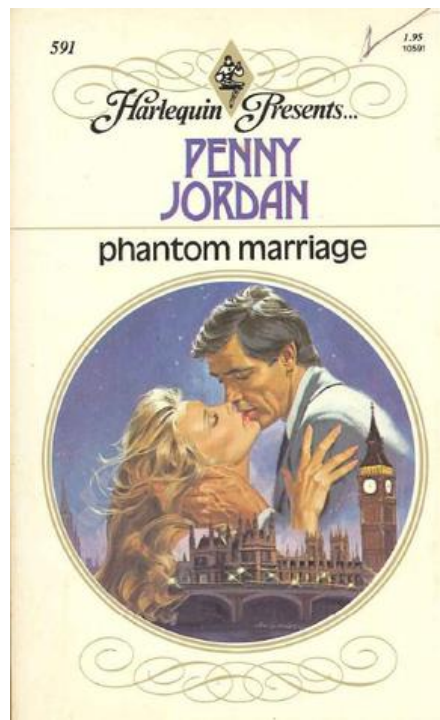




Phantom Marriage

Penny Jordan

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She had weathered life's storms alone

Tara had been only seventeen when she'd given herself to James. She had borne him twins in secret, inventing a short-lived marriage to protect her fatherless children and to hide her shame.

The years had brought Tara added wisdom, though time hadn't dulled the pain of James's rejection or the aching pleasure of their remembered passion.

Meeting him again was a shock, but Tara was determined never to let him know the price she had paid in silence for her first and only love.

Phantom Marriage Details

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From Reader Review Phantom Marriage for online ebook

Mo says

I'm sorry, I just can't get over how nasty and cruel the H is to the h all throughout this book. Let's say that everything he thinks about her really is the truth: in what universe does he have the right to judge her, punish her, speak to her so harshly and generally make her life a misery? He was a pervy older guy who slept with a 17 year old girl. Even if his suppositions were correct, why does he think that gives him the right to mock her for her dead husband and her attempt to move on with another man 7 years later? He is a giant dickhead. I cannot get over how much of a doormat she is, taking every single piece of abuse he wants to dish out and smiling when he finally changes his mind. I'd be smiling too, because I would enjoy the hell out of the 7 plus years of alimony back-payments I'd be due, not to mention crushing his creepy dreams of setting up house with his punching-bag.

This is an epic fail of a book.

Alexis-Morgan Roark says

Okay...so, they live in a small town but it takes YEARS for former best friends to meet again? Maybe I missed something. Oh, and the guy who allegedly loved her and whom she loved, takes the the word of his knowingly crazy as& soon to be ex-wife (blackmail marriage with NO BENES!) that the heroine is but a trollop?

Uh, huh.

THEN...when they finally meet, he's ignoring kids any idiot should be able to tell are HIS??

Oh...and who the hel& leaves their 6 year old twins at the house ALONE for ecen 2 minutes let alone the TWENTY the heroine found no problem with??

Give me a break and a lobotomy to get through these books. I am skipping the 80s and 90s-just a few more to review that I've already read-I can't handle it!!

Jenny says

3 stars for my favorite PJ. I enjoyed this book and I liked the hero and the cute twins but the relationship between H/h was underdeveloped. I mean come on the heroine had more scenes with OM than with the hero who was barely present in the book.

Also heroine slept with hero even though she knew he was a married man and she was best friends with his stepdaughter. Hero's marriage was a sham of course but she didn't know this. Plus she should let him know about the twins no matter what. Her reluctance to tell him the truth about his kids was frustrating and wrong. Not the best heroine PJ has written.

Tia says

The hero and heroine had a brief romance when the heroine was only seventeen. The hero was quite a bit older than her and married to someone else at the time. After the affair, the hero took off, loving her as she did him but knowing she needed to grow into a woman. Knowing she needed a chance at getting the life she wanted, not knowing that she was pregnant with his babies, his twins.

When the hero and heroine meet again she is now twenty four and she has embraced life as a single parent. She is terrified of the hero finding out he is the father to her twins. Over time they get to know each other again and she is shocked that he still hasn't figured it out.

When the heroine takes the twins on vacation, the hero shows up and now he knows he is the father, for he has seen the twins birth certificates. He demands to know why she kept him in the dark and she explains the situation, then he tells her he has always loved her but will she accept him and let him be a true father to his twins?

I thought the book was quite lovely. I enjoyed the story and passion and I most certainly couldn't imagine being a mother at seventeen to two babies. What a strong character portrayed in this novel. Once again Penny Jordan was an amazing goddess and author at writing this. R.I.P.

Azet says

"Phantom Marriage" is about Tara who falls in love with her best-friends stepfather James, and one night full of passion creates twins which she hides from him for 5 years.

They meet again, and full misunderstandings led them to believe that the other didn't love the other.

James really taunts Tara throughout the story, and it's understandable how jealous and hurt he is. Really like how they fell in love in the past, it was so pure and beautiful, their chemistry was really great! The twins Mandy and Simon were so adorable, and I felt it somehow that little Mandy was playing the match-maker..how sweet.!

Chitra *CJ* says

Why, you ...'

For a moment Tara thought he was actually going to strike her and cowered back, fear mirrored in her eyes, but with an almost superhuman effort he seemed to gather himself together to thrust out of the room, leaving her alone as she listened to his footsteps descending the stairs, and the harsh slam of the front door, followed within seconds by the soft purr of the Rolls.

How great it is to have a verbally and almost physically abusive rapey hero who never takes no for an answer?!

"Phantom Marriage" is the story of Tara and James.

This mess of a saga tells the story of single mom Tara, who invents a "phantom" husband after having an

affair with her best friend's (married) stepfather.

When she gets pregnant, she is thwarted by the friend's evil mother and runs away to assume the role of a widow.

In present scenario, she is a struggling single mom to twins and works for a leading photographer.

One day, she meets her old best friend again and is invited to her country estate. Reluctantly agreeing for the sake of her children, she comes face to face with her baby daddy again and that's when drama begins.

Irrespective of the truth to the H's marriage, I don't condone cheating in any form, neither do I like abusive heroes. The male lead of this book was both. The heroine was extremely putty in his hands, getting all worked up with lust in a matter of seconds, forgetting conveniently all the shiz he put her through, only for her horny-nessness and pseudo slutty-ness to be thrown back to her face in ten seconds.

There is an overzealous boss, annoying but realistic kids, drama, baby secrets and scenes that will piss you off so much that you'd genuinely want to strangle the hero.

For instance, the amazing scene where the bratty kids are throwing a tantrum, run away from home, the heroine is having a breakdown looking for them, police and her boss get involved, and the hero casually returns to inform that she's a terrible slutty mom and they've been with him all along..UM WTF.

The reveal happens at the very end, and is unsatisfying. No resolution to conflict or grovel.

The bicker-fest of two immature noobs.

SWE

1/5

KC says

I love Penny Jordan, but this book earns only an "okay" rating due to an unlikable hero with a penchant for game playing (and I don't mean Candy Crush). Other than being rich, successful and sexy, James' positive traits weren't on display much. He spent too much time taunting Tara after they were reunited which zapped out much of the romance. Yes, James was jealous, bitter, hurt—and still in love with Tara—but it would have been nice to see him exhibit more gentleness towards her to balance out his less appealing traits. More *wooing*, less taunting please.

A lot of their heartache would have been avoided if they'd communicated and been honest with each other. Normally this doesn't bother me as much in a Jordan book, but maybe it did because they had children together? Add the fact that Tara had been so young when they had their affair. Guess there would be no meat to the story if it was all resolved early on.

The best character in the book? Their daughter, Maddy. What a kickass, strong willed six-year-old! Too bad she didn't kick her daddy's ass to snap him out of his douchebaggery.

Grace Harwood says

We're on distinctly dodgy territory here with this offering from 1983. The premise is as follows: Tara, whilst

visiting her school friend (yes, school friend....) meets and falls in love with her friend's step-father, who then takes her to bed. She then falls pregnant and the obligatory Jordan twins follow. Sentenced to life as a single teenage mother, Tara copes admirably until she accidentally runs into her school friend again and "James", (the seducing unscrupulous step-father) decides he wants Tara back again.

There are many, many things wrong with the premise for this as a romance, (as is clear from the above synopsis) but that said, if you remove the romance from the equation (difficult I know, in a Mills and Boon) this is actually a really well-written book with lots of issues and intriguing things going on in it. First off, there's what Tara has to face as a single teenage mother in a small village (of just the type I grew up in – which isn't all that surprising being as Jordan habitually used a small Cheshire village as her location), the small-mindedness, the prejudice was all very familiar (and I didn't even get pregnant with twins!) Then there is James's attitude to Tara – he clearly blames her for her predicament and even states at one point "Strange how women always blame the man!" Once again, we are into literature of protest about the social mores of the time.

This is a great example of Jordan's work and how she offers a more substantial satisfying romance than the usual M&B fare. Yes, the hero is just WRONG, but you have to look beyond that to focus on the female character who is really a very likeable heroine indeed. I didn't like the ending. I'd have liked James to have fallen off a cliff, but it's a Mills and Boon, so, hey I can't complain – the ending is inevitable. In a couple of weeks I'll be going to present a conference paper at the University of Keele on these romances and the research I've done so far (it's an ongoing thing...) Hopefully other academics will get it too and I won't get laughed off campus.

Lu Bielefeld *read.laugh.love* says

hero was a married man + heroine is OW

Sandra says

[Tara hasn't seen James since they had a brief affair seven years ago. He was married at the time,

iamGamz says

A very intense story of love lost, deception, secret children, and a too young h.

The h and H meet when she was 17 and he was 26 and married to her best friends mother. Oh yeah, there was adultery too.

They shared an amazing night that resulted in pregnancy. The H, feeling guilty for sexing up a 17 year old, skipped town and left her to face the music on her own.

She had her babies, moved to London, got a job and took care of business. 7 years later, she runs into her former best friend and an innocent invite bring her back into the H's life.

There's animosity and distrust but the chemistry and love are still there. Just buried under the animosity and distrust.

I loved this book. Penny Jordan kept me waiting for the big reveal and when it came, I wasn't expecting it to happen the way it did. I read through the night to finish and will be exhausted tomorrow. But it was well worth the missing sleep. :)

Jasbell76 says

The first book I read by Penny Jordan. This book is VERY emotional in my opinion. It caused me a lot of tears in some of its scenes. I think I am going to re-read it after 7 years and give it a better review. In my own rate format I gave it 6.5 from 10.
Here in Goodreads I will give it 3.0 stars ñ_ñ

Aayesha Khatri says

2.5 stars

So I didn't hate it as much I usually hate my 2-stars, neither did it make me feel as *good* as the regular 3-star. So 2.5 stars.

Starting with the hero this time. At first, in the beginning of the book when we hadn't actually met the hero, I disliked him intensely because, even though our heroine is the main h, he still *was* married to someone else. I don't care if it was a farce marriage, it's still called cheating. And if there's one thing I can't tolerate (other than a bitchy, lying and deceptive heroine), it's cheating. But then I got to see the tender, gentle side of him and found myself falling a little in love with him. He *was* good and honourable and kind and gentle.

The heroine I liked, at least in the beginning. I understood her motives and reasons for being so bitter and hiding her children's parentage from their father. But it really started grating on me by the end. Especially when she not only didn't defend herself when the hero believed that she was promiscuous and having an affair with her boss, but actually *fed* to the story. And she *still* didn't tell him that they were his kids. UGH. Deceptive heroines.

So neither of the characters in this book were particularly likable. But dear God, little Amanda/Mandy/WhateverHerNameWas was just *so cute!!* I loved her impertinence and her cheekiness, and her affection and innocence! I swear, she made the story so much more enjoyable.

The writing was great, not at all the cheesy kind of writing I've come to associate with vintage Harlequin Presents. The vocabulary wasn't repetitive, even if it *was* overly dramatic. But hey, it's Vintage.

Overall, I would have liked it better if the heroine hadn't so deceptive. And if the hero hadn't cheated. **I still liked him better than I liked her, though.**

Ska Benítez says

I really loved this book, I felt sometimes frustrated with the female main character but I really loved it, from the start to the last word. The development of the characters, the lost love found, the complexity of the situation, I think everything was well used.

Su says

I didn't like the h. She seduced a married man (not the other way around). Then she acted an idiot by not letting him know that she is pregnant.
