



Forbidden

Christina Phillips

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Carys knew from the moment she first spied on Maximus in his naked barbarian glory that he was a dangerous Roman centurion - his taut, battle-scarred flesh marking him as a fearless warrior. But her desire for him was as undeniable as it was illicit.

Charged by his emperor to eliminate a clan of powerful Druids in Britain, Maximus never expects his mission to be thwarted by the clan's ethereal princess, Carys, his daring voyeur. Falling under her spell, he doesn't realize her true heritage - until he captures her heart as well as her body.

As Carys's loyalties are twisted, and freedom is no longer her single-minded obsession, an avenging former lover threatens to crush Maximus's people into oblivion. Now Carys and Maximus must overcome the devastation of war and face the ultimate sacrifice if their forbidden love is to survive.

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Forbidden Details

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Author : Christina Phillips

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From Reader Review **Forbidden** for online ebook

Jenny Schwartz says

The writing sizzles, but Christina Phillips' real gift to readers is characters with heart and passion. As desperately impossible as Carys and Maximus' love seems, you believe that they have the courage to create a new, shared future. That's the magic -- and the hope -- of romance, and "Forbidden" delivers it.

A wonderful, emotional and sexy read.

Liz says

2 stars for managing to keep my attention.

Besides the confusing druid-gods-Rome-conquering-everything plot, this book's view on sex really bothered me. The heroine's people believe having sex honors their gods (or something like that, it was confusing shit). They talk about sex openly and know who's doing who. And yet the heroine only has sex to offer her virginity to a goddess. She's not even attracted to the guy. It's no surprise the hero has no such problems. This book is double standard galore.

Although the h was not a virgin, she is still the picture of virginity according to various side characters. The H forces the heroine to tell him how many guys she's slept with (1), gets absolutely angry that other men have touched her; but when she asks how many women he's been with, he basically says, "Don't worry about it babydoll. I'm a man." And that's that. He ignores her questions. For almost the whole book he's trying to figure out how to keep her as a mistress after he inevitably marries to beget an heir. Romantic stuff here.

Roksana says

Updating my review from 2nd April 2016 (see "Safe Gang" section)

A warning: This is a very passionately sexually charged romance...expect this:

And this....

And more of this...

Seriously my head was spinning from all that sexual charge in the book and I have never read such passionate romance sexually and emotionally at the same time! For those who like their romance with a mix of fantasy and history throughout look no further and the good thing is that this book is focused entirely on the romance development, so you can witness the thriving love between both protagonists! It was definitely a case of insta lust and then insta love, but, hey no complaining...it worked perfectly here, as both characters were enemies and it took them some time to accept each position. The Hero was a Roman General, but a noble one nonetheless, he respected the heroine and acknowledged her intellect which was very refreshing and there was absolutely no OW for this Hero as soon as he laid eyes on the heroine! He was a bit of a jerk at

the beginning, but that would justify the fact he was the heroin's enemy, but if you pass that you will see his possessive and jealous side he just wanted the heroine for himself...."She's mine"

For the safety Gang: (view spoiler)

Katie(babs) says

Carys and her people, the druids, are in hiding from the Roman barbarians that have taken over their land. As a healer and princess, Carys wants to care for those that are sick, but if she is caught by a Roman soldier, she fears being attacked and raped. She prays to her goddess for answers, but hears nothing in return. She is walking a dangerous line when she watches a Roman bathing near a waterfall. She is strangely attracted to him and fantasies about becoming his lover. When the Roman spots her, she doesn't run in fear, but welcomes his touch.

Tiberius Valerius Maximus is one of the Roman centurions who has invaded this land and practically enslaved the people there. When Maximus spots Carys spying on him, he is both curious and aroused. He won't force himself on Carys as so many of his counterparts do. Instead, he will court her with respect and kind words until she will only want him and no other.

Carys knows that being with Maximus is dangerous. Her one time lover and the high priest, Aeron, is obsessed with having her for his own and uses magic and the power of the gods to show him how to make her love him. But Carys has never loved Aeron, or even enjoyed sex with him, because of his selfishness and greed. She turns to Maximus for fulfillment although she knows they can never have a future together. Soon Maximus will go back to Rome and most likely marry. And since Carys refuses to leave her suffering people, she will stay behind.

As Carys and Maximus's passion for one another continues to grow, Aeron becomes even more unstable and has a plan to not only kill Maximus but make Carys pay for refusing him.

Forbidden is a passionate tale about enemies who become lovers. Maximus is the type to take what he wants, but even though he is a hardened soldier, he is still merciful and simply longs for peace. He finds this peace with Carys, who is insightful to his needs, as well as her own. Carys is very spiritual in her search for advice and choosing the correct path to take. She soon realizes that all that matters is being with Maximus and even defies the gods to be with him.

The setting is rich with mysticism, ancient customs and sensual love scenes between Carys and Maximum where a Roman bath is put to good use. Aeron is a nasty piece of work who has no redeeming qualities and is one of the many obstacles facing Carys and Maximum.

Christina Phillips has a nice way with words and setting up a story. Her love scenes have just the right amount of heat and should appeal to those readers who like a little more spice and passion. *Forbidden* was an enjoyable read by an author who can really tap into the emotions of her characters and the world around them. For a solid reading experience, I would recommend *Forbidden*.

Kirsten Brown says

I Love this book. This reminded me a lot of Anya Seton's Mistletoe and Sword as it was very much about Romans and Druid and a forbidden love between the two. What I did prefer about this was that the Roman way of life was much more brutal, without being overly so.

A great read which is being added to my Favourite's!!!!

Bookaholics says

Forbidden by Christina Phillips
Historical Romance-Sept 7th 2010
5 stars

Forbidden is an amazingly sensual and taunt historical that enthralled this reader. Set in the rough and untamed Roman times it made me want a brawny Roman centurion of my own!

Carys is a healer and a Celt Princess destined for great things. But Carys is playing with fire when she is caught spying on the ruggedly handsome and sexy Roman centurion Maximus taking his bath. When Maximus sees Carys he is mesmerized by her beauty and feels the instant and burning attraction between them. (The immediate scene between them is scorching HOT!) But complications arise because as a Roman it is his duty to overpower and enslave the Celts.

Carys knows wanting the Roman is wrong but she is caught by her elicit desires for his toned body. She has never wanted a man more. But revealing herself to the enemy can only cause heart break and betray her people.

Their star crossed love is also complicated by a jealous and manipulative High Druid named Aeron. Whose craving for Carys body and greed for power threatens to disrupt their fragile love and the Celt's way of life.

At first Maximus doesn't understand his burning need to possess Carys and asks her for 'use of her body' in exchange for his protection as a leader in the Roman army. But as he grows to care for her he begins to questions the Romans way of life. Their plundering and treatment of people they conquer. He especially questions the treatment of the women they view as prizes.

This book was gritty and primal. I felt I was in the Romans times and I loved it! Maximus is pure, raw male and too sexy for words. I could understand by Carys was enthralled with him and wanted him despite him being her enemy. I am also a sucker for star crossed lovers and a really evil villain. It made this book very thrilling as I hoped Maximus and Carys would be able to evade Aeron's nefarious plans and end up happily together.

This book was scorching. I would love to read another book by this author set in the same time. There is something about the Roman era that makes the characters and sex more earthy, sensual and untamed. This is a book that anyone who loves erotic romance and a little 'wilder' historical will definitely want more of!

Reviewed by Steph from the Bookaholics Romance Book Club

booksofallkinds says

Carys has often secretly watched the man that comes to the waterfall, even though she knows that they can never meet. Wanting him will have to be enough, as their dangerous world would forever keep them apart. For Carys is a powerful Druid, forced to hide in the hills as the strength of the Roman Empire tries to destroy everything she holds dear. And the man who has stolen her breath is a Roman Soldier, born to conquer and take what he wants. But when Carys unexpectedly finds herself in his arms, he is everything she has ever dreamed of, and so different from what she thought a Roman would be. But he must never find out what she is...

Maximus is captivated by Carys, his little wood nymph, as soon as he sets eyes on her. But as he gets to know her passion for her people, her stubbornness, and her intelligence, he falls even more deeply for her. Wanting to protect Carys, he is frustrated by her demands that she remain in the hills. But with a High Druid intent on taking Carys for himself, danger starts to close in around them. Will he be able to save the woman who has worked her way into his soul? And can they find a way to bridge the gap between opposing sides in this epic battle for love?

FORBIDDEN by Christina Phillips is the first instalment in The Druid Chronicles Series. I was drawn to both of the main characters for their inner strength and determination to do what is right for their people, and their passionate need for each other. Their tale of forbidden love is effortlessly woven with historical detail and imagery to create a beautiful picture for the reader. Now be warned, this book is hot, with plenty of steamy scenes to raise your temperature!!! With danger from every side, this love story really got under my skin, and I am eagerly awaiting the next in the series.

*Book received from author in exchange for an honest review

Shawna says

3 ½ stars – Erotic Historical Romance

The premise of “forbidden” love between a Roman centurion who’s charged with leading the fight to eliminate enemy tribes in Britain and the princess of a powerful Druid clan who’s gifted with magic seemed like a unique concept for an erotic romance. And I thought it sounded a little bit like the movie King Arthur with Clive Owen and Keira Knightley, which I loved.

It started off really good, and the star-crossed love affair between battle scarred warrior Maximus and beautiful, ethereal Carys was intensely erotic from the beginning. But then somewhere along the way, the story started to drag a bit, and there was a lot of time spent on talk of goddesses, clan politics, magic, and spells. Not that there’s anything wrong with that, but it just got a bit boring and repetitive at times and took away from the romance. It’s labeled as an erotic historical romance and although it’s definitely steamy and the love scenes between Maximus and Carys are indeed passionate and sensual, it’s not overly explicit. In fact, I was in the mood for a little less talk and a lot more action, so I would have liked it even better had there been a bit more heat.

It's an interesting idea and time period for a romance, and I liked the author's writing style. I'll definitely check out the next book, *Captive*, when it comes out. 3 1/2 stars.

Erin Grace says

A scorching, breath-taking read! If you want something sexy, fresh and original that will capture your imagination as well as your heart, I highly recommend 'Forbidden'!

Cynthia says

A nice change of pace from the usual historical romance offerings: A Roman Centurion, Maximus, and a Druid Princess, Carys. Two lovers caught on opposite sides of a war. What a delicious set up for a romance!

And what opposites they are. Carys - A Druid Princess from a matriarchal line. A cultural that holds women in high esteem, honors their Goddesses above all, doesn't believe they need a man's permission. Maximus - Roman, alpha, protective, possessive, sees women as property, patriarchal. It's these differences that Ms. Phillips puts to work....overtime.

He towered over her, his wood nymph, his Celtic lady, his Carys. "Why do you never do as you are bid?"

"Because"--Carys gasped as she flexed her thighs and dug her heels into his backside--"I'm not your slave, Maximus. I'm your woman."

Maximus and Carys truly care and love each other, regardless of the consequences or conventions of what their peers and social standing require. They will do whatever is necessary to protect each other from the ravages of war.

I'm not a big fan of magic, and I felt at times it was excess baggage. One incident occurred when Carys entered into a drug-induced dream state to commune with her Goddesses. Another was during the destruction of the "spiral": Was this an explosion or an implosion? I know Druid magic is an integral part of the story line and Carys's way of life, but I just couldn't wrap my mind around some of this.

And because of that, I was really undecided on a 3 or 4 howl. Oh - The roman bath scene. Okay, a 3.5 Howl!

Skyler says

This book was so much more than I was expecting.

Carys, a Druid, meets a handsome Roman adversary. Their magnetism is instant. From a romance novel, I didn't expect such a fast paced plot with intrigue and historical retellings. Not to mention, great writing. I enjoyed it so much more than I was expecting!

Deanna from Deanna's World says

Forbidden is a sensual journey, a dance between Carys and Maximus as they negotiate the chemistry between them in a time when they are supposed to be enemies, not lovers. It's also a story of how two very different people from very different backgrounds can find common ground with this thing called love.

I'm not a fan of enemies to lovers stories for the most part but the setting of this story intrigued me. I am a huge history buff and I love Ancient Rome and the mysticism surrounding the Druids and their culture. Ms Phillips manages to weave a sensual love story filled with intrigue, politics and opposing loyalties when two warring cultures clash and two people find love. The passion between Carys and Maximus sizzled off the pages.

Carys is a princess and a high born noble in her Celtic world. She is a Druid and a beloved one, revered and honored by her people. She's also a very proud Celt. Strong willed, independent, intelligent. Perhaps a little too proud. Carys frustrated me. Her tendency to run and her resistance towards Maximus got tedious after a while. She was constantly berating herself for wanting Maximus, and yet she was not willing to let him go but wanted him for herself nonetheless. I thought she was being very unfair towards Maximus with all the things she was hiding from him, constantly citing their differences in culture and understanding as her reasons, while taking what she wanted from him. I didn't think Maximus deserved her disdain and her reticence considering he showed her nothing but kindness, generosity and understanding. Carys was as close-minded and uncommunicative and evasive, as Maximus was open-minded and understanding. For the most part, I understand the position Carys is coming from but it bothered me that much of her internal dialogue treated Maximus as though he was beneath her despite her feelings for him.

As for Maximus. I adored Maximus. Tiberius Valerius Maximus. Even his name sounds noble and commanding. Maximus was wonderful right from the start. He was noble and honorable, and he did everything he could based on his understanding of Carys' culture and the situation to treat her with respect and care. He even put her in a position of safety and protection (after she needed rescuing several times!) while Carys continued to resist him and all she was worried about was how her people will think of her and how their mighty princess has fallen for consorting with the enemy. There were moments when Carys said things to others which caused Maximus unease, making him wonder if she was similarly dissembling and omitting things in their conversations and hiding the truth from him and I really wished I could yell into the book and tell Maximus "YES, SHE IS!!" I really didn't think Carys deserved Maximus considering how poorly she treated him.

In spite of me heartily disliking Carys more and more as the book progressed, Ms Phillips managed to captivate me with her thorough research of the Ancient Roman and Celtic culture. The story felt authentic and real. I enjoyed what I learned about the Celts in particular but I confess I had a moment of cheekiness when I read about Carys taking a root of some sort to put her in a trance and to get visions from the gods. I couldn't help but wonder if someone way back when had wandered into the woods, got hungry and decided on gnaw on a tree root which had hallucinogenic properties and went on an almighty trip. Then said fellow decided that the trip so good and he was communing with the gods and decided it was restricted only to the special priests and druids. Of course, I do not mock their culture and beliefs since the stuff fascinates me but I couldn't help the magic mushroom reference as I was reading that particular scene. But seriously, Ms Phillips did a fantastic job of showing the other side of the Roman occupation, of a people and a way of life being progressively obliterated and assimilated into the Roman culture to make way for the future, and how

desperately those people clung to their heritage and did everything they could to resist though they were fighting a losing battle.

And speaking of special priests and druids, I need to give an honorable mention to Aeron, designated bad guy of the story. What a delusional fellow he was. I'm told the name for people like him is a narcissistic sociopath. He had a very special way of justifying some rather heinous acts as sanctioned by the gods and therefore perfectly acceptable. There's a special place in hell for people like him. I enjoyed seeing him get his just desserts!

I thoroughly enjoyed this world Ms Phillips has created and I look forward to reading the next books in the series. Hopefully, I will like the other heroines more.

See more from Deanna's World

Has says

I was really drawn to this book when I first read that it was set during the Roman conquest of Britain, and I am always on the lookout - and a fan – for unusual settings and premises for historical romances. I am also a fan for romances that feature a hero and heroine on opposing sides which *Forbidden* uses as a backdrop, so when I had read the first couple of pages, I was instantly hooked!

Whilst her land has been conquered by the Romans, Carys, a powerful druidess, is being pressured to stop caring for her patients by her head druid, and she is struggling to fulfil her duties as a healer to the people she serves. However, she soon finds herself being fascinated by a Roman soldier, Maximus, who is second in command of the Legion stationed close to where she lives. When Carys sees him regularly bathing near where she works, she finds herself spying on him to catch a glimpse of the man she soon yearns for, but is unable to act on her attraction. But when Maximus discovers her, and realises that she is related to the rebel Druid clans, he also can't help his growing attraction, and both find themselves drawn to each other first sexually, and then emotionally.

Forbidden is a refreshing take of a tale of prohibited love between two people who are sworn enemies. Unlike most books with this premise, the taboo of loving an enemy did not feel forced – or the fact that the characters spent a lot of time blaming and angsting with each other about their opposing backgrounds.

Within their first meeting, Carys' and Maximus' romantic and sexual tension is palpable. If their relationship was like the mercury in a thermometer, it would have blown it apart! The sexy elements of the book did not overpower the plot or the characterisation, but added to their love story. The real heart of the book is the emotional elements between them, and I really liked how that was played out throughout the book. Although the well written love scenes added a sensual layer of heat and passion, and *fans self*, I will never think of Roman Baths the same way again.

Carys is a strong and independent women and it was really interesting to see how she interacted with Maximus about her status as an independent woman in her own right, while he was more accustomed to submissive women from his own culture. What I really liked – which really fleshed out their romance – was the fact that Maximus gave her the space and did not try to overpower, or dominate her. He respected her culture, but he also didn't lose his own Roman sensibilities. But as well as facing their inner conflict about their different cultural backgrounds and stance about the war, Carys faces exile or even worse from her own people if they discovered her relationship with Maximus.

This then leads to the mystical and magical elements of the book, such as the Druids way of life, and their Gods and Goddesses influences on the Druids lives and the people around them. I loved this aspect of the book! It was so detailed and well thought out and I could tell that Christina Phillips paid attention to detail about the beliefs of the Druids, but with her own take. I have to state, though, that I found it ironic that her former lover, the head druid, Aeron, was more domineering and oppressive than the Roman's rules were to Carys' duties, but there is a good reason why this is the case.

Forbidden is a solid historical romance with fleshed out characters against a setting that is not commonly explored in this genre. Because of this I found it was refreshing, passionate and imaginative. Although Maximus and Carys were on opposing sides, there was no forced angst or obstacles that made the book feel forced or melodramatic. And with a strong focus on the romance and relationship against a magical and mystical setting, you can't go wrong with picking up *Forbidden*. If you have a hankering for a really passionate romance that is magical within the romance – as well as with the tone and atmosphere of the book – *Forbidden* is the book for you.

Coco.V says

?FREE on iBooks today (10/24/18)!!

Mandi Schreiner says

Favorite Quote: Gods, if he didn't get relief soon, his balls would explode.

Carys, a powerful Druid can't help herself as she watches a very sexy Roman centurion, her enemy, bathe in a waterfall. She is mesmerized by him, although she thinks she is being sly hiding, he discovers her watching. It is lust at first sight for both of them, but their lust is complicated. They come from opposing sides – both trying to decimate the other. If she were to become enslaved by the Romans, bloodshed of an extreme magnitude would erupt. But they cannot deny the other and they will soon discover there is a greater evil that lurks out in the beyond, waiting to destroy them all.

What really drew me to *Forbidden* is the cover. I think it is beautiful, but it also deceived me. This is a Berkley Heat book, and I should have expected erotic sex to be a big part of it – but the pretty, unique, modest cover made me forgot about the “heat” part. So when I read the first few pages of the book, and the hero is bathing in a waterfall as the heroine secretly watches and rubs her boobies on a tree to get off, I was a little taken aback. In fact, the first quarter of the book is all about the hero with his balls about to explode, and an engorged shaft that makes it difficult to walk. It was a little excessive, although damn sexy. However, the hormones do calm down a bit and after I finished the book, I can look back and enjoy the explicit beginning much more.

Christina Phillips gives us quite a fun, adventurous story that I really ended up enjoying. Maximus is described as barbaric by his enemies, but it is actually a pretty accurate term. Maybe I should say he is a “barbaric gentleman.” He has the “she is mine forever” attitude pretty much from the moment he spies Carys, and it takes a lot for him to let her go at the beginning – but he does act with honor. Carys is no virgin and wants at her Roman. I enjoyed her as a heroine – she is not shy in telling him what she wants, and although their people are enemies, and they have a lot riding against them, their love story is pretty straight

forward and mature.

Carys has to hide the fact that she is a druid from him, and for as smart as Maximus claims to be, I thought he might have figured it out sooner than he did. There are some big clues he conveniently doesn't pursue for a good part of the story. I also thought a bigger confrontation between the two of them when he did discover what she truly is should have played out in a more dramatic fashion.

There is an excellent villain in this book, one that you will love to hate. Also, the supporting characters, in particular Maximus' friend, is set up well and I really want his story, which comes out in the sequel.

Forbidden starts with a bang – literally. Then calms down and there is a nice plot, and still quite steamy action. Christina Phillips has a nice voice and I look forward to more from her.

Rating: 3.5/5
