



Fortune's Hero

Jenna Bennett

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Quinn Conlan had it all: a fast ship, a great crew, a gorgeous girlfriend, money, and adventure around every bend. That was before he agreed to ferry a shipload of weapons to the besieged planet Marica. Now he's stuck in the prison colony on Marica-3, enduring weekly sessions with the camp's "medical team," and praying for a quick death before he breaks under the torture and spills everything he knows about the Marican resistance.

When opportunity strikes, Quinn takes Elsa, a Rhenian med tech, hostage and heads into the inhospitable interior of the small moon where he formulates a plan for getting his crew out of prison, his ship out of impound, and everyone out of orbit. But when Elsa professes her love, can Quinn take the beautiful doctor at her word, or will trusting her—and his heart—condemn him and his crew to an eternity on Marica-3?

Fortune's Hero Details

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Author : Jenna Bennett

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From Reader Review Fortune's Hero for online ebook

ShortyS says

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Like this:

A small dose injected by syringe just burned like the fires of hell and made you feel like your
sk

Claire McFall says

Four is maybe a touch on the generous side, but I'd feel very stingy giving this story 3*. It's well written and I liked the H/h dynamic.

Didn't like the amount of involvement h had with torture and nastiness - :(- but my main issue was the ending. I don't really like cliff-hangers, but I like them even less when they aren't cliffhangers but abruptly stopping in the middle of the action. That's okay in a serial, not so much in a novel.

Charlee Allden says

Quinn Conlan was caught smuggling weapons to the Marican resistance and he and his crew were sent to the prison colony on Marica-3 where he has died, many times, rather than reveal what he knows about the rebels. Each time the torture ends his life, the medical team drags him back, so they can begin again. After months of hell, he's no longer afraid of dying. If he thought it would stick, he'd probably be longing for it.

He has no skin in the resistance or their war and has no reason to be loyal to them..., except he gave them his word when he took the job. As Quinn predicts, this torture session ends in near death and another revival, but after his recovery he finally sees an opening, an opportunity to escape. Unfortunately, there is no where really to go on the desolate moon and his escape relies on the cooperation of the woman who has stood by and watched his torture with cold, emotionless eyes.

It is a new twist on the reluctant hostage romance trope and one that is, for the most part, done exceedingly well. The author provides many trials, dire circumstances, and a slow, believable journey to bringing these two opposing characters together. I say 'for the most part' because there is a point where the heroine, Elsa, declares a night of passionate lovemaking has changed her. I winced a little at the over-the-top sentiment. Fortunately, the author had taken me on the journey and I well understood where Quinn and Elsa were emotionally. I was already rooting for them and a couple of lines in the middle of the book weren't likely to spoil it for me. From there the story only got better, keeping me on the edge of my seat right to the cliffhanger end.

Luckily, this is the first book in a series of related books. I'll be looking forward to more Soldier of Fortune novels from this talented author.

M.E. says

When the author described the book as "Indiana Jones meets Firefly," I was hooked. I love Indiana Jones. I love Firefly. Together? Of course I had to read it.

Welcome to Marica-3, prison world and torture palace. That's unfortunate for the hero, Quinn Conlan, whose gun-smuggling activities for the Marican resistance have landed him in hot water with the militaristic Rhenians and the diabolical Dr. Sterling. Don't let that "doctor" title fool you, because Sterling isn't as interested in the health of his "patients" as the information he can extract - preferably in the most painful way possible. Aided by the beautiful, and capable, Dr. Elsa Brandeis.

But Quinn does the impossible - he breaks out, taking Elsa with him. Then he does the unthinkable - he returns for his crew. Mal Reynolds would be proud.

Admittedly, the first part of the book - Quinn and Elsa trudging across Marica-3 - is a little slow. What kept me going was finding how exactly how these two unlikely lovers were going to get together. Another reviewer mentioned how impossible it would be for a tortured prisoner to escape - but I can see it. I mean, the Rhenians are arrogant. Their prison on Marica-3 is the only thing in town, the landscape is brutal (think Saharra desert), and filled with native nasties. Speaking of that, Bennett does a fantastic job with the alien world building, including a whole host of threatening fauna (worms that tunnel though the body - eww). Hard to believe she hasn't done sci-fi before.

But if the first half of the book is at a slow pace, the second half - pretty much from Quinn's recapture to the end - is anything but. I couldn't flip the pages fast enough because I just knew there had to be more coming.

Bennett did a nice job with the suspense. Is Isaac Miller a part of the crew, or just another cold-blooded gun for hire? Is Elsa's heart really changed, or was it all just a ploy to get back? And the ending? I won't spoil it, but are you seriously telling me I have to wait until fall 2013 to read what comes next?

The only thing missing, and it would have served zero purpose aside from emotional gratification, was a showdown between Elsa and Josie. But hey, you can't have it all.

I never would have figured that romance and sci-fi could co-exist. I am happy to report that I was wrong.

Lucy says

This was 3 1/2 to 4 stars, the last part being a little flat for me. Captain Quinn Conlan and his spaceship crew have been captured and imprisoned in a Rhenish prison. Their crime--weapons smuggling to native insurgents in a planetary system the Rhenish have taken over. The Major in charge of the prison has had the prison doctor and his beautiful assistant, Elsa, torture the Captain to death over and over again, only to be revived by Elsa for more torture in an effort to get information on the insurgents, but it isn't working.

When Elsa is sent to retrieve Quinn for another bout of torture, he overpowers and kills the guard and kidnaps Elsa, forcing her to help him escape the prison. Elsa has been taught all her life that the Rhenish people, descendants of long ago settlers from Old Earth, are superior to all others and that Quinn and his crew are the lowest scum of the universe. But over and over again, Quinn's actions belie all her expectations.

He is polite, for a captor, loyal to death, and saves her from danger again and again from the harsh environment of the desert moon upon which the prison is located. As she revises her opinions of Quinn, she begins to fall in love with him.

I really like escaped convict stories. Add in a little sci-fi and it only gets better. I really liked this story and the plot. There were a few things that kept it from being a solid 4 stars or better--weak or unbelievable dialog at times, Elsa's change in her beliefs regarding the captain was a bit too quick--although she had been observing him for months, so maybe that's not so bad, and the ending, which was way too abrupt. I would have liked a bit more alone time with Quinn and Elsa. This book is a romance, not erotica, and could have used a bit more hotness for me, too. These criticisms notwithstanding this was a very enjoyable story for me and I highly recommend it.

Maggie says

Captain Quinn Conlan hit rock bottom on Marica. Betrayed by his girlfriend, he and his crew are stuck in a prison. The medical team has tried to break him repeatedly – bringing him to the point of death over and over again, but he won't tell what he knows about the Marican resistance.

Elsa, the tech who monitors Quinn's life signs, admires the strength in the captain and falls for him in a big way. When he escapes, she is his hostage. But his re-capture has her re-evaluating her life goals.

Was a taste of life enough for Elsa? Or will she do everything in her power to fully live?

Jenna Bennett is an excellent writer and she had me hanging on the edge of my seat for this entire story. I'm looking forward to more in this series.

Sandy Williams says

Well, that ending was sudden! It didn't quite feel complete either, because there was still a heck of a lot to do to get everyone's butts out of trouble. But I guess maybe we'll learn more about how Quinn and co get out of Marican space in the next book? Hope so.

I enjoyed this book. Quinn, the hero, was freaking awesome. Seriously. Read the book and you'll have a mad crush on him to, if you like Han Solo-like heroes. (I do.)

Elsa was alright. Honestly, I just think I held a grudge against her through the whole book because I couldn't forgive her for standing by and letting someone be tortured like Quinn was tortured (not a spoiler; you learn this in Ch. 1). I kept waiting to read about how she was forced into her position. Maybe someone was holding a family member or someone back home hostage and threatening to kill them if she didn't continue her work? But that never happened. So I had to just accept her behavior and move on.

Still a very good read. If you're a fan of sci-fi romance, you should enjoy this!

Rhianna says

Good FORTUNE for Scifi Romance Lovers

I love the blending of science fiction and romance. It's one of my favorite subgenres, but it's just not as popular as its cousins, paranormal and time-travel. So, when I find a new series of scifi romance that can blend the best of scifi and a sexy romance I sit up and take notice. If you're the same way you are going to love FORTUNE'S HERO.

While I wouldn't quite compare Quinn Conlan to Han Solo, scifi fans who love the hero with a questionable sense of morality will like him from the start. He's taken some stomach turning torture as the story opens and still hasn't betrayed the secrets he's holding even though it's of no real personal benefit to him to keep mum. When the opportunity to escape the Rhenian prison he's stuck in on Marica-3 pops up, he doesn't hesitate to take the med tech in the room hostage. Elsa's been doing her duty as a Rhenian, working under her mentor torturing information out of useful prisoners when Quinn kidnaps her. They're so opposite there's no way an uptight Rhenian could ever fall for a scoundrel like Captain Conlan.

Therein lies a great premise for a tense adventure in the wasteland beyond the prison. The hostile landscape leaves little chance for survival beyond the walls and Quinn refuses to leave his crew behind to rot. But being thrown together by circumstance and facing certain death no matter what they do finds chemistry burning between them but trust isn't so quick to follow.

Gah! I couldn't believe this clocked in at more than 350 pages because it flew by. There were moments when even I wasn't sure they'd live long enough to rescue the crew and had to remind myself that it's a romance and the formula of romance demands a HEA ending. Without that I'm pretty sure I'd have lost hope. Bennett really rakes Elsa and Quinn over the coals and then some. If you like romances where the hero and heroine face life-or-death circumstances to get to their HEA then you will be greatly rewarded with FORTUNE'S HERO.

Scifi romance lovers this is definitely not one to be missed! The series is looking to be really good as whole and I'm super excited to get my hands on the next Soldier's of Fortune book, FORTUNE'S HONOR, hopefully sometime later this year.

Notes: Review copy received via publisher.

Jess F. (From Me to You ... Book Reviews) says

Check out my review and two teasers here:

<http://frommetoyouvideophoto.blogspot.com/2012/11/feasted-on-soldiers-of-fortune-series.html>

Denise Malone says

I absolutely loved this book. Jenna's descriptions sucked me in and made me believe I was watching everything first hand rather than through the narrator's eyes. I know that she started out writing cozy mysteries, but she wrote sex scenes in this book that were hot, hot, hot. I loved the chemistry that developed over the course of the book. I fell in love with Quinn in this book. I can't wait for more in this series.

Marlene says

This dual review was originally posted at Book Lovers Inc.

Has: When I first encountered the premise of a Sci Fi prison break typesque romance it was no contest that I would want to pick this book up! Quinn a smuggler, is captured, imprisoned and tortured for information about the rebels he has been helping with supplies. But he has refused to let the Rhenian authorities to break him down or to betray the Marican rebellion. But during a torture session, Quinn manages to escape with a hostage, Elsa who is a Rhenian doctor who has been assisting with his torture although she finds it distasteful. But stranded in a stark and barren planet, along with dangerous creatures and no water and food, strong feelings develop between Quinn and Elsa and despite their differences, they soon begin to trust each other.

I loved the setting, premise and the romance, between Quinn and Elsa. I felt that Jenna Bennett sets things out realistically especially with the initial mistrust and fear between Quinn and Elsa and I liked how she evolved their relationship over the course of the story to that of enemies to lovers. There was a lot of thought into the world-building, and setting and I could envision the desolate prison planet which were vivid and stark. However the pacing, in the story was a huge issue for me. While I was glad there was a lot of time spent in building up the relationship between Elsa and Quinn, I did find that not a lot of conflict or action was able to bring forward the pace, which felt like it was dragging quite slow especially in the beginning. And the romantic/personal issues between Elsa and Quinn was not enough to engage me in the story.

Marlene: While I, too, loved the idea of a Science Fiction Romance prison break (I really, really loved (review at Reading Reality) Heather Massey's Queenie's Brigade, which uses this theme to the max) Fortune's Hero didn't quite move me in the same way.

The prison planet is pretty starkly drawn (the creepy crawlies, ugh!) but what we don't know is why the Maricans are rebelling and what it is about the Rhenian authorities that make the Maricans need to rebel. Yes, the Rhenians have allowed the governors of this prison planet to conduct atrocities, but is the entire Rhenian government atrocious? We want to believe that the Maricans are the plucky "Rebel Alliance" and that the Rhenians are the evil empire, but we don't actually know. We just know the Rhenians have some extremely rotten apples running this prison planet.

Quinn is a mercenary, after all. Not a member of the rebel alliance. They paid him to run guns and supplies. He's not a true believer.

And Elsa started out her posting to the prison believing in the Rhenian cause, whatever that is. She thought that the doctor was serving the right. His torture of his prisoners changes her mind about his methods, but doesn't seem to change her mind about her country, or planet or empire or precisely whatever the Rhenian group is. Even when she's captured by Quinn, she still believes that Major Lamb is a upstanding Rhenian officer. It's only after some time in Quinn's company that her allegiance changes.

A case could be made that Elsa has Stockholm Syndrome. She's bonded with her captor. An equal case could be made that Quinn has Lima Syndrome. He's bonded with his captive.

Has: I disagree about the lack of explaining why the Rhenian's were so bad and oppressive, because I got the sense they were pretty domineering in the book although I agree that there should be more about why they wanted to take over Marican system. What made them so special and was it over resources? But I definitely

agree with you about Quinn's reasoning on not betraying the rebels to Doctor Sterling and it didn't ring true on why he would not especially with the extent of torture he went through which was horrific. But I think with Elsa, she wanted to be a doctor and to heal, but her society's structure and ethos seems to be very patriotic and authoritative and in a lot of ways reminded me a bit like Nazi Germany.

I actually felt that their bonding was the strongest element in the book, because while they were hiding outside in the wilds, they were both stripped from what they knew and that helped them to bond with each other. I think those were my favourite scenes in the book, because the romance for me was genuine and real.

I didn't see Elsa being a brainwashed citizen and I think she was a bit of a rebel at heart and being with Quinn helped her to face her feelings. I do think it was idealistic and naive to trust and actually like Sterling, who came across as a cold-blooded sociopath. While with Lamb, I didn't get a great impression for him being a smart leader and was incompetent especially towards the end where I think the escape was too easy to be realistic. But I was glad she never defended them or thought of them as being good men at the end, but I wished there was more time, in her questioning her home-land's beliefs and the damage they have done to other planets and people because it was not realistic.

Marlene: There are definitely hints at the beginning that the Rhenians are supposed to remind us of Nazi Germany, but to me, that's all they are, hints. And all those hints come from Quinn's perspective as the prisoner. I'm not saying he's incorrect, just that he'd be inclined to see things in the worst light possible.

Likewise, Sterling is definitely a sociopath. He clearly loves torturing people. However, except for the staff at the prison, most Rhenians seem to worship Sterling as an inventor of medical miracles. He's a two-faced sociopath, and probably just eats up the worship. The prison seems to be a collection of Rhenian sociopaths, with the exception of Elsa.

I think my point about Quinn was that the rebel cause may not be all that glorious. Quinn needed to be paid to serve that cause. He's holding out from revealing what he knows for a whole lot of reasons. It's part of his own code of honor, and because it's the best way of keeping his team alive. Once he talks, Sterling will have no more use for any of them, and will probably kill them all.

The bond that rises between Elsa and Quinn does make up the lion's share of the story, and it does strip away the masks that both of them, especially Elsa, normally hide behind. However, both the syndromes I mentioned do make the emotions they engender feel real. They need that bond to survive. If there were a second book, I would expect that figuring out if what they discovered between them was real or the heat of the moment would cause some tension, but would stand the test of time.

The romance was well done. It makes the story work. My question is whether it's happy-for-now or happy-ever-after, considering the circumstances where it begins.

I would also wonder if there wasn't a tracker somewhere, because that escape was too easy. If the Rhenians have conquered so much, they can't be that incompetent.

Has: I think Fortune's Hero basically sets up and establishes the characters and the setting and that there will definitely be more to come because there is a bit of a cliffhanger at the end and there are hints of what direction the next book may go into. I think the main issue is that this could have been a tighter book if it was a novella because it was overlong due to the lagging pace and lack of clarification on the agenda the Rhenians have over the Maricans but I suspect we will learn more in the next installment.

I hope the romance and the issues that both Elsa and Quinn have will be further developed in the next book and we get to see more of the wider universe. I did like the general world-building and the tone and feel that Jenna Bennett has created was well done but I agree there were definitely issues with the details and of the

main plot and even some aspects of the characterisations.

Marlene: I agree 100%. This would have been a better book if it were shorter. Maybe not novella-length, but definitely cut down. I wanted more explanation of the Rhenian agenda and the Marican rebellion, and less repetition of the prison planet terrain.

The romance was well-developed but this couple is going to have a lot of issues that will need to be resolved in the future. How will a Rhenian “traitor” fit in with a band of mercenaries? Did they get tracked? Was the escape part of a bigger plan?

Verdict: I give Fortune’s Hero 2 and a half creepy-crawly stars (read the book to understand)

Has: Whilst I liked the premise, some of the execution was a bit of a let down, especially since it didn’t expand on important aspects of the plot and along with the bogged down pacing the initial promise didn’t live to my expectation. The romance was a highlight for me but it wasn’t enough to carry the story for me, but I enjoyed Jenna Bennett’s voice and I will definitely check out future books of hers but I don’t think I will follow the sequel.

Verdict: I give Fortune’s Hero two star and half stars (and no creepy crawlies linked to it because I don’t like poisonous spiders!)

Patricia Eimer says

There are a few things you should know about me at the beginning of this review.

1.) I don’t like man vs. nature stories. I don’t. I never have. I’ve never made it all the way through most of the classic movies of man v. nature: The African Queen, any of the Indiana Jones movies, I haven’t even made it through Romancing the Stone and for Heaven’s sake that one is about a ROMANCE WRITER. I mean that one should be an obvious like for me right? Nope.

2.) I don’t really like sci-fi romance. I’ve tried. Multiple times. There are some great ones out there but I can’t really get into space ships and aliens and all that.

Okay, so those two disclaimers out of the way, when I agreed to read Jenna Bennett’s Fortune’s Hero I didn’t know that what she was giving me was a sci-fi romance that involved man vs. nature as he trekked across a miserable planet to break out of prison and then break back in to get his friends.

No, all I knew was that Jenna had written it and if Jenna writes it, I’ll read it. Seriously, her Savannah Martin Mysteries is probably my favorite series of all time. I once recommended it to someone as a way to teach about southern female culture to Northerners. If they read Savannah they’ll suddenly understand the twisted freaking backgrounds we come from. So, Jenna said I have a new book, want to review. I said, sign me up oh creator of my favorite literary character.

She sent me a sci-fi man v. nature. Elsa is not Savannah. Quin is not Rafe Collier. Somehow Jenna made a couple that was even HOTTER than the ones I loved before. Rafe has been kicked out of my proverbial book boyfriend bed, given a pat on the head and told to put his fictional clothes on to make way for Captain Quin Conlan.

Seriously, I don’t like Sci-Fi or Man v Nature but today at my daughter’s swim meet they had to literally

take the kindle out of my hands so that I could watch her race and the whole time I was going “but, but, can’t they postpone her race? I need to find out what happens!!!!”

I’m sorry Savannah, you’re still my chicken fried home girl, but you’ve been replaced as my favorite Jenna character. We can still stay friends though right?

Rea says

I absolutely adored this story, but my friend hated it. So it would seem that it has to be your cup of tea for it to work for you.

I tend to read more fantasy than sci-fi, but I do like to dabble in sci-fi from time to time as well. I really enjoyed the prison planet setting here, and the slow-building romance was right up my alley.

It had all the right ingredients and I was in the perfect state of mind to make this one of my favourite reads of 2013.

The ending makes it obvious that the story isn't over yet, but due to the length of time it took before the sequel was released, my enthusiasm has dampened a lot and I now have other books on my radar.

Maybe if I go back and reread this one it'll rekindle my interest in the series.

Cynjin says

Yep, the pace is slow. Yep, there are some things that make you go hmmm, like: They're on a planet where the only facility is a prison. The H has been badly, badly tortured. He manages to escape, with a hostage, to a flat, inhospitable terrain - and they aren't recaptured in minutes? The reason for the underground scene totally escaped me for quite awhile, until I worked out a reason that satisfied me.

However, by the end of the book, I was mad...because I'm dying to know what happens next! The slow buildup turned out to be just right for investing in this book. The crew is marvelous, the H is truly heroic, and the h turned out to be pretty darn brave. Can't wait to see Conlon's Crew again!

Sandra says

This was somewhere between 2 and 3 stars for me. I like the setting and the development of the relationship between Quinn and Elsa and the relationship itself. I wasn't crazy about the torture and the rape that happen in the prison. These make sense for the story, but they are just topics that I don't enjoy reading about. However the 2 major things I had gripes with were Elsa's active participation in the torture not only of Quinn but of other prisoners (note she only stops because she falls for Quinn and escapes with him, not because it is wrong)and the extremely abrupt end. The story itself moves quite slowly and as we near the end things start to heat up action wise then bam it ends with no resolution. It would have been quite easy to end with the crew at their final destination and still set things up for another story. I still enjoyed the overall story and am looking forward to reading the next one.

