



Bad Things

Varian Krylov

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Xavier makes a lot of people nervous. The rest, he flat-out scares. More than his hulking, tattooed body, it's his predator's gaze that makes people feel vulnerable, as if he had the power to read their thoughts and see their soul. For his lovers, it's Xavier's ravenous appetite for all things carnal—for the taste of flesh under his tongue and the feel of a trembling body under his control, for whispered pleas and muffled cries—that makes him dangerous.

But recently, driven by a festering rage against the men who attacked his sister a decade ago, Xavier has developed a taste for a different kind of hunt and conquest: stalking men who do truly bad things and punishing the predators he sniffs out. The problem with vigilante justice, though, is sometimes the man in your trap is innocent.

Carson suspects he's playing a risky game with dangerous men. But the lies are convincing, especially when they're slipped to him among hundred dollar bills. He never guessed how big and dark the secret hidden under all the lies and money could be. And he has no idea he's not the predator, but the prey, until it's too late.

And you can't beg for mercy when there's a gag in your mouth.

But when Carson escapes from Xavier's trap, he's forced to accept that Xavier is far from his most dangerous enemy. Xavier may even hold the key to overcoming the painful past that has kept Carson prisoner for almost two decades.

Bad Things Details

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From Reader Review Bad Things for online ebook

Baba says

2 WTF stars. Review completed September 22, 2014

Favorite quotes:

After disliking Dangerously Happy I thought I'd play it safe and downloaded a sample before giving Bad Things a go. But, unfortunately, not even that could save me from another disappointment. I really disliked Xavier very much in Dangerously Happy and dedicating a story to that character meant that he needed to be redeemed. What came out of it, however, was more or less forgettable and Xavier wasn't redeemed, at least not in my book. I don't want a nice sweet bow at the end of a book and in between some vigilante justice, a whole lot of fucking and then more fucking, some pseudo psychoanalysis, plenty of sugar and cheese that did nothing at all to provide the story with much needed substance. I liked the beginning and I sure as heck had my absolute highlight when (view spoiler) and Xavier were sexing it up (maybe (view spoiler) Yet the more I read of Bad Things the less I enjoyed it. It was bad. The part where Xavi (view spoiler) felt off and left me confused. How can anyone combine sweetness with (view spoiler) It left a bad taste in my mouth. Besides, I don't label this 'dark'. Dark reads don't mix (view spoiler) with 'let's hop onto the merry-go-round and eat cotton candy'.

There were many short, choppy sentences that annoyed me, i. e.

Showering together, even though he was going to work out and would have to shower again. Soapy caresses. A few wet kisses. Breakfast. Easy. Quiet.

The scene at 49 % made me bang my head on a table:

"What? You decided I was gay? And that made it okay to (view spoiler)

"No. I saw that there was something I could give you. That there was a way I could make you choose me over (view spoiler) and his money or whatever he was giving you."

Xavier was very generous with his Spanish expressions. So let me say something, too. Que mierda hablan!

And then at 93 %:

"Even (view spoiler) I started to love you. The real you. Real love. And you started loving me, too. You already loved me, the first time you fucked me."

Within three days, the (view spoiler) Whoever wants to believe that can do it but I don't.

Warning

Like I mentioned already there was a lot of fucking. (view spoiler) I felt that there wasn't enough page time dedicated to really develop Xavi and Carson's (**NON-**)relationship. Instead, every issue was fucked or (view spoiler) into oblivion, simply garnered with some sappy amateur psychobabble. In my book, that was gag-

inducing. In consequence, the author never managed to redeem Xavier.

At 99 % the very best quote...

(view spoiler)

...but unfortunately the execution that led to that conclusion failed big time. However, I guess I'm ploughing a lonely furrow because everyone else loved it.

A few writing samples for your perusal:

A playful light in his dark eyes, that boyish grin pumping Carson full of adoration...

The way (view spoiler) downturned mouth softened, Xavier could see his self-mutilated pride had been cauterized before it bled out.

Xavier ran his hand over Carson's hard dick, his hanging balls, his exposed hole, drinking down the nectar of Carson's stiff, trembling suspense, wondering if he'd guessed the significance...

Christ. He said it so, so sweetly, it darkened that pale shadow under the fullness in Xavier's chest.

Xavier laughed, channeling his real anxiety into an alchemical mask of self-doubt.

I had to read that twice. Alchemical refers to noble metal. It means changing a metal into gold, but it also means to transform something simple or common into something extraordinary or special.

He watched the rage and the horrible sadness that had been swelling and swelling in her drain away, like sand out of an upturned bottle.

And when Xavier dropped (view spoiler)

Welcome to the healing world of magic dicks--brought to you by amateur therapists (view spoiler)

Add in a HUGE and gag-inducing amount of sugar and cheese and top everything off with sad puppy-eye looks, a shy blink, lots of blushing and tons of adorable smiles and boyish and mischievous and endearing grins. Don't forget to repeat fear, sweet, tender, shy, adorable, luminous, sad, warm, and mischievous ad nauseam because it will help you to deal with your low self-confidence, your self-loathing and self-pitying thoughts. Plus, as a very nice side bonus, it will also help you to get over the (view spoiler) and, in the end, you will magically fall in love with (view spoiler) and, after all, that's exactly what he needed and wanted even though he wasn't aware of that little detail. And let's simply forget that he (view spoiler) Et voilà. *waves magic wand* You're willing to love yourself again, to put all your hang-ups in the deepest corner of your mind and are fit to be released to the real world and overjoyed and eager to commit yourself to a relationship. You will proudly declare "I am a happy gay man," who, unfortunately, fell in love with an asshole. But, wait, he is such a terribly EMPATHIC man. Sorry, that's me being sarcastic. Let's forgive him all of his sins, shall we?

(view spoiler)

My reaction? Jesus fucking Christ is that cheesy. *insert major eye-roll*

It does get cheesier, though...

(view spoiler)

(view spoiler)

The common pet peeve of mine. **Repetitiveness.**

Situation as per September 20, 2014

195 x grin, grinned, grinning

Xavier grinned.

...Xavier gambled on a playful grin.

Xavier grinned and leveled a...

Xavier risked a flirtatious grin.

*Xavier grinned. Again and again and again and again and again and again. *gags**

Sucking. Biting. Panting. Grinning.

He couldn't resist grinning.

Xavier gave him a teasing grin, and Carson...

...through his reps; that amused grin.

Xavier's taunting grin widened...

He grinned back at...

etc.

182 smile, smiles, smiled

...it bent into an irrepressible smile, his dark gaze so full of dangerous, vulnerable love,...

Such a radiant smile.

Xavier gave him another tender smile, ...

Such a tender smile,...

Xavier gave him a sad smile, and...

God, that smile.

...took the book, his warm smile...

Xavier gave Carson a warm smile...

a wide, easy, slightly artificial smile.

They were just looks. Smiles.

God, his smile was the saddest thing Carson...

His smile stayed wide and warm...

Xavier said, smile as wide and warm as...

...had the sweetest, most true smile of anyone...

...Carson waited for Xavier's tender smile to bend into his amused grin.

No, a tender smile.

...gave him an impossibly sad smile.

etc.

68 x sweet

A sweet, deep but slow kiss.

*Xavier said with sweet patience.
"Aren't you sweet. Lying to spare my feelings."
He said it so, so sweetly,...
Sweet Carson.
...melancholy under all that good, sweet warmth.
And those sweet whimpers.
...to every touch so fucking sweetly.
etc.*

74 x sad, sadder, saddest, sadness, sadly

*Pobre. He sounded so sad.
...that sad ache was crushed under a growing, shapeless rage,...
...under the weight of a sadness almost as heavy as it had been...
Face so sad you'd think...
How fucking good those sad looks of his...
Then sadder and sadder, minute by minute...
Sadder than ever.
...in Carson's sad eyes extinguish...
...the rage and horrible sadness that had been swelling...
...bright, warm beauty and its sad, filthy lostness.
etc.*

107 x fear, fears, fearful, feared

*...shrink to a spark of fear.
...up and need swept away fear like a devastating wave.
...a bright constellation of desperate fear.
...between fear and obedience.
...beautiful face of love and fear, incarnate.
...Fear and pride mingling, like...
Watched his fear flare up big and bright.
etc.*

48 x shy

*A shy but wide smile to make your heart warm and your cock hard.
Like a shy, nervous seduction.
Shy.
Shy all over again, like a colt who hadn't been broken.
Still so shy.
...it was because you were shy about letting me see you.
Shy and sweet.
His kiss shy and tentative.
etc.*

35 x blush, blushing, blushed

*Still blushing.
Was he blushing at the idea of watching that?
It made him blush.
Blushing like crazy, Carson obediently...*

*A beautiful, deep blush that said everything.
Carson was blushing and squirming under...
All Carson did was blushing.
He blushed.
Carson laughed, still blushing, but almost not caring.
When Carson blushed,...
etc.*

57 x beautiful

*"How beautiful we are," Xavier said, his voice so low and smooth it was like bathing in it.
Beautiful Carson. Every taunt, every threat...
That flame in his beautiful eyes burning like a barn on fire.
Beautiful back.
Did this beautiful man make love to you, when...
"You're so beautiful, Carson. You must hear it all the time. ..."
Christ, it was beautiful, the way his abdomen--
...of a man, so fucking beautiful Carson almost blushed...
Fuck, they were beautiful.
Fuck, he was a beautiful tease.
etc.*

Everything goes easier when Jesus and God are lending a helpful hand:

36 x Jesus

*Jesus. Every time Carson turned red like that, Xavier's dick got...
"Jesus. Yes." Adorable, the way Carson hesitated for a...
"Jesus, Carson. We had a beautiful night. ..."
"Jesus, Jesus," bucking, cock seizing against...
But Jesus, Jesus, even that wild terror...
etc.*

112 x God

*But, God, Carson wanted to hear it.
God, it felt cruel, hurting him like that.
"God, I love you, Xavi," he sighed.
God, that smile.
etc.*

105 x warm, warmer, warmest, warmth, warming, warmly (too many warm smiles)

Wonderful but warning warmth sinking through Carson's chest, into his belly, then lower.

The term soul has been stressed 39 times. I think it would be good to use it sparsely because I don't take that crap seriously anymore. More often than not it's just trite, shallow, cheesy and melodramatic.

There. Looking into his eyes, watching his pleasure swallow his soul as his body convulsed and his throat

contracted and a howling cry broke against his teeth.

This man was at ease in his wiry body, ardent, pouring his usually shielded soul forth.

I had a nice chat with a friend. Here are our emails:

I find it annoying when authors throw Spanish around in their stories in an excessive way.

puta Jesus Cristo

puta idiota

puta Dios

puta Cristo

puta Madre Maria

puta cabron

puta mentira

puta zapatos estrechos

puta pene maravillosa

etc.

The term puta has been mentioned 31 x in Bad Things.

My friend's response:

Spanish or any other language when it's not organic to the plot. You shouldn't notice, or if you notice it needs to feel natural, an integral part of the character, like the colour of his hair, for example.

We exchanged more messages but I'll quit here.

Bottom line, Bad Things left me extremely underwhelmed and disappointed. Given the fact that everyone loved this book, you might as well ignore my opinion and give it a go. I hope you'll enjoy it more than I did.

JustJen "Miss Conduct" says

A review by The Blogger Girls.

This story had a few different elements to it and turned out to be not quite what I expected. It centers around Xavier seeking revenge/justice for the rape of his sister and taking down the leaders of a sex trafficking ring.

There are basically three parts to this story, or at least, that's how it read for me. First, we have Xavier and Carson. What a rocky start these two have. They meet at work while Xavier takes it upon himself to go undercover as a bouncer in order to infiltrate the sex traffickers. Carson is a bartender in the club who is somewhat innocent but gets sucked into helping the bad guys. He gets caught trying to spy on Xavier, which leads to Xavier keeping Carson captive in his basement and somewhat torturing him. There's a fine line here as Carson responds to Xavier's actions and treatment, which is pretty rough. Poor Carson was afraid of everyone – the bad buys and Xavier. I will admit that I really didn't like Xavier much through this part of the story. He doesn't seem to have very many actual redeeming qualities at this point, though there are reasons

for his behavior.

Then, after things come to a head with the bad guys, Carson is brought to Xavier's friends, Aidan and Dario, for safekeeping while they wait for the police to take everyone down. Whewwww, was this part of the story hot stuff. Aidan and Dario are completely in love, and I loved everything about them. I had not read their story, Dangerously Happy, but I most definitely want to after meeting them here. They show Carson a totally different side of things, and I wanted them to keep him forever.

The final part was back to Xavier and Carson. As much as Carson longed for what Aidan and Dario had, he couldn't get Xavier out of his head. He found he craved what Xavier gave him. Now, this part is where Xavier turned things around and sort of won me over. Maybe because he showed more emotion and caring, I'm not totally sure. Xavier and Carson had a pretty volatile relationship for most of this, but they seemed to be a good fit, especially by the end.

This is gritty and dark, and even the parts I shouldn't like, I found steamy and intriguing. While it took me a while to really get into this, I was on the edge of my seat after about halfway and didn't want it to end. I loved the mix of edginess, steam and sweetness. This is the first book of Ms. Varian's that I've read, and it surely won't be the last.

Natalia says

4.5 stars

I loved it, although I was expecting it to be more dark. Goes to my favorites shelf.

Jan says

Love those two as a couple.

Carson was just what Xavier needed to bring out his softer side. That entire rough and bad boy attitude needed a balance.

Xavier was just what Carson needed. A person to force him to accept who he was and let go of all traumatic brain wash done by his family.

I felt in my heart all Carson's pain. How cruel can some parents be not thinking that the way they deal with their children will leave marks FOR GOOD in their lives.

They were perfect for each other.

This book was so much more than I was expecting after reading the blurb. It was intense and emotional.

It was also a dark read with dubcon/noncon, just a warning for those who are not into reading something as dark.

Tamika♥RBF MOOD♥ says

Dnf @ 40%.

So this was a first for me with this author, and from what I've seen I don't think I'll read anything else based on other friends honest reviews whom I trust.

The choppy sentences I could deal, the over dramatic thinking that went into Xavier little ass brain, I can deal with that as well. The down low cop, I loved those seems.

Too me reading this Xavier was just as much a predator as the rapist, traffickers, and other criminals. I just couldn't understand how he believed his actions were justifiable and the rapist wasn't. Did he not think it wasn't rape but his victim was a grown man, or because they weren't teenage girls or his sister. Like if I'm going to read a book and the villain is the main character, please state in the beginning he is a psychopath and not have me read and getting madder during the first 40%.

I guess I decided to DNF because after the rape. Let's call a spade a spade people, Carson got free, what does he do? He decides to let Xavier know he is free and leaving. DAFUQ??? Why, I'm convinced he doesn't have Stockholm's Syndrome he is just dumb as fuck. I skimmed and then when Carson finally asked Xavier, why did he rape him? Well Xavier response that it wasn't rape, if it was some poetic bullshit he said that I can't recall but it was bad. I definitely couldn't put up with the foolishness.

In conclusion don't use my review as a base on reading this. I'm not a good candidate. In fact I deleted it off my kindle as soon as the steam left my ears. I always wondered what happened to the club, but at this point I don't give a fuck anymore!

Bey Deckard says

4.5

Xavier, the hulking, tattooed bruiser with the soft nougat centre. Carson, the beautiful boy with the beautiful cock. Add some organized crime shenanigans, deep-seated issues crippling both the main players, and some very interesting smearing of the non-con line and you've got a read that would appeal to those who like their erotica on the darker end of the spectrum.

I rather enjoyed it, and I will definitely check out the sequel when it comes out. :)

Ula'ndi Hart says

Overall book rating: 4.5

Audio Book: N/A

Book Cover: 4

I've tried a Varian Krylov some time ago. Back in the days when MF was still high on my reading list. Truth be told I didn't get far and I never finished it. But THIS....This was something I couldn't put down. I just didn't want to.

I am a firm believer of only reading "dark" reads when you are in the right state of mind. Only then can you appreciate what you reading and give it a fair chance. So stumbling on to this in my current state of mind I can only say WOW. WOW. I really really really liked this.

It surprised me that at the end of this book, the only thing I really focused on, the only thing that really mattered to me, was the depth of emotion between Xavier and Carson. All the F**** up churning of desire and hate and hope and loss and whatever the hell else they had bubbling up between them in gallons.

Xavier is so much more to me than just a psycho without limits. He is a blend between Dark and Light. Between Hurt and Comfort, Love and Hate, Punishment and Liberation. He is the Protector and the Avenger and ...most of all – Xavier is Carson's savior.

He brings new meaning to the phrase – Cruel to be kind. And I LOVE HIM FOR IT! I love him for being the unapologetic ass in this story.

He makes Carson bleed in so many ways and through the hurt he brings him back to life. Because Xavier is brave enough to push too hard.

I even understood the part where Carson is forced to live with Aiden and D. They way I see it, Carson was so closed off for how many years, he imagined dreaming of soft and sweet. Tender loving and sharing. All things Xavier is not. Well, things he can be but Xavier will never be ONLY SWEET, he has a darker side and Carson had to experience the time with Aiden and Dario to get to know HIMSELF. He had to see that he yearns for an illusion. That what he dreams of and what he really wants / needs is not what the kind of love these two men share but rather his own flavor of caring. Something uniquely Xavier. If Carson didn't get that opportunity he wouldn't know this about himself.

I loved Carson. I hated what his stupid parents did to him and I will gladly take that bloody marker they used on his shirt when he was nine years old and write ASSHOLE over their faces. I hope it's a permanent marker that takes weeks to wash off.

Carson is so perfect for Xavier it makes me want to weep. Yes, there were times I wanted to repeatedly hit Xavier with a frying pan. But after everything, I love him just as much as I love Carter. Both in their own ways.

This was amazingly done.

Jill says

4.75 Stars! Loved this story! I especially loved Xavi!

Fabi says

This is my 4th (5th?) time reading this book. It never loses its place among my all time favorites. Every single time I read it, I am amazed.

It is creepy, dark, dirty, kinky and so very stark.

And yet, all I can think when I finish reading it again is, "ok, back to that favorites shelf my love" ?

Original review below:

I read this book about six months ago...THREE TIMES

some of my reactions to it...

Sweet mommy dearest, I thought I was becoming jaded from reading too much. Losing interest in books. Either not finishing or picking up and putting them down over and over. Well, I was just riding the wave until this author crashed into my life. I don't care if she writes about men, women, or pretty yellow daisies, I'm reading all her freaking works.

Once you read even the first few pages, you'll be hooked. And BOY does it get better and better and better as it goes on. This one is more than an "I really loved it" one for me. I found myself replaying scenes, rereading pages, then rereading the entire book over again several times. There is so much depth to the characters. There are so many heart stopping moments. There is just so much in this one book.

The main character? You won't know if you even LIKE him at some points. You begin to wonder if he is the good guy or the bad guy. And does it resolve? Hmmm, let me tell you... I did nothing but read the entire weekend, and the book was at the end; I had no more fingernails left and no sleep for two days, and I was STILL wondering. -What a ride!- Every time you think this book has given you all, it gives more. All the way through. I was at 95% and still freaking out over new things. Whew! What a book!

I was in such a fog after reading this book that I could hardly think of anything else. So, what did I do? I read it again! Then...I immediately picked up another of Krylov's books about a couple who made a cameo appearance in this one. And then...I read this one again.

In case you were wondering...this book rocked my world! My number one read of 2014.

Chelsea says

Ho-ly Shit! That was such an intense book! So not what I was expecting at all, but so incredibly good! I am not going to be able to put how I feel into words, but seriously, these characters are so..... wonderful, complex, soul-consuming!

This will sound cliché but the journey that both Xavi, but especially Carson goes through, to overcome their pasts is fucking incredible! It's written so eloquently (unlike this review) that my life *was* this book for the past few days.

That scene at 87% has probably become one of the most moving scenes I have ever read in romance!

Fucking incredible.

Be warned, Xavier is a cruel bastard at the beginning, but we get it as the book progresses. Also there is on page sex with other characters (all male), but please please don't let that deter you, it works well within the story and for Carson and Xavier's relationship development.

Ugh I'm really scared that I've hyped this up too much now and you'll go out and not like it *please like it*.

? BookAddict La Crimson Femme says

Buy this book and read it now! Ms. Krylov writes a masterful piece of line blurring non-consent. In Bad Things, Xavier possesses a hero complex. His inability to make the males who raped his sister pay for their crimes fester in him. He's a big guy who keeps his body in peak shape as well as his mind. When his sister is once again threatened due to her job, Xavier can't stand by and watch. Since he comes across as a dumb thug body builder, he easily slips into the shadier side of life to secretly help her out.

This story is truly about bad things. The bad things humans do for fun. People who have too much money and without moral can cause the worst things to happen. These are the people Xavier wants to help his sister take down but to do so, he too steps into the dark side. The question is, does the ends justify the means? From Xavier's perspective - yes. It is up to the reader to decide if they agree.

Ms. Krylov paints a depraved picture of a sinister human trafficking organization. The way this corporation sells their human product is quite ingenious. Whilst it's reprehensible, it's amazing clever. The details Ms. Krylov puts into this story make it multi-layered and rich. The bad things which happen hold a reader hostage by enticing them to flip page after page to see what will happen next. The criminals in this story are not stupid. They are also easily identifiable. What is difficult to decide is who is the good guy. Are there good guys?

The character building in this book is phenomenal. Xavier is a complex character with an intense and dangerous side. His dominance exudes from his pores and any submissive within his vicinity will become weak in the knees. His style of interrogation is erotic and oh so wrong. He imprisons a pawn and takes his sweet time sexually torturing and humiliating the boy. This right here is how dark erotica should be written and it's so exquisitely stimulating. Intellectually, the reader knows Xavier crosses several lines and he is bad. However, his dialog and actions generate a lustful feeling and flame the reader's arousal. In some ways Ms. Krylov perverts BDSM into a bad manner yet it doesn't feel BDSM hostile. The way she writes the kinky sex never crosses the line into BDSM attacking. It ends up being a fabulous BDSM dark fantasy. Many readers may wish to suffer under Xavier's cruel punishing yet pleasuring hands.

The erotic aspect to this story blends perfectly with the plot. The way the ending occurs is believable and works out just the way a reader would want. That is, the relationship between Xavier and his little fucktoy. The ending for the criminal is not satisfactory. Perhaps this is to leave it open for another book in this world. A reader can only hope. This book is highly recommended to m/m readers who want something dark and erotic.

**provided by BDSM Book Reviews*

Xing says

Rating: 2.5 stars

Living with the guilt of his sister's rape, Xavier has grown and nurtured an inner hatred for many kinds of people. So it isn't surprising when he decides to unofficially assist in an investigation into a human trafficking ring taking on the front of a high end club catering to rich men. And perhaps it isn't too much of a stretch that he meets a very attractive man who may be key to ending it all.

If I had to describe Bad Things, I would say it was a road trip that starts off pleasantly, but ends frustratingly with traffic and detours. Xavier was definitely the more interesting of the two, but Carson (unfortunately) gets a good amount of page time. Their relationship starts off unconventionally to say the least, but the progression of it didn't feel very believable. In a way, most of the emotional development was recognized in hindsight, which made for quite the jump in their opinions of one another quite a leap.

However, the unbelievable relationship between Carson and Xavier didn't tone down the sex. Holy cow, talk about steamy. Bad Things probably ranks up there in terms of sexiest book of the year. But even too much of a good thing isn't always...good. And after a while, I was actually getting tired of the sex scenes. Chalk it up to old age, but I need a little bit more than a good ol' orgasm (or three).

In terms of plot, the book definitely had one to start. But somewhere along the way, it got derailed by the introduction of two characters from another book, Dangerously Happy. Perhaps if I had read this other book, I would have enjoyed the portion introducing them. Or perhaps not. Either way, I started skimming towards the middle as I realized not much was happening except for lots of sex, kissing, and picture taking.

And while the book starts off deliciously dark with an unconventional start of a messed up relationship, the last portion of the book was nothing but melodrama and sappiness. Which, is not my sort of thing unfortunately.

So overall, Bad Things just didn't work for me. Great steaminess and one interesting character (Xavier). However, the story was probably 30% longer than it needed to be, and the plot felt derailed towards the middle. While I'm happy with how the the book ended, I'm not quite sure if it was worth the time and trouble to get there.

~Mindy Lynn~ says

2.5-3 stars

I expected to feel the way most of my GR peeps did by the end of this book (loving it). That didn't happen. I didn't connect with either MC. I couldn't bring myself to like them either. They only started making sense together at the very end. The beginning was OK. Then it got intense and disturbing. I didn't enjoy any of what happened in Xavier's basement. It turned me off of Xavier completely. I'm just not a fan of "rape" (who is) or the kind of "play" that makes a person feel humiliated. Even if in the end that is what that said person likes. Not my cuppa, capiche?

Carson was no better. He liked to play victim, but yet he wanted more. So yeah, nope.

Then there was the moments with Aiden and Dario. I didn't feel like it was needed. I was bored. I kind of skimmed some of those moments.

Then we moved on to the trial and of Xavier and Carson being thrown back together. I sometimes felt like I was reading different plots rolled up into one book. It didn't feel cohesive to me. I think maybe if Xavier was

with Carson throughout everything in the book, or we got to see what was happening with Xavier while Carson was with Aiden and Dario it would have come together better for me.

The last 25/30% was probably the better parts of the book. Although I never felt like there was any real romance in this book. They had sex. A lot. But there was no real relationship. And the book seemed to go on for much longer than it needed to. It got tedious after awhile and I started to hate myself at the end for picking this as my next read. lol

So in the end this book just wasn't for me. But for many it was. So give it a go or don't. Either way, happy reading, dolls! xx

Natasha says

This. Fucking. Book. *scrubs face*

Hands down, the best MM I've read this year.

(spoilers in this review)

Let's get things out of the way by stating it wasn't perfect (to me, at least). A few parts I could've lived without, a tad "Good Will Hunting" in parts.

But fuck. It was pretty fucking close.

Xavier is **fucked up**. And not in a cute way. He is literally a psycho. He is LITERALLY psychotic. And I adore him. He's hilarious. And the things he does... there is no line for him. He doesn't even know what crossing the line means because in his world, there is no line.

He says some fucked up shit. His thoughts are along the lines of: God. He looks absolutely terrified. Doesn't he know what he does to me?

Fuuuuuucked up.

My pal CC has a great review for this book here that I'd suggest you read.

All of these stars are for Xavier. He is one of the most fucked up characters I've read about in MM romance who stays true to himself. His characterization is perfect. Excellent writing, and the author seems to really know and understand the characters. I disapprove (strongly) of characters who have a sudden change of heart because of **love** and they change their stripes. That doesn't happen at all in this book.

Gah. I'm ranting because I just finished it, but it's so fucking good.

The last line in this book? SHIVERS. SO GOOD. The way it ended was perfection. Precise. Clever. Not force-feeding the author all this corny bullshit. Just...perfect.

Don't read this book if bad things offend you.

If you aren't into MCs who literally get off on revenge-death-rape, then maybe it's not for you. Just saying.

(but it's still so fucking good)

Optimist ?King's Wench? & MANTIES Champion says

This book... I swear to all the deities... It did things to me. Nice things. Not nice things. All kinds of things.

“The humiliations and defeats, given with a primitive honesty, end not in frustration, despair or futility, but in hunger, an ecstatic devouring hunger-for more life.”

~Anais Nin

Cards on the table. *Bad Things* won't be for everyone. It's intense, full of angst and... it's completely fucked. Seriously. **F-U-C-K-E-D**. The subject matter, Xavi and Carson's relationship, the situations they find themselves in, their reactions to those situations, all completely fucked. Yet, I totes loved them. I was enchanted from the start by Xavi in *Dangerously Happy*. I'm fairly certain that alone cements my depravity.

Xavi is an antihero. He gets things done using unorthodox methods, but he is loyal to those he loves. He'll do anything for them which is how he winds up in this clusterfuck of a situation. His sister, Elena, was gang raped at 18 which was the catalyst for a suicide attempt and her subsequent decision to enter law enforcement. At the beginning of *Bad Things* she witnesses a gang rape which dredges up the past for her and Xavi. For Xavi this translates into going undercover and isn't strictly legal. He sets out to right a wrong on a human trafficking case of Elena's that got dismissed on a technicality and ends up as a bouncer at Gomorrah where he meets Carson, the bartender, along with a cadre of unsavory characters.

Xavi is a tattoo artist and a sadist, but more than that, he's one of those people that have perfected the art of reading others. Not in that weird prescient way which is so popular in romance fiction-"the perfect dom", all-knowing, all powerful, precognitive... total bullshit. He watches, learns, looks for signals and isn't always right. Just 90th percentile. All of which makes him exceptional at the mindfuck and he mindfucks the bejesus out of Carson.

Carson is a naive, somewhat desperate young man who gets caught up in a situation that is bigger than him and through a series of events lands him in Xavi's basement naked, bound, gagged and terrified. The trouble is he's desperately, perhaps foolishly attracted to Xavi. An attraction he's denied since he was a boy thanks to some vile parents who decided to eviscerate a nine year old. The shame and humiliation that wafts off Carson feeds directly into Xavi's sadistic nature.

Does Xavi go too far?

Probably.

Possibly.

I'm of the opinion that the ends justify the means which isn't a popular opinion, but there you have it. I told

you. Depraved. *shrugs*

I think Carson needs Xavi and all the "scary" to face himself and the demons of his past. I also think Xavi needs Carson to bring some light into all that dark and to give him someone that's his. They've both been alone for far too long. Their relationship is unconventional in both its genesis and evolution, but it is one that I'll not soon forget.

Cuffed to the bed (because Carson still needed that, not to surrender to Xavier, but to surrender to himself), and carefully (which didn't necessarily mean gently) palpitate his soul, find his dark, empty places, and fill them all, one-by-one.

What I like about Ms. Krylov's writing style is her uncanny ability to plumb the depths of the human psyche. She is exceptional at illustrating how complex and unpredictable humans can be. She turns her characters inside out and gives you all of them, even the distasteful and irrational. She excels at illustrating the duality of weaknesses for what they are as well as strengths and individuality. The healing but not transformative power of love seems to be a constant in her work which is something I appreciate over magic cocks.

She has the erotica gift. **Damn.** She does for erotica what Jake Jaxson does for adult films-shows you the beauty of it. She captures the total experience from the emotions to the environment in such vivid detail it becomes visceral. As you can imagine, to achieve this takes words, but I'll give latitude when the author is painting a picture this gratifying.

"Holy Christ, the look on your face," Xavier growled. "I want to fucking devour you. Like parents have that urge to eat their young."

Word. <---*pun intended.*

This wasn't the book I was expecting. I expected a more conventional romance between these two with more sadomasochism and traditional scening. What I got was more complex, and ultimately, more satisfying.

It's not perfect. There are editing issues and I concede the story is not everyone's cuppa, but it was perfect for me and probably some kindred depraved souls out there.

An ARC was provided in exchange for an honest review.
