



Moss Rose

Day Taylor

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From the ruins of war, their love, like the wounded land, would be reborn.....would rise up to pursue a soaring dream.

Adam Tremain, the legendary Black Swan, had won honor in battle - and the undying pledge of Dulcie Moran, Savannah's most dazzling beauty.

Born in defiance, their love withstood trial and separation. Now it would endure a perilous test in the bitter aftermath of the Civil War.

Many would sell their souls to survive. But Adam and Dulcie were bound to each other and the ravaged land. The pillars of the South would stand proud against the sky once more. Their love would burst into bloom anew. Fired by the finest dreams, emboldened by the vision of a glorious destiny, they would reclaim their cherished heritage....

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Moss Rose Details

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Karla says

It's 1865, and Adam and Dulcie Tremain go back to Georgia to rebuild Dulcie's home, Mossrose, which was burned by Sherman's troops in the war. What they discover is a grieving land that's become rotten and a carrion feast for circling vultures. The Klan is in high gear, its ranks filled with Those Who Won't Forget and drunk with the anonymous power its robes and tactics create. A plot is early revealed, spearheaded by Edmund Revanche (Tremain's nemesis from the preceding book "The Black Swan") and assisted by grasping and corrupt locals, to set up a store and extend credit to any and all. Since it involves Revanche (whose nastiness was well-established in the last book), their intentions are far from noble - namely, to pick over the bones of what's left in the neighborhood with an aim to keeping the newly-freed black folk under their heels and snatch up as much land as possible by calling in the debts. Adam, a southerner at heart but a pragmatic loyalist after the surrender, finds himself in square opposition to the corruption which threatens to ruin the South past all hope of rebuilding. With him and against him are an array of characters with stories and subplots of their own as they survive or perish in the post-war upheaval.

IMO, this book was better, far better, than "The Black Swan" (which was pretty darned good, give or take a couple oddities). [One carp: Southern drawls and slave lingo are still written out phonetically, which reads hilariously at times, but after awhile it's easy to plow through long paragraphs of dialogue with nary a hitch.] In this book, I liked the fact that Adam and Dulcie were not antagonists and Big Misunderstandings and Long Separations did not occur on The Slightest of Pretexts. Very little happened among any of the characters where I rolled my eyes or wanted to slap them aside the head. The Tremaines are happily married and fiercely dedicated to one another, with Adam encouraging Dulcie to become independent and his partner in all things, rather than cling to the affectations of a southern belle. Since Dulcie is finding the habit of others to carry on as though the war never happened quite stifling, she lets her feisty flag fly and the scenes where she butts heads with "the old guard" put her victimization during that bizarre voodoo island interlude from "The Black Swan" into the dark where it belongs. For the first time, she sees the selfish cruelty her class is capable of, to their former slaves as well as to their own families, and she bucks it with a will that scandalizes her neighbors and makes Adam love her more.

Despite Adam and Dulcie being the H/h of the book, I found the subplot of the Northern freewoman Kyra Jordan to be the main page-turner. Dedicated to the monumental task of educating a population kept in ignorance by slavery, she meets everything head-on - from attacking Klansman with a longknife to barging into a drug den/child brothel. Her frustration with the people she hopes to educate, and their suspicion of her educated ways, create a great deal of the book's atmosphere, as the reader is shown just how miserable and hopeful Reconstruction was for all involved. She is a perfect counterpart to Adam, who wants to rebuild the South with justice and equality, but finds his opposition from the white quarter.

Towards the end, the revenge plots became a bit dull and OTT bodiceripper, but the resolution was neatly tied in with the beginning of "The Black Swan" and the murder of the slave woman, Ullah. The scene is macabre and gothic and quite creepy. The final scene is left with an unstated promise to continue the series, but AFAIK, this never happened.

Overall, I recommend this book to those who love their historical romances erring on the side of historical rather than romance. There are a few sex scenes, but not very graphic, and this isn't your usual bodiceripper. I'm beginning to see why some romance fans get peeved when everything remotely "historical romance" gets slapped with that label. Covers are often deceptive, and until you read the book, it's impossible to know just what's in it. In "Mossrose", Day Taylor gives a page-turning yarn about the best and worst of Black and White in the Reconstruction South.

This book review has been provided by the No Book Left Behind Campaign! A Bodice Ripper Readers Anonymous group initiative to review the un-reviewed!

Celery66 says

I know I read this , cause I remember the cover. Will need to find it again!
