Taken by Desire

Lavinia Kent

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Strong and independent, she dreams of him in secret.

Fierce, yet world-weary, he's always desired her.

Neither considers marriage an option.

But when a single kiss has unforeseen consequences, and wedding bells follow, they'll both learn the power of passion. Desire can change everything.

Taken by Desire Details

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Author : Lavinia Kent

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From Reader Review Taken by Desire for online ebook

Kimm says

The cover attraction for this book leaves a lot to be desired---but don't let that get in the way of a great read.

Anna: A strong independently wealthy woman who has learned to use her wiles as a means to even out the battle of the sexes.

Alexander Struthers: Strong in his own right with a newly acquired wife on his hands and plenty of ideas about what to do with her.

These two characters are my typical favorite creations. Both a little untrusting and marked by the pain of their pasts. Both afraid of what they stand to lose, but weigh it against what they stand to gain. In the end, they come to learn that what they desire most is each other.

Kent tackles a couple of strong topics in this story, one of which has to stay somewhat of a mystery for fear of spoiling part of the plot. The other issue concerns a nineteenth century woman and her finances. Anna's money becomes her husband's in the event of their marriage. One of her biggest fears is losing control over it, as was the custom of the day. She spends big and what she spends her money on is somewhat of a mystery to everyone. She has a purpose and a plan for it, but puts herself at risk by her actions.

Nefarious American cousins enter the picture with the intent of claiming Anna's inheritance for their own. How they plan on doing this is forcing her to give it over by threats of institutionalization. It would take very little in those days to have a woman locked up---nothing more than mere chattel. This puts Struthers' proposal and her subsequent acceptance in a better light. She's damned if she does and even more damned if she don't....

But what will Struthers do with her money? Will he take possession and control of it from her or trust in her wishes. Trust is a hard pill to swallow when she's spending the money like it was going out of style. At that rate (and her intent), she'll squander the entire sum in no time at all.

Anna makes it her mission to show Struthers what lies at the heart of her fears. She places her trust solely in his hands. It pays off and the two find love with one another, while ridding Anna of her external barriers to independence and self-sufficiency.

This book is so well written that I have marked it as a definite re-read for the future. I heartedly recommend it to all Regency romance enthusiasts.

Eye-shuh says

This book is basically 3-4 chapters just repeated over and over and over again until the end. It drove me mad having to read them talk about how they needed to talk. Seriously, just the exact same dialogue. She could have copy and pasted most of the book. Then in the end they use sex as a weapon against each other to find out what is finally going on when they really had no reason not to tell each other from day one. They just

kept finding these pathetic excuses like the author just couldn't think of anything legitimate and she had so little plot that she had to stretch it so thin it was transparent and ripped a little.

Their relationship was barely a romance and the "revelations of love" were bull. They didn't love each other. They loved having sex with each other, which was made very clear throughout the book. Everything about this was contrived from the dialogue to the just terrible descriptions of seduction. If I saw people acting the way described in an attempt to be sexy I would burst out laughing. And I can not stand books that toss out the "I love yous" without any cause or reason; just because the author knows it's a romance novel and the characters should probably say I love you.

The characters are also awful. The author tries to make it seem like the man learned something from the woman about how she's strong and women can do anything, but really he just learned to be bored with her attempts and ignore any lesson she was hoping for. She in turn was supposed to be a strong liberated woman...who acted like a whore and constantly used sex to get what she wanted. Yes, that's clearly the only weapon women have in their arsenal. Forget intelligence, just use your boobs.

Even the sexual encounters were written terribly. You had to constantly deal with the copy/paste paper thin "plot" throughout and her descriptions felt very awkward and rough. It went back to the same thoughts when reading the "seductive" moves - I just kind of wanted to laugh at how ridiculous their encounters sounded.

Overall, pretty terrible book. Do not recommend.

Janga says

I have come to expect interesting, unusual protagonists from Lavinia Kent, and she does not disappoint in that regard in her third historical romance, *Taken by Desire*. Anna Steele is an independent, sexually aware woman who is wealthy enough, thanks to an inheritance from an uncle, to live her life as she pleases. Her choices may raise eyebrows, but Anna is more amused than chastised by such responses.

Anna's independence is jeopardized one night when, to protect her married sister, she lets people believe that she's having an affair with the wealthy, enigmatic Alexander Struthers. Her confidence that this latest scandal will be just another on dit is shaken when a friend warns her that the scandal may be just what her greedy male cousins need to have her declared of unsound mind and seize control of her fortune. The friend insists that Anna and Alexander must wed not only to save Anna's fortune but also to save her freedom.

Anna, fully aware of the irony of entering a marriage that may curtail her independence in order to thwart those who would destroy that independence completely, is nevertheless persuaded that she must accept Alexander's reluctant proposal.

The two are not strangers. They have a long history. In fact, Alexander is the one who brought Anna the news that her first love had been killed. He had been more than a little in love with his friend's young, innocent fiancée, and while a strong physical attraction persists, he doesn't trust this new, sophisticated Anna who is far removed from the beautiful naïf he once knew.

The marriage of two people who desire one another but don't trust one another enough to reveal the persons they are behind the social disguises they have constructed is predictably complicated. The story is rich in tension, sexual and otherwise, as Anna and Alexander grow to understand that sexual intimacy is only one

facet of the desire they evoke in one another. The threat posed by the avaricious cousins must also be removed.

The story drags a bit in spots, and I found Anna's family as annoying as fingernails on a blackboard, but Anna and Alexander are interesting characters with surprising depth. I was sufficiently engaged with them to ignore minor irritations.

Heather says

Kent created two strong-willed, intelligent, capable characters who through one rash act end up married. Anna is ahead of her time: managing a large fortune, discreet lovers, living on her own. She's not afraid to use her womanly wiles to get what she wants. And while Struthers knows that she's manipulating him, he falls right in line. Struthers has wanted her since her engagement as a young girl to his best friend, but has fought it; now married, he must figure out what to do with her and her demands for independence. They struggle to really open to one another, neither liking answering to another person. But what I loved was their seduction; they seduce each other playfully, with little touches and with words, and it was sexier than even their sex. And it really allowed for them to build a relationship and grow trust. There is a large secondary plot that I can't reveal without showing too much but it fit in so nicely and is a bit unusual for a romance. I enjoyed the secondary characters, particularly the women. These are no innocent misses but neither are they too "out there" in their lifestyles. I'll definitely be keeping an eye out for any other titles by this author.

Nicole says

Publisher: Avon

Publish Date: 12/1/10

How I got this book: NetGalley

I've read Kent's work before, and have always been happy with the stories; *Taken by Desire* is no exception! While the cover leaves much to be desired, Kent creates a wonderful book with two incredibly headstrong characters, a sweet and wonderful courtship, and a side plot that was well woven in.

Anna and Struthers are married very early in the story, against both their better judgments. I thought it was great that although the two married, they didn't really behave like typical married couples do. Anna still stayed at her home, in her bed, managed her large fortune, and went wherever she pleased. Likewise, Struthers stayed in his home, took care of his fortune, and did whatever he pleased. It was comical to see how separate their lives really were.

I really felt bad for Anna though, because she really was independent for her time, and the thought of marriage really did scare her to death. She was so worried about her money and whether or not Struthers would allow her the kind of indulgences that she was accustomed to. It's hard enough for Anna to trust anyone, but when it comes to her money, she is even more hesitant.

I really enjoyed the side plot where Anna's cousins from the US come to London in hopes of stealing her

fortune. The way that she and Struthers are somewhat forced to trust in each other to get through the ordeal together is great, plus the way that Anna ends up solving the problem completely put a smile on my face.

I also really enjoyed the way Anna and Struthers found a way to come together. I loved that Anna tried to show him all the ways that women of that time period had it so difficult, especially when she took him to the "insane asylum". It was great to see that Struthers really made an effort to understand exactly what she was scared of, and the different constraints Anna had against her because of being female. While the sexual tension and passion always was there between the two, it was fun to watch their minds and hearts follow.

Although this isn't my favorite Kent book, I liked the way she tackled some of the harsh realities for women of the time frame. I thought she did an excellent job portraying what it must have been like for a woman in Anna's situation. To me, that really stood out as a focal point in the book, even more so than the romance.

All in all, I give Taken by Desire 4 out of 5 wealthy regency heroines!

Georgie says

Upped this to 4 stars on re-reading it.

Two strong characters and some great dialogue make this one of Kent's winners. I liked the fact that the heroine in particular was not a standard-issue virgin - it's rare to find an unmarried woman in Regency times who has willingly slept with a number of lovers. She has her own set of ethics and moral standards and much of the book is about how the hero slowly learns to appreciate these. Their relationship is a balanced one - he's not a bully, she's not a simpering miss - and part of the satisfaction of the book is how their emotional balance is mirrored by a more social equality too.

There were a couple of things that didn't quite work for me. (1) Anna is accepted by society, even though she's had lovers. I found that implausible. (2) She's got enormous strength of character, but the plot is founded on the premise that (view spoiler). This doesn't jell with her other actions. (3) The subplot involving Anna's sister is ill-formed, and isn't properly developed - though the relationship with her father in particular offered a promising line.

Overall, definitely worth reading, and I will look out others by Lavinia Kent.

Karla says

The Goodreads Giveaway really thumped my ass this time. My greedy mass entries landed me yet another Avon title (out of 4 wins, 2 have been Avon fluff), and yet....I read this one with much optimism. Surely - yea, surely - my choices have simply been unfortunate happenstance!

And for the first 120 pages or so, I thought that I had finally found a good Avon title. The heroine...not a blubbering spinster! The hero....not a pathetic woobie manwhore who sets aside 20 hours of each day to navel gaze! I nearly peed my pants in eager, albeit cautious, delight. Sure, there's nothing about when this takes place apart from a mention of William Wilberforce and the public opinion of the slave trade is turning

to one of condemnation. It's absurdly wallpapery, but the leads were relatively engaging and the story seemed to be on pleasant trajectory.

And then....The Big Mis. It grew and grew. And grew. With all the time the hero and heroine spent saying that they needed to talk, they could have actually SAID what the hell it was that needed to be said.

And I know what you're saying: "Oh that kind of thing happens all the time in romance."

No, you don't understand. It was really *really* dumb here.

The hero puts the heroine off by saying he should really run home THAT EXACT MINUTE to put on a clean shirt. (I am NOT kidding.) Wait til lunch....then wait til dinner....wait til the party....

And the heroine goes through these ornate little schemes to get the hero to see that she's a STRONG WOMAN and WOMEN ARE STRONG and WOMEN: WE HAZ STRENGTH, and yet she can't blurt out **"So, are you the one who knocked up my half-sister?"** and **"I'm not a crazy insane woman throwing her money away. I'm spending my slave trade fortune inheritance on good causes."**

Seriously, that's what she keeps bottled up for over 250 pages and what keeps getting fobbed off on the lamest of pretexts while each one frets and ponders and wonders if he is an impregnating bastard and she is a silly little goose with money. It really meets a Trifecta of Retard in piss-poor storytelling and tension.

And then when she **DOES** finally ask, she indeed blurts it out, but only after she's sunk down on his rod after a weird light bondage/role play session. And then in between groin thrusts and pumps and gasps, the whole story comes out.

Avon, WTF? Srsly.

And Lavinia Kent? Thanks for the autographed copy and you gave me a little glimmer of hope for awhile there, but it simply didn't work.

3 stars for that first 120 pages, 0-1 for the rest.

Katelynne says

I received this book free through Goodreads First Reads.

I really enjoyed this book. The writing and the characters were wonderful. The plot was a little dramatic, but still (somewhat) believable and was carried out well.

But I cannot say enough about the characters. Anna and Struthers are two of the best-written characters I have found in a romance novel - or any novel, really. I was really surprised by how real they seemed. Neither was too perfect or too flawed or too one-dimensional. They were fantastic characters and Ms. Kent really knows how to show her characters interacting in realistic ways. Their courtship - that incidentally takes place after their marriage - was appropriate for their personalities.

The writing, as I said earlier, was superb. The only problem I had was with the plot, which was simply too dramatic for me, but it was carried out well, without turning into an even more dramatic scene (which it easily could have).

I have never read any of Ms. Kent's books before, but this one has me convinced that I need to change that!

Stella says

Loved it! Detailed review coming soon. If you fancy a steamy sensual but humourous historical romance this one is for you! :-)

Melba Hard says

Kept me guessing right to the end.

I have now read all three of the books in this series and have only just on completing this realised that they are all set over the same timespan where three slightly scandalous women find true love!. They are so well written that they cover the same event from different perspectives.

I think that this book was my favourite there were so many twists and turns and Struthers and Anna so good together.

Melanie says

I was a bit disappointed in the third book. Is it possible to hate the story and love the writing? That's what I got out of this third installment. There was nothing wrong with Ms. Kent's writing. Her characters were three-dimensional, at least the primary, and somewhat interesting but I just didn't connect with any of them. This book gets into social issue of how much power husbands had over their wives. Upon marriage, all of her assets become the husband's, and our Heroine had plenty of those, so she's not willing to separate herself with them, be it giving it away to the husband or taken away by the nefarious means by her family.

I didn't like the games our Heroine played on our Hero. All of the characters, primary and secondary, were annoying me to no end. At one point I just wanted to line them all up and slap them silly! Like that scene with Cher in Moonstruck where she says to Nick Cage: "SNAP OUT OF IT"!

As I mentioned before, Ms. Kent's writing was as excellent as usual, but the characters I just didn't like much. Our Heroine was too busy plotting and manipulating, and the hero came off too timid. It took both of them forever to come clean and resolve the problems that they dug themselves into. However, I still recommend this novel just because of its writing and the social issue of that day.

I do recommend you read all three books, as I like the authors prose, but be warned, you might not much care for this couple.

Melanie

TinaB says

This was my first Lavinia Kent novel and she does not disappoint delivering a fun and romantic read. If the cover triggers “uh-oh- raunchy fest feeling” it does go beyond that factor and offers a fun mystery, romance and true love. Anna Steele is an independent, wealthy woman who inherited her fortune from a rich uncle, while she lives her life carefree and responsible with her money, her uncles sons are livid that she got a piece of the inheritance. The men are just waiting for a chance to discredit, destroy her and take the money. The opening of the story does just that- while her sister is having an affair, Anna lets people believe she’s the one involved with the scandal, thinking it will blow over soon to rumors and gossip. What Anna is not prepared for is the real life threat it poses to her freedom and wealth once her Uncles sons have the information.

In order to protect herself and her fortune she marries Alexander and hopes the marriage doesn’t bind her to a life of submission. Alex and Anna are not strangers, being the best friend of the man she once loved, they share a bittersweet past together. They defiantly have chemistry and their hesitant romance builds much tension for the reader. Although the story begins to drag in the middle and the side characters begin to grate, Anna and Alex development keep the story alive and fun until the end.

Gina says

2-1/2 stars

Wollstonecraftmegirl says

It may be time to accept that Lavinia Kent is not for me. A lot of my goodreads friends really liked this and I, well, I did not like this.

The writing is cumbersome and the characterisation is non-existent. The story was somehow both thin and flabby and rested on characters behaving stupidly or failing to notice very obvious things. The romance was clumsy and I had zero investment in it. There was a lot of anachronistic language – characters ‘figuring’ and ‘levelling’ and things which were ‘getting old’. Also: cookies.

Others have liked this book. I cannot in any way recommend it.

Nelle says

Just finished Taken by Desire and whew was it hot! Full of nefarious plots, trust issues and women's rights. Oh and sex! It showed there is no love without trust.
