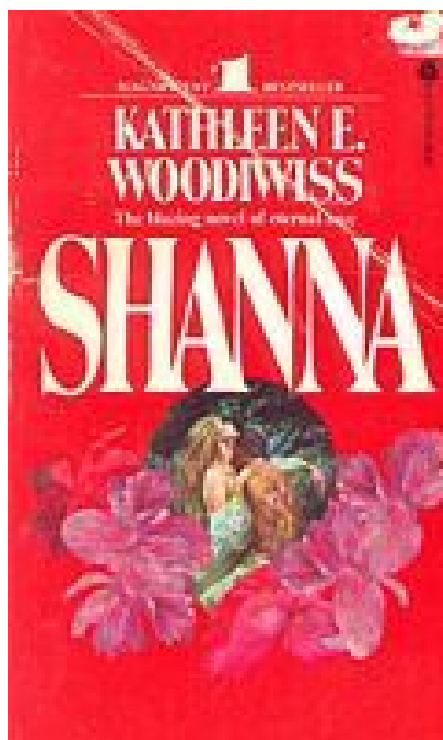




Shanna

Kathleen E. Woodiwiss

Download now

Read Online ➔

Shanna

Kathleen E. Woodiwiss

Shanna Kathleen E. Woodiwiss

Behind the foreboding walls of Newgate Prison, a pact is sealed in secret -- as a dashing and doomed criminal consents to wed a beautiful heiress . . . in return for one night of unparalleled pleasure.

In the fading echoes of hollow wedding vows, a promise is broken -- as a sensuous free-spirit flees to a lush Caribbean paradise, abandoning the handsome stranger she married to the gallows. But Ruark Beauchamp's destiny is now eternally intertwined with his exquisite, tempestuous Shanna's. And no iron ever forged can imprison his magnificent passion . . . and no hangman's noose will deny him the ecstasy that is rightfully his.

Shanna Details

Date : Published 1977 by Avon Books

ISBN :

Author : Kathleen E. Woodiwiss

Format : Mass Market Paperback 666 pages

Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction

 [Download Shanna ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Shanna ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Shanna Kathleen E. Woodiwiss

From Reader Review Shanna for online ebook

Lisa Kay says

One day in 2027 *Shanna* will officially become a true “classic” in lieu of just a “bodice-ripper” or “historical-romance”. Until then, I will just have to refrain from tagging it as such for my personal GoodReads bookshelf. But, just so you know, it is one. A classic.

It is also the only historical romance book my husband ever listened to, against his will and with strong protestations, as read by me. We were going snow skiing, back in the days when we couldn’t afford to fly, and it was a 14 hour road trip; one in which, with his manically determination, he would only stop once and only for gas. I used one hand to pack the cooler, while I kept the other hand holding the book, eyes glued on the pages of *Shanna* and Ruark’s incredible story. As I made it out to the car that night, I was already gripped by KEW’s tale (and half in love with Ruark) and dying to know what happened next. When it occurred to me: there I was, with a captive audience! I had to go back to the beginning so my husband would not be lost, but I didn’t mind.

Midnight, November 18, 1749

London

Night gripped the city with cold, misty darkness. The threat of winter was heavy in the air. Acrid smoke stung the nostrils and throat, for in every home fires were stirred and stoked against the seaborne chill that pierced to the bone. Low-hanging clouds dribbled fine droplets of moisture which mixed with the soot spewed forth from London’s towering chimneys before falling as a thin film that covered every surface.

The miserable night masked the passage of a carriage that careened through the narrow streets as it fled from some terrible disaster...

From that moment on, I was *in* that carriage, surrounded by that dark night, jolting over those cobblestones. And so was my husband. For this is not only a romance book, but a **high-adventure** story. My spouse has been always a sucker for swashbucklers like *Sea Hawk* and *Captain Blood* and this had all those elements: prison, the threat of the gallows, escape to an exotic island, an ingenious and dashing hero, amazing secondary characters, rat-infested dank holes, sailing ships and pirates. And with the additional scenes in the untamed backwoods of a fledgling country and a nice little mystery sub-plot. Plus, *Shanna* is a bitch! For it is really the *Taming of the Shrew* - only with tons more sex - so there was a lot more he liked about it than I!

True, I stopped to ski, then went on to read while he continued his marathon hot-dogging down those snowy slopes of Sun Valley, Idaho. However, he didn’t piss and moan again when I picked it back up for the ride home, to continue on from where I’d left him in the story. And I didn’t mind re-reading that part again either. :-)

Maybe it’s time for another re-read!

Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says

This one of those books I loved for the hero, and wanted to drop the heroine off a cliff. Back in the day, that

was rare. Usually the heroes were jerks with a capital J, and I just wanted the heroine to get away from the hero and give a rude gesture as she walks away. I should reread this. It's a long book, though. Probably should finally read Outlander, first.

Carla says

There are books full of jerk heroes who redeem themselves in the last pages and people simply love them because they are rude, arrogant, self-confident, whatever. So, I don't understand why so many people didn't like Shanna. She's that kind of person, with one difference: she's a young girl and not a 35 year old jerk hero. She's totally unexperienced and knows nothing about life. She's a scared girl who dreams with a man who's the opposite of Ruark, probably because she's not prepared for Ruark's fully committed adult love. But as the story grows, Shanna will grow up with it and she will become a real heroine.

I confess that one of the most delicious parts of the story was to watch Shanna's growth while I delighted myself with Ruark's wonderful, fearless and persevering love, which knew no barriers or sacrifices.

Maureen Feeney says

Ruark is in prison waiting to be hanged for a murder he did not commit. Shanna has to marry or her father will choose her a husband. Desperate she propositions Ruark, marry her for a night of passion before he dies, this way she becomes a widow and is free. That is the first 80 or so pages. Then we have nearly 600 pages of a fast adventure, bondsmen(slaves), revenge, colonials, pirates, kidnapping, a couple of murders and love.

The story is brilliant and Ruark is the perfect to die for Hero. Shanna!~, what the hell was wrong with her. She was a spoiled whiny bitch. While most women would kill for a man like Ruark, she was a cold cruel brat that I wanted to use as a football!!

Then KEW did the unimaginable, a small miracle even. She redeemed Shanna. The spoiled child was gone and a loving caring woman was in her place. But it was the way KEW redeemed her, it was done so slick and subtly that you hardly noticed. Over a few chapters Shanna was forgiveable, human and I loved her. Which proves what a great writer the late KEW was!

Any body that reads the older 80S Hist/Rom will know that the Hero's usually start off as being jerks, this book is different as in the Hero is great its the Heroine thats a jerk... Fantastic read and highly recommended.

V. PARENTAL GUIDANCE ALERT: A Court of Wings and Ruin is NEW ADULT/EROTICA but Goodreads editors won't tell you says

I'm leaving it unrated because I can't remember much. I read it like four years ago.

Consuelo says

Vaya chasco, no le pongo una estrella porque al final lo he terminado, hubo momentos que pensé no

seguir....:(

Christine says

Recommended to me as a romance novel classic, apparently there is a whole generation of romance novel readers that started out as pre-teens with this book as a fondly remembered introduction to the genre. Considering the ponderous length and wordy descriptions in the book I find it impressive that they were so engaged. I suppose it just goes to show, never underestimate the motivating power of a hot love scene. :)

The plot twists and turns and twists again! Ruark, the hero, is awesome. Very alpha-male while being uber patient and loving (well, from the middle on anyway). The heroine can get a little annoying, but when i found myself getting annoyed at her for not just acknowledging her feelings and going with it I remembered a couple things in her defense. 1.) In the beginning Ruark is not sweet and loving, he's angry and demanding about his deal unconsummated. And he's a convicted murderer! 2.) It's 1750. Classism as word doesn't exist, it's just accepted as the way things are. She has been raised to be a spoiled brat and her father basically told her her one goal in life is to snare a suitable husband and get with child. It's understandable that she balks at declaring herself the wife of a slave and takes some time to realize the worth of the man and the depth of her feelings. It's not entirely fair to judge by our modern egalitarianism. 3.) Most people in real life take at least a year before they pledge themselves in marriage, so I guess I can forgive a romance character for taking more than the usual 2-3 weeks to realize she's madly in love.

Anyway, I really enjoyed the epic romancy-ness of it all. And *rawr* Ruark!

PS-- I wonder (since this is considered a romance classic) if Outlander's Claire BEAUCHAMP is Diana Gabaldon's homage to Shanna? Ya ken?

Floripiquita says

Más de 20 días he tardado en leer esta historia, cuando devoré Una rosa en invierno. ¿La culpa? Shanna. En un libro tan extenso como éste, que no puedas soportar a la protagonista principal -por indecisa, clasista, vengativa, irreflexiva, altanera, actuar como el perro del hortelano y no sigo pero podría- hasta más de la mitad de la historia se hace muy cuesta arriba. Si no fuera por ella y el exceso de paginación, me hubiera parecido muy entretenida. No en vano, está llena de aventuras; no paran de pasar cosas; el protagonista masculino, Ruark, es un Dios entre los hombres, con una capacidad de amor y perdón infinita, y hasta salen ¡piratas!

La frase para subrayar de este libro: No sé si es peor el dolor de mi pierna o el de mi entrepierna. Ejem, muy sutil para la época.

#RetoWoodiwiss #RetoRita2
#Campañaromantica: Piratas

Searock says

[It couldn't get much more tidy or corn-venient. (hide spoiler)]

Erin says

Update/Edit: 26/06/18

As I stated below, my mothers copy was so well loved that I couldn't resist buying my own copy (for a whopping €27 I might add-worth every cent). I managed to get my hands on this BEAUTIFUL cover which I am sure is well known in the historical romance community so I just had to brag about it:

This was my mom's favorite book and since I was little she has always preached to me about how much I would love it and why it was brilliant.

She loved it so much that by the time it got into my hands, it was worn and tattered, broken in half, pages taped in and taped back together...but none of that took away from the magic and romance that is Shanna by Kathleen E Woodiwiss.

I found my mother's view of this book to be true...(Here is the cover-That isn't even attached to the book anymore, I wasn't joking about the condition I got the book in):

This was my second Kathleen E. Woodiwiss novel. My first being The Flame and the Flower which I loved, so I decided to tackle this 672 paged book-the largest amount of pages I had read at the time.

It quickly become one of my favorite books.

I loved Ruark Beauchamp (the hero) and couldn't understand why he fell in love with Shanna ~~When he could have been with me~~-with her being a such a brat and only thinking about herself but somehow, he knew she could change and loved her for her good aspects instead of the bad. I liked how he could forgive so easily even with all the pain she puts him through and he never gives up on her, Striving to show her how much he loves and cares for her through out the book.

Though Shanna may be immature and self-centered in wanting to live the dream of her childhood fantasy, Ruark moves heaven and earth for her love and becomes a dream grounded in reality (of the book at least). I think many woman want the perfect suitor and I believe Ruark is just that. He is simply perfect and so devoted to Shanna, it kills me.

My god, the way Woodiwiss writes! 'Shanna' was written as if it was meant to be poetry! I love the dialogue, many of the scenes and have doggy eared my favorite pages.

At the beginning, all I could describe Shanna as was: selfish, naive and childish. However, as a reader I felt myself grow up and mature with Shanna. The characters notice and of course, the reader's notice-including her father who was well aware of her faults and didn't put them aside like Ruark did.

Shanna grew to be a woman: mature, grown up and radiant, having been strong-willed the whole time; nothing much changed there. She became more accepting and loving to Ruark who always deserved her love. The Love scenes are intense-the dialogue beautiful and as stated before written with poetic flare.

I will forever love this book.

I think there is much to be enjoyed in watching Shanna, a headstrong young girl become a caring young woman, as well as falling in love with the irresistible, Ruark Beauchamp.

5 STARS!!

Barbara says

First off to all of you who actually read this book and didn't skip, skim and go directly to the end...you must have the patience of a preacher and you deserve to win the lottery =) I really did try to give this novel a fair shot, it did start off great, but holy moly there was just too much information for my taste (yes there is a such thing as too much plot). It just went on and on and on and on....(much like this review), so I'll do what Woodiwiss couldn't or wouldn't do and stop while I'm ahead.

Yolanda says

Me ha encantado!!! Ruark es maravilloso!!! Shanna es malcriada acostumbrada a salirse con la suya, a veces le darías...

La novela tiene de todo, romance, aventura... y te lleva a muchos sitios la isla de Los Camellos, América, Londres...he disfrutado mucho. Es lo primero que leo de esta autora y no me ha decepcionado para nada. Para mi es una de esas joyitas románticas escritas hace años, creo que cuando la relea me gustará todavía más.

UniquelyMoi ~ BlithelyBookish says

Wonderful!

This is my first foray into the brilliance that is Kathleen E. Woodiwiss's writing, even though I've had some of her books on my shelves for years. But when the publisher sent me a copy of *Shanna* I decided that there's no time like the present, and dove right in. And oh, how glad I am that I did because this isn't just a historical romance, it's an epic love story. There's mystery, romance, passion, sword fights, pirates, kidnapping, murder...start to finish it's one captivating, exciting adventure!

Needless to say - but I'll say it anyway - I'll be reading more of this author's writing, very soon!

My thanks to Avon Books for providing me with a copy of this story. In appreciation I'm giving them an honest review.

Regan Walker says

The Gold Standard for Historical Romance! A Keeper!

This was my first by the queen of the modern historical romance novel, Kathleen Woodiwiss and I highly recommend it. A wonderful Georgian romance.

Set in mid 18th century London, the Caribbean and the Colony of Virginia, this is the story of the strong willed Shanna Trahern, the only daughter of a successful British merchant who has retired with his wealth to his Caribbean island, Los Cammellos. There he is both governor and owner of a thriving plantation and trade business. His much-loved wife has died by the time the story begins and he wants grandchildren from Shanna and he wants them now!

Her father gives Shanna, who has rejected all her suitors, one year to find a suitable husband or he's picking one for her, preferably one with a title. She has no interest in complying and spends that year in London enjoying herself. Nearing the end of the year, she decides that in order to avoid her father's picking a man for her, she'll take a husband from among those in Newgate Prison facing the gallows. Her goal is to be an instant widow with a good name.

She finds Ruark Beauchamp, a convicted murderer, and marries him. When she first sees him, he is dirty, bearded and unkempt, living in the prison's squalor. At the wedding, after her man has cleaned up Ruark, she discovers a handsome, intelligent and virile man who is a bit, well... overwhelming. His price for giving her his name is one night with her after they are wed--a marriage in truth, however brief. He manages to claim a bit of it just before her scheme is discovered. With hatred and anger in his voice, as they drag him away, he vows to hold her to their bargain if God grants him mercy from the hangman's noose.

Unbeknownst to Shanna, that mercy will be granted to him.

This romance is worth your money. At 666 pages of well-told, detailed, historically accurate, page turning romance, it's a keeper! The characters are brilliantly developed and the settings well described. The hero's love for his woman never varied (which I loved). He is a man I'd give up decades for. Kathleen Woodiwiss, who unfortunately is no longer with us, could write!

This is on my Top 20 list!

Keri says

So I decided to do a re-read on this older gem of a book. I originally read it back in the 1978 range and I was about 13 years old when I read. No, my mother didn't know I read it. Still has the original store price sticker on it. Here is the deal, doing old re-reads can be a tricky thing. Some books don't hold up to the test of time and this one didn't for me. I am leaving my rating as it stands. But Shanna was so immature and bi-polar, I don't know how Roark stood her. I kept begging him in my head to drop kick her into the ocean and go find someone who would love him without all the drama. I felt like this for 2/3s of the book. The last 1/3 was as really as good as I remembered it. :-)

Catriona (LittleBookOwl) says

Putting this down for... the time being? Forever?

Really put off by the love interest raping the main character, and I'm not ready to read 500+ more pages of a 'romance' between them...

Tammy Walton Grant says

I've just re-read this one for the first time in recent memory -- it's still my all time favourite historical romance. BUT...I can sure see why so many people don't like Shanna. She's a spoiled b**ch and I would have slapped her silly before the end of part 1. And I don't quite understand why Ruark fell so deeply in love with her - she doesn't show many redeeming qualities until the last quarter of the book.

What I love about the book I think is the sweeping saga of it all. And Woodiwiss' writing. What's that phrase - "evocative prose"? It fits. From the opening pages I could visualize everything she was describing like it was a movie - the carriage travelling over the cobblestones through the foggy, wet streets of London on the way to Newgate gaol. I was in the carriage. And when she meets Ruark for the first time in his cell, I was there too.

It remains that way for me through the entire book. I love the descriptions, the language, the detail, even the dialogue. I consider most KEW's books more Georgian than Regency (mid to late 1700s) with powdered hair, shoes with buckles and ruffles on men's shirts so I don't mind the flowery turns of phrase. It's all part of the way KEW takes you into the story.

Shanna takes you from London, across the Atlantic to Los Camellos, on a pirate ship bound for a hidden island in the Caribbean to the untamed wilderness of Virginia. The descriptions are vivid and her characters fully fleshed out and well-drawn (for me, anyway) so that by the end of the book you feel as though you know them all. You certainly get to know Shanna and Ruark – KEW shows us each of their POV so that you know how much Ruark loves Shanna (although unfortunately not **why**) and you can see how much Shanna struggles with recognizing and admitting her love for Ruark (that love being the only good thing about her through much of the book).

The book takes place over the course of a year or so following Shanna's return from London to Los Camellos. It felt realistic to me – there are stretches of time where Shanna tries to stay away from him and there are other happenings on the island that keep them apart (mostly due to Shanna's unrealistic expectations of Ruark and what she wants from him) but their arguments are realistic and their assignations very sigh-worthy. (Lots of sneaking into each other's rooms at night). Except for Shanna's stubbornness, which is much more apparent reading this as an adult.

I would recommend this book for anyone who loves a chunky (666 pages), historical romance. The prose is descriptive, (oh all right, PURPLE) the story is epic in scale and hero is to die for. I fell in love with Ruark Deverell Beauchamp when I was 11 years old. His book is still my all time favourite.

Sarah Mac says

DNF. While the idea behind Shanna & Ruark's saga is a good one, I can't drum up enough interest to make it through the next 400 pages. It's just plain *slow*. Really, *really* slow. Also really, *really* wordy. The plot was pattering along in the background -- and it should've been a plot I cared about, because the proper ingredients were there -- but my interest was obscured by the tedium of endless minutia. I don't need to hear how people step down from a carriage. Stare at each other. Walk to the inn. Open the door. Stare at each other. Close the door. Stare at each other. Meanwhile, the plot slowed to a crawl as block paragraphs were devoted to descriptions of gestures, expressions, fabrics, clothing, furniture, temperature, weather conditions...

Yup. Pretty much.

I thought I'd prepared myself for a sluggish read, but this went above & beyond expectations. Setting the stage & creating a vivid backdrop is great -- but too much detail drowns the story beneath an onslaught of typeface. It's called *overwriting*, & KEW's prose was a epic success in terms of padding a 350-400 page story into 650+ pages of Grand Dame romantic legend.

From pg 171:

His eyes aflame and lusting, Ruark lowered his weight upon her, parting her thighs, and pressed deep with[in] her. Shanna moved to welcome the hard thrust, her woman's body reacting instinctively to this new, indescribable, budding, splintering feeling that built with pulsing leaps and bounds deep within her. The pleasure mounted so intensely she wondered wildly if she could bear it.

It was magic, a stunning, beautiful, expanding bloom of ravaging rapture that made her arch against him with a fierce ardor matching his. The wild, soaring ecstasy burst upon them, fusing them together in the all-consuming caldron of pleasure.

I understand that romance needs to include feels, but c'mon. That blurb is out of control. There's a fine line between enjoyable purple prose & an orgy of extraneous modifiers. Why use 10 words when 80 will do?

Preach it, Shat.

Andrea Smith says

Woodiwiss is my all-time favorite author. Way back in the mid 1970's, I was introduced to my first 'gothic' romance novel that contained an alpha male. It was 'The Flame and the Flower.' It was the first book that gave my stomach butterflies; that I couldn't put down. Wikipedia states that this book that was officially published by Avon in 1972 "is credited with spawning the modern romance genre." All I know is that everyone wanted a 'Brandon Birmingham' in their bed - LOL!

That of course was followed by her second book, 'The Wolf and the Dove,' where we got to meet Wulfgar (ultra-alpha male) and Aislin (a bit more backbone than Heather from TFATF).

But it was Ms. Woodiwiss's third book, 'Shanna,' that was by far my favorite.

Ruark Beauchamp is an alpha male - not in the same way as Brandon or Wulfgar, but then, Shanna was a bit more high-maintenance than either one of the heroines in the previous two books. So it took not only an alpha, but an alpha that was patient, tenacious, and who really 'got' Shanna in order to tame her. The reason is obvious - as another reviewer pointed out, Shanna was spoiled. However, Shanna was more than that. We cannot overlook the fact for that period of time, Shanna was a couple of hundred years ahead of her time; kind of like Scarlett O'Hara was for her time.

Shanna did not want a 'marriage of convenience' to please her widowed father who was hell bent on having her married off and giving him a passel of grandbabies. Shanna had plans of her own. Having essentially been raised without her mother who died when Shanna was just a baby, Shanna lived in a man's world,

having seen what that was like, she wanted her own independence.

Yes - Shanna could be selfish and self-serving, until her amorous 'bond slave' taught about compassion, generosity, loving and learning. She nearly lost it all before she realized what she had. She was humbled by Ruark Beauchamp.... that was a first.

This book, out of all of Ms. Woodiwiss's novels, was actually optioned for a movie. I believe it was somewhere around 1978 or 1979. Whether it was a television movie or the big screen, I don't recall. I do remember reading articles about it and I am not sure why it fell through. I recall that several well-known actresses were vying for the part of 'Shanna Trahern,' one being the 'Charlie's Angel' star, Cheryl Ladd.

In today's reading world perhaps the "graphic" description of the hot sex Shanna and Ruark had could not hold up to the writing of authors such as E.L.James (whose work I love by the way) or others writing in the romantic-erotica-alpha male genre. But I can tell you this: about every 3-4 years I re-read this book and after all of this time, it still gives this old lady butterflies - DOWN THERE!!!!

sraxe says

It's hard to enjoy, much less like, a book in which I thoroughly detest one of the two main characters. It makes it even worse that the novel is named after her so I don't even have a hope that she might somehow be offed before the end and I can be rid of her. The only reason I even bothered to finish it was so that I could write a fully-informed review. Also, I try not to swear in reviews but...this one? Can't be helped.

Shanna is so unlikable. Actually, that's putting it nicely. I got so sick of hearing how pretty she is look-wise because she's such a nasty and disgusting person on the inside. She's a straight up bitch and I hated her more than I think I've ever hated a character in any book I've ever read. I was feeling bad for Ruark for a fair bit of the novel but I stopped after a while. Why? Because he's such a damned doormat. Over and over and over again Shanna treats him like shit and walks all over him and he just goes crawling back to her. She berates him continuously and he just casts it all to the wind and lays himself down before her, like the doormat that he is, to be trod upon once again. The worst thing is that the author writes him so that he knows all her faults and calls her out on them yet loves her anyway. He calls her a coddled-brat and a prudish snob (praise the lord, hallelujah, etc etc etc...to that!) but that doesn't deter him from loving her.

And that's what confuses me. I don't know why he loves her. Other than her looks (got so sick of hearing about how ~beautiful~ she is), she's a dirty, rotten, nasty person on the inside. Honestly. She's such a bitch-- **such a bitch** omg--to him and he loves her. They make a bargain in the beginning and he holds up his end yet she deceives him and doesn't hold up her own. Every encounter with him has her calling him all sorts of names and he just takes it. When she finds herself being reluctantly attracted to him, she responds by dressing to the nines and wanting to shame and put him in his place because of the way he dresses and his station (as a bondsman). She sleeps with him but then later turns around and says he took advantage of her ("but tossed me on the bed and once more took advantage of me" and "you crept into my chambers in the dark of night and took advantage of the slumber still clinging to my eyes"). OH and she straight up accuses him of attempted-rape (and only feels "a tiny inkling of remorse"). She knew what she was doing when she approached Pitney (after he said they'd done Ruark wrong and would not be party to his abuse any longer) and she did it anyway simply because she was angry (and didn't even give him a second to explain that he

was being FALSELY ACCUSED). *Then*, when they're captives to the pirates and he saves her more than once from being taken advantage of (kills a man in the process, btw), her response is being a cold and teasing and taunting bitch to him. Now, I'm not saying she should up and give her body over to him because he helped her out while risking his own life, I'm just saying that her teasing and flaunting her body at him and then giving him the cold shoulder is god damned cruel.

And you know what? During the entire ordeal he suffers and never once takes advantage of her. Not once.

And then he claims to love her.

Ruark got to his feet, counting himself far luckier than any man on the island, despite what they might have termed poor luck in being imprisoned for murder and sold into bondage. In truth, if he hadn't been in the gaol, he never would have married Shanna, and he counted all the abuse he had suffered there well worth the gain of such a wife.

Oh, Ruark...

She's also so hot and cold to him throughout most of the novel. She sleeps with him one second, and then derides him the next. Even Ruark calls her out on it: "How quickly you chasten me, as if you're sorely set upon." Like, nine times out of ten, he doesn't even have to incite her into anger because she does it herself most of the time and for no reason what so ever! Some of the time she calls attention to her own body (he calls her beautiful and her response is: "I feel ravished every time you look at me.") and then is all **HOW DARE YOU** when he makes some salacious mark towards it. She knows how he is and what he's like but acts all maidenly and shocked when he makes a remark that drew attention to her body in the first place.

She also gets jealous when other women take notice of Ruark and then she gets mad at him over it. Ruark is jealous and upset when Billingsham pursues Shanna, but he never once takes it out on her. He brings it up and is angry (and that's only in response to a tirade from her), yes, but he never pulls her aside to go in on her the way she does to him and holds it against her--like she does with him. He calls her out more than once on her jealousy. He asks her what he is to her -- either a husband or not a husband. If he is her husband, then she has a claim to jealousy. But, if not, then she has no right to call him out if he decides to seek favours elsewhere since she, as his wife, denies him and their bond as husband and wife. I'm not one for cheating spouses, but honestly...he's right. What right does she have to jealousy when she turns around and calls him a rutting knave and rake and cad and denies being his wife.

I was happy with Ruark called her out on this:

(view spoiler)

But, then the author had Shanna completely ignore what he said and, instead, turned around and made it all about poor little ol' Shanna and how she's in such a difficult position and how bad she's got it etc etc etc.

Just stfu.

Later on, he calls out her high-and-mighty manner and I was ready to give him a standing ovation:

(view spoiler)

Her response? "But do you say you love me?"

Fucking hell. Are you serious? Just...

I nearly laughed out loud when she had the audacity to say:

"You banter with my pride and toss about my honor lightly."

Oh, my. She has the nerve to mention honour? Sorry sweetie, but you forfeit any and all honour the minute you made a bargain for your body with a man and then proceeded to betray him on his return after he came through for you. OH, and then lied about the actual terms of your bargain. Just want to clarify that her honour wasn't lost in bargaining with her body (gotta do what you gotta do, yeah?), it was the deceit and betrayal on her behalf that followed. On top of that, she later claims that there was no bargain and it's false. She calls him names and belittles him. Sorry, but she gets no special thanks or credit for finally making good on a promise that she should've done so from the beginning.

I didn't blame him for how he went in on her after she says she refuses to bear his bastards. She deserved it.

Anytime during the novel that Shanna feels any sort of guilt or sadness, it's a result of what she's done to Ruark. She takes his problems and what he's gone through and makes it about herself and makes herself feel

bad. Rather than feeling bad for Ruark and what he has to go through as a result of her deceit, she takes what he might be going through and is sad because of the guilt she feels. I didn't feel bad for her one bit during those times because she's the one that did him wrong and now she claims hurt feelings and guilt as a result? Ugh. It's always about how she's suffered as a result of what she's done to him rather than it being about how he's suffered as a result of what she purposefully did to him. Mercy...she takes everything from him (including his name) and can't even let the man keep his pain as his own.

During the entire book, I just couldn't help but feel that she's such an emotionally abusive partner/spouse. Over and over again we see her deny him sexually. When she does *exalt* him with her presence, she follows every encounter with name-calling and insults, berating and degradation. She disavows their martial vows but displays jealousy and uses it to further hold things against him. Hell, she's jealous over a relationship of his from nearly a decade ago! The entire novel is her stomping all over him while he cowers before her in hopes of just a morsel of her attention and favours. She also never admits her own wrongdoing. Pitney never actually learns of what her original bargain was. She's never taken to task nor does she apologize for falsely and vindictively accusing Ruark of attempted rape and having him sold to pirates as a result.

I usually like HEAs in books...but this one? I would've been much happier with the opposite. Ruark is a nice guy and does well by others and he deserved so much more. Yeah he's a doormat but he deserved better because she's a spiteful bitch who betrayed him, betrayed him and betrayed him some more. She's so undeserving of the HEA she got. She's clearly a terrible person through and through because even the other characters point out that she needs to do right by Ruark. But does she see it for herself? No. It's only because of the author's cheesily included delirium-speak that she suddenly does a one-eighty.

When she's at the Beauchamp household, she feels she should stand up for Ruark and claim him as her husband but doesn't because:

"The only thing that stilled her words was the fear that Gaylord would rush to his magistrate father to bear the news that a man he had condemned to hang was alive."

Yeah...uh, no. The author shows time and again that Shanna is as dumb as a rock considering how she's ~so surprised~ at having not realized how badly she's mistreated Ruark. She only "realizes" it when he speaks *super coherently* during his fever. As such, I think it's straight up bullshit that she'd have the foresight to even consider holding her tongue for that reason. No way. Nope. Not buying it. It was just the author's way of extending the drama more and dragging it out for pages and pages more and making Shanna seem ~smart~ when she's really just an idiot and a coward.

And ugh, Ralston and Billingsham both got what they had coming to them but Shanna gets off? She was worse than Ralston (at least Ralston got him out of gaol) and she gets a rich husband and a connection to a marquess?? Fucking hell.

This entire book was such a mixture of

and

