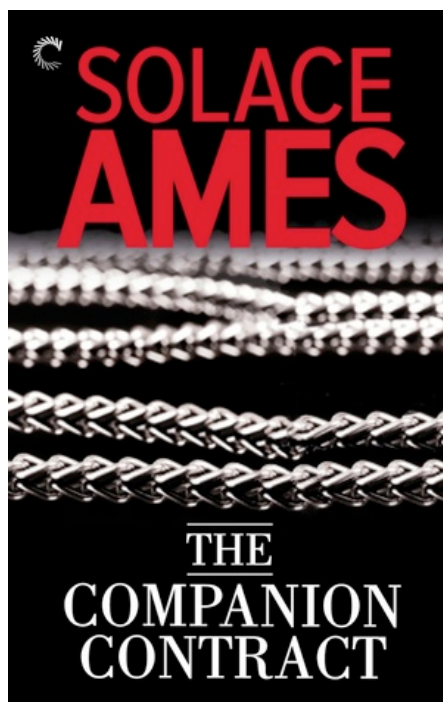




The Companion Contract

Solace Ames

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Control. Submission. Power.

Amy Mendoza knew she'd never have a Cinderella story. She walked away from the ashes of her childhood on her own, and signed her first porn contract the day she turned eighteen. The money's been good, but it's time to walk away again before the life drags her down. When a mysterious stranger offers her an unusual contract—sexual companion to a recently relapsed rock star—she accepts.

Amy quickly and gratefully falls into an easy rhythm of control and submission—but it's not her client who keeps her up at night. Emanuel, lead guitarist and the man who hired her, occupies her thoughts—and soon, her bed. Their connection is intense, and although Amy knows sleeping with Emanuel isn't what she's there for—isn't what she's being paid for—what's between them is too strong to ignore. But there's more to Emanuel than Amy knows, and submitting to him might come at too high a price...

89,000 words

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From Reader Review The Companion Contract for online ebook

Tina says

Read this on vacation; can't remember much...or maybe I'm just old. Yeah, it's that old thang.

What do you get when you take one Albino rock star, one half-Filipino porn star, and a rock star who needs a sober companion who will also bang, blow, and whip him per doctor's orders? Well, you get this book.

Emanuel, albino and lead guitarist for Avert, hires Amy to help Miles, another Avert band member, stay sober while the band tries to stage a comeback. Amy's tired of doing porn, so I guess being a paid companion for a lot of money looks good in comparison. At least I thought so when I quit porn. What? Was that audible? Moving on...

And if Miles needs to bang one out in her butt as part of his recovery, whatevs. Not like she hasn't done it before. But I would...maybe...just maybe...question which branch of psychology the doctor practices because...ow. However, sounds like Amy's butt is made of stronger stuff than mine, so power to the people.

The problem is that Amy is drawn to Emanuel. But it's hard to start a relationship when you've got another man's peen in your mouth. Makes conversation very difficult.

But Amy and Emanuel work it out, and he takes her to Pound Town. Sorry, Miles! Good luck with your sobriety! Maybe your peen can be your sober companion now that Amy is with Emanuel.

Ames' books are gritty and dark--they ain't pretty. Amy lets Miles use her body; she gives Miles some good ol' fashioned BDSM beatings; and Emanuel puts a hurtin' on Amy 'cuz she likes it. Reminds me of making confession on Sundays.

An interesting book but darkly erotic. Romantic in its own way as Amy yearns for Emanuel but not Disney Princess sweet. More like Maleficent on a bad day, whippin' yo ass.

Ally says

While I can really get behind this book in terms of the diversity of lives it portrays, it was just not my style.

Ranging from addiction to transgendered to the blurred lines of bisexuality and race, including albinism, The Companion Contract was an extremely diverse read about people from every walk of life.

The first half of the story was interesting. Amy is a porn star disenchanted with the business. Honestly, when she signed this companion contract with a rock star albino I was hoping for a story more akin to Leah Raeders. I was sorely disappointed.

I didn't like Amy. I can respect her for being sexually comfortable and laid back. But I didn't need to hear about it every second page. If I hadn't been reading this while waiting for a flight, I might have dnf'd it.

Overall: great premise, poor execution.

Ceilidh says

Review available on Bibliodaze.

<http://bibliodaze.com/2015/01/review-...>

Allison says

Unhappy with her life as a porn star, Amy takes an offer to be a companion to a former rock star, trying to make his way back into the stop light. It is her job to watch over him and help him transition into a sober lifestyle, meeting all his needs.

This book was a hot mess, IMO. I did not finish it, stopping at 55%. It was like watching a horrific car wreck, while you don't want to look.. you just can't turn away until you get to the point you have seen enough. That is where I'm at with this book.

I kept trying to give it one more chapter, trying to find something within the pages to hang onto.

Unfortunately I did not find it. I never connected with the characters. I don't understand the idolism Amy has with Emmanuel. And let's not mention the fact I wanted to slap Miles half the time for his fit throwing immaturity. I just didn't get this book.

I also did not like the transition in scenes without a break of some sort. I would often have to reread paragraphs trying to figure out what was happening and how the character went from one place into another from one sentence to the next.

I know there have been some higher reviews, some people seem to love it. So I want to remind those reading this that this is my opinion, and my opinion is my own.

NOTE: This book contains sexual situations, some BDSM scenes, drug addition, transgender characters and same sex relationships.

****I received a digital copy of this book in exchange of an honest review****

Elisabeth Lane says

I'm not sure I actually wrote reviews of the first two LA Doms books: The Dom Project (which was clever, hilarious and sexy) and The Submission Gift (which explored intriguing ideas about relationships, gender constructs and sex work). They were both stellar reads for me. I was disappointed with The Companion

Contract in comparison, though it's not actually a bad book.

The story revolves around Amy Mendoza, a Filipino-American porn star on the verge of retirement and Emanuel, the Colombian lead guitarist for a rock band on the rebound. Emanuel hires Amy as a sober companion for the band's struggling lead singer with the understanding that one of the ways she might distract him is via sex. So far, so good, right?

The problems for me stemmed from two things: 1) the book is first-person POV entirely from Amy's perspective and 2) the ensemble nature of the cast detracted from the main romance. What that added up to is that I didn't feel like I got to know the mysterious, aloof Emanuel very well at all. He seemed like a good enough guy--loyal and fierce about protecting those under his care. I just didn't quite feel the love. And, for me at least, it was immediately clear why anyone would love Amy. She's smart and sexy and struggling a little bit with where to go next in her life. And her characterization was spot-on.

The large ensemble cast was an interesting choice, but unfortunately one that didn't work well for me. A band has to have other band members and an entourage, plus Amy knows a lot of people in LA and so her friends and family make appearances too. In particular, there are Miles, the lead singer Amy is hired to babysit, and Emanuel's cousin, super interesting characters who seem ready for a book of their own. It's just that I thought too much of their backstory and current struggles were written into this book. I actually enjoy when romances are interconnected, but this one seemed to happen at the expense of the main story. I think if the entire series had been written like this, it would have been less jarring--for example, the way Kit Rocha's Beyond series is written--as a completely interconnected world. But while characters from the previous books make cameos in the others, the other two books in the LA Doms series were just more focused.

I really wanted to love this book as much as I did the other two, but unfortunately it was not to be. It's still worth reading, even if you haven't read the other books (which all function as stand-alones), mainly because Amy is great example of why diversity in romance is so hugely important. Her experiences, her voice, her journey, everything about her was perfection. I just wanted to see more of her with the love of her life.

Xan West says

Complex, nuanced, intensely compelling story, wonderful characterization. Beautiful. The novel is so balanced. It tackles complex stuff, allowing both the hard stuff and the hope in at the same time. I especially liked the depiction of solidarity & community: among sex workers, immigrants, and women of color. I also loved how queer the story feels. Not just the many queer characters but the story itself. The D/s relationship is deeply nuanced, very hot & just gorgeous, from negotiations through play. It feels like such an important story. I'm so glad Solace Ames put The Companion Contract out into the world!

???'s Xamante de los spoilersX says

DNF

No cumplió todas mis expectativas, me estaba gustando hasta que Amy y Emanuel empezaron a salir, de la nada Amy sale con que lo ama y yo estaba como: *Wait, WHAT?*. Igual vale la pena darle una oportunidad por la diversidad que tiene además de que Amy esta segurísima de su sexualidad y no se avergüenza de eso.

Amaranthine says

Apologies in advance, this review is likely not going to be remotely helpful.

I don't know what to say about this book. I don't know what to think about it. It's certainly not what I was expecting. From the description, I figured on a read that was sort of smutty, and maybe a little dirty. What I got was this insanely compelling allegory on life, sexuality, immigration, and the human condition—complete with bizarre ocelot analogies.

Written entirely from Amy's perspective, her narrative is quite bluntly honest. And though her voice is sometimes oddly stilted, the text often takes on a poetic, almost lyrical, quality.

A touch gritty and at times near vulgar, the book is so straight forward and hyper-realistic, that it is utterly surreal. Which makes no sense, I know. It's just...it's really, really good. Do yourself the favor of giving this one a chance. I can't imagine that you'll be sorry.

For the sake of full disclosure it must be stated that I received this book, free of charge, from Netgalley.

cEe beE says

I loved this. Vivid, emotional and raw. Honest and gritty. Hot. Racially diverse. Passionate love. Epic. Five stars for me.

Sonja ✧ Badass Wanderer ✧ says

7.75/10

'The Companion Contract' has great characters, who feel real. I can imagine meeting them in the flesh. Solace Ames writing is incredible, it was a welcome surprise.

All I can see anymore is you. You drown the world in your light.

I received an ARC of this novel thanks to the publisher via NetGalley in return for an honest review. My thanks for the opportunity.

Ana Medeiros says

**** ARC provided by NetGalley ****

I just finished reading (Christmas day!) the Companion contract by Solace Ames and let me tell you - this book is something else! Solace knows how to write and she knows how to grab the reader's attention right on page one. I found it amazing how easy it was for me to connect with Amy and to understand where she was coming from. Creating characters that you can relate to is tough but Solace does it superbly well. Being

inside of Amy's head was entertaining as hell. And the sex? Loved it. All of it!

The Best: Is not often that you read erotica with such unique characters that feel so real. Not to ruin the surprises this book holds for its readers I won't go into detail but one thing - Emanuel. Wow.

Buy it? Yes. And that's a loud yes!

Emily May says

About this time last year, I got into reading a lot of erotica/erotic romance - ssh, don't judge me, the British winters are cold and lonely :P But I stopped pretty quickly because there was **so much bad**. Most of my reviews were 1 star rants and, let's face it, when you've read about one throbbing penis then you've read about them all.

So we parted ways. I read more YA, fantasy, sci-fi and contemporary, and I forgot about erotica... until I saw this book highly recommended in my Goodreads feed. *What was this?* **An erotic romance filled with unique dynamics, diverse characters and more than a touch of the girly tingles?** No way! But apparently yes.

The Companion Contract is surprising in the best of ways. For one thing, as much as I pride myself on being liberal and open-minded, I'm a bit of a puritan when it comes to relationships - by that, I mean that I like two characters (don't care about their gender) who have sex with each other, don't dally in that whole "love triangle" business, and don't go around shagging others outside of their relationship. It's not that I care if other people do this, just that it doesn't turn me on. I'm also not a big fan of threesomes.

However, this novel actually challenged the way I think about things. Perhaps the most interesting thing about The Companion Contract is how Ames clearly distinguishes between sexual activity and passion/romance. The protagonist and narrator, Amy Mendoza, is an American-born Japanese-Filipino porn star looking to get out of the business. She's had sex with countless men and women and never feels ashamed of her sexuality. She enjoys sex and doesn't have any qualms about getting down and dirty with men she's just met.

In this book, Amy is offered a job as a sober companion for a rock star recovering from a drug addiction. She's happy to do it because the guy - Miles - is hot, she likes having sex with hot men, and she gets paid to do it. They have a lot of sex, often kinky sex, and she enjoys it. But things get more complicated when she begins to develop a very different set of feelings for the albino man who hired her - Emmanuel.

I imagine this story might be hard to swallow for those who feel that love and sex are inextricably entwined, but I appreciated the way Ames managed to challenge my views. She also portrays all the difficulties female sex workers face in the industry without ever turning this into a lesson on the "dark truths" of porn work. **It was surprisingly sensitive, thoughtful and interesting.**

I also think there is much room for praise where the characters are concerned; firstly, because of their diversity - a Japanese-Filipino protagonist, a Colombian albino and a transgender woman, to name but a few - and secondly, because of the way the author never neglects their characterization. For example, I felt sure that Miles would be a throwaway character used to bring Amy and Emmanuel together, but he had a complex personality and history of his own.

Top off all this good writing and seriousness with a heavy dose of hot sex and you have a pretty damn

impressive erotic novel. I think my only complaint is that the book is a little too long. There were a couple of scenes that could have been shortened, or simply cut all together. But still, **definitely worth reading**.

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The Romance Evangelist says

A copy of this book was provided by the author for an honest review at Romancing Rakes for the Love of Romance.

THE COMPANION CONTRACT is the latest entry in Solace Ames's excellent LA Doms series, and although it ended up being a good read for me, it wasn't nearly as good of a romance as her previous stories.

In this story, we meet Amy Mendoza, who lost her entire family to deportation at the age of thirteen, forcing her into life choices that no child should ever have to make. Now eight years later, the world knows her only as the porn star Serena Sakamoto, and she's made the most of what life has dealt her in order to stay alive and send money back to her family in the Philippines. But when Amy's good friend Chiho needs rescuing from a Hollywood party gone wrong, the man who helps them out might end up being the one person Amy can count on to be there for her when nobody else ever has.

Emanuel de la Isla experienced the best and worst of life as he moved from a violent upbringing in South America to incredible success as part of the seminal rock band Avert. When he witnesses Amy's strength in handling pressure under fire, he realizes she's the perfect person to keep track of Avert's problem lead singer as the band attempts a long awaited reunion album and tour. As Amy becomes indispensable to the success of the band's future, it becomes all too obvious that she's just as crucial to Emanuel's happiness as he is to hers. But when the band's planned future derails yet again, it remains to be seen if Amy and Emanuel's love can survive outside the protected bubble they'd created together.

As with the other books I've read by Solace Ames, I was struck by the richness and elegance of how she structures her stories and develops her characters. No matter how unlike the events and people she writes about are with respect to my own life, I am always able to fully relate on an emotional level to what her characters are feeling and experiencing. In THE COMPANION CONTRACT, our heroine is a porn star who deliberately chose this career on her 18th birthday because she knew it was her best option to make enough money to support herself and her distant family. She falls in love with an albino Afro-Colombian who is the lead guitarist of the band she loved best as a teenager, and becomes the close friend of both the band's lead singer, who has ongoing problems with drug addiction, and the trans woman he loves but cannot have. All of these characters are fleshed out beautifully and their interactions with the hero and heroine are both organic and essential. By the end of the story, each character is in a better place than they started, and optimistic that they will continue to be happy.

Yet, as a romance first and foremost, THE COMPANION CONTRACT missed the mark somewhat for me. Although I believed in Amy and Emanuel's love, it was often pushed aside in favor of the various dramas associated with Miles, Avert's unreliable lead singer, and Xiomara, the trans woman important to both him and Emanuel even as she was still learning how to live as her true self. And with the story told entirely from Amy's first person POV, it was difficult for me to understand what motivated Emanuel beyond caretaking of his loved ones and a sexual pull toward Amy that she shared in return. That also affected my reaction when Emanuel and Amy were briefly separated, as she worried he wouldn't return even though he swore he would, and I wondered why she didn't believe him when I'd never seen any reason why he would lie.

Still, THE COMPANION CONTRACT is a lovely read overall and if you're good with the romance being equal to other parts of the story, then you shouldn't have any problems. Either way, I'm still a fan of Solace Ames and look forward to what she'll be writing next.

Favorite Quote:

I wasn't a beggar or a queen. I had room in my heart to love everyone who stayed behind.
I was only myself.
And that was enough.

Jill Sorenson says

I loved it.

I've never read anything like this. I didn't love everything about it but it still gets 5 big stars because the strengths far outweighed the weaknesses. I liked the heroine from the start. Amy is a porn star unhappy in the business. In the first chapter she collects her drugged-out friend from a party. The friend starts convulsing and an ambulance is called. This is not a great time for a meet cute. While the paramedics are working on her friend, she gets the hots for a large, mysterious Colombian albino former rock star.

Rock stars and age differences (older hero) aren't my favorite. She's 20. He's close to 40? The description made him sound like an albino Lawrence Fishbourne from the Matrix. He hires her to be a sober companion and escort for his recovering (maybe) addict lead singer, Miles.

This combination of elements is unusual, to say the least.

I liked the portrayal of Amy's sexuality and the unflinching look at the porn industry. It was uncomfortable to read about some of the things she'd done. It was uncomfortable to read about both characters' backstories. The author doesn't shy away from ugly topics. Amy is sexy and good at her job. She's not broken or defined by what she's done for money.

The writing throughout is lyrical and beautiful, sometimes too poetic for my taste when describing music and intangible things. Some of the dialogue sounded unnatural, with deep thoughts people seldom express out loud. Other lines were biting and funny. "I want to fuck you like an ocelot." I lolled. The writing is as unique as special as the characters. I thought Emanuel was a little too perfect, but it really bothered me that he only saw his daughters 3 times a year and this is presented as ideal. 3 months a year? 3 weeks a year? I also liked Miles as a character, but not a romantic hero.

I took my time reading this and really enjoyed the experience. It was thought-provoking, beautiful, ugly, different, excellent.

***I follow this author on twitter and we share the same publisher. I bought the book.

Isamlq says

I am unsure on my rating...

Those handful of references she makes to where she is from (and I am not talking about the porn industry here) simplify that aspect to its negatives, yet the bigger more important thing- as to who she is and who she has chose to become was splendidly done- dark, different, but factual; she doesn't dramatize much- as former pornstar meets former rockstar with oddball entourage/not- entourage alongside, things got interesting as they both reveal their pasts an? how the same has brought them together.

Bonus for me Xiaomara (sp?) and maybe even Miles.

Thank you, NG!
