

RRAH review “a four rose read”

Annie Burrows' CAPTAIN FAWLEY'S INNOCENT BRIDE is much more than a typical Regency romance. While it does have its share of societal posturing, snapping fans and synchronized dancing, it shows a far deeper heroic character than I've read in quite some time. This story was titillating, suspenseful and often very moving. I enjoyed it from beginning to end.

Captain Fawley is a man who has lost much in battle. His wounds are profound, right down to his scarred face and missing limbs. But what is most profoundly wounded is the Captain's heart. Coupled with the blow living as a "diminished" man, his heartache turns to hardness and he believes himself unlovable. Of course he meets a damsel in great distress. Deborah and her mother have been left nearly destitute and since she is a very plain girl who had a health crisis after dealing with her father's final affairs, she has little or no prospects of making a good match. She considers seeking employment—that is, until the Captain makes her an offer she can't refuse.

I enjoyed seeing Deborah blossom under the Captain's attention. There are times when he is out-and-out rude, obnoxious and crass, but by the time he exhibits these less-than-favorable qualities the reader feels his pain, understands his anger and sympathizes with him. His ill manner can be overlooked. Deborah might have stood up for herself a bit more, I thought, but that is only my opinion and I admit I have a fondness for heroines whose spines are a little bit stiffer than this one's was. Still, Deborah knows her heart and what she wants, so who am I to tell her how to get it? Believe me, she needs no assistance! She and Robert have some amazingly passionate love scenes. They are well written and show the true nature of the bargain this unlikely couple has entered into.

CAPTAIN FAWLEY'S INNOCENT BRIDE is a refreshing look at life and love among the ton. I enjoyed it, and I think others will, too. Well done!

Kay James