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She possesses the courage and beauty of her wild Cossack ancestors. Now Katerina is on a vengeance quest against the marauders who destroyed her village and stole her priceless snow-white horses in the name of the mad czar. Nor will she rest until she has killed the man who dared to take her innocence.

Never does she dream that it is her irresistible seducer--a proud Mongol prince--who will help her avenge her people and reclaim her horses. Together they harness the fires of fury and passion that consume them. And, together, they forge a destiny as magnificent as the land and the love that is their glorious heritage....

Whitefire Details

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Author : Fern Michaels , Iris Summers

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From Reader Review Whitefire for online ebook

Karla says

The squeamish reviews made me want to read this. NGL.

However, sadly, the plot's delivery never lived up to its promise. It's got a rapey, asshole hero in the Mongolian prince Banyan; a revenge-driven, kinda dumb but more regularly smart heroine in Katerina; a couple secondary heroes; and the vast expanse of Russia as a backdrop. Should have loved it. And did, at first.

But the pacing got mired down in the long, lnnnnnnnnng interlude with Katerina training up a bunch of prisoners and Mongols into a Cossack army to fight the forces that killed her clan. There were a few bright spots here and there - the manic intermissions back in the Kremlin with Ivan the Terrible being utterly terrible to just about everybody - and I really liked the fact that Katerina owned her sexuality and acted on it in non-monogamous ways that buck the constraints of the genre.

But the bint got caught in the trap of the genre at the same time and attached herself to the nominal hero in a twisty bit of schizoid neediness that made the secondary hero stuff just token filler (or so I'm assuming). Bah. I kinda lost interest in the tale after that scene. **Kostya4eva**.

It was less lolzy crack than what I've read in other Fern Michaels books, which was both a positive (if you're in the mood for more srs researched stuff) *and* a negative. Sometimes I just want the lolzy crack.

Another problem was that, due to summer and a natural slowdown of free time to read, it took me way too long to finish it. Some books can withstand that strain. This one couldn't. Perhaps if I'd been able to bang it out in a couple weeks, I'd have felt different. Who can say.

Meagan Raborn says

I reall liked this story.. for a few reasons.. ont being that the heroin IS a strong woman! she can kick butt! I did have a hard time getting over the fact that the hero is the guy that raped her.. but I guess when you stop and think about how harsh these people are and have to be.. But thats the only reason it didnt get 5 stars from me.

Ash says

"In a time of ancient gods, warlords and kings, a land in turmoil cried out for a hero. She was Xena, a mighty princess forged in the heat of battle. The power. The passion. The danger. Her courage will change the world." Not quite, in fact it's way more brutal, but I couldn't help hearing Xena's war cry every time this heroine's eyes spewed fire. Katerina's Cossack village is slaughtered and their prized cosars (horses) stolen. Daughter of the headman and trained as a warrior, she's determined to get them back and avenge her people at any cost. I can MAYBE accept her falling for a man who raped her, but it's hard to swallow her considering it a victory when young girls are basketed off to slavers. Guess I can't really judge a woman from 16th century Russia on her values. Either way, welcome and engaging distraction.

Lauren Dumas says

This book starts with rape and I thought, "No way. She's not gonna do it." But she did. She had the heroine fall for the man who viciously raped her. I read through it to give the book a chance to redeem itself, but it didn't happen. Not a good message to send out.

Noelle says

I really tried to like this one but I just could force myself to finish it.

Katerina (h) was a young woman who's father Sasha powerful Cossack know as The Kat. One day when she was away from the steppe (where her village is) her all of her people are slaughtered including her father, the snow white horses prized by her people are gone, stolen. She takes it on herself to make a long and dangerous journey to her uncle (another powerful man) for help. Along the way she meets a man who she clearly remembers as the one who brutally stole her innocence in a snow bank and left her for dead. Her plan is to say nothing and let him help her get to her uncle..... then she'd kill him.

Banyan (H) doesn't recognize the girl as the one and only woman he had raped but he does know she intrigues him. He brings her to the Khan, the man who has taken him in after Ivan the Terrible had murdered his family. His plan is to stay with the Khan, do his bidding until he has enough men in his army for his revenge, then he will kill Ivan. He had no idea that would suddenly be taking this girl and a bunch of prisoners back to the Carpathians to train to become Cossack warriorsand taking his orders from her.

I think the main reason this book didn't work for me was because the h was too strong of a character for me. She gave the orders, she fought as good as any Cossack and she trained all of the prisoners to fight as such. Also *****spoiler***** she didn't seem to have any bad feelings about the rape other than the fact that he left her nude and in the snow to die. She didn't fear sex, she willingly had sex with others and even him just to see what she would feel in comparison to her rape. It just didn't seem realistic to me.

Katherine says

Let's talk about bodice rippers, shall we?

Bodice rippers are a genre of literature that I've actively avoided for the longest time. I snickered at the bad covers and the abysmal descriptions on the back. I laughed every time I passed the humongous section of bodice rippers that inhabits the library of my grandma's retirement facility. "I'm too good for bodice rippers", I said.

It doesn't help that both my mother and grandmother avoid bodice rippers as well. My cousin often gives books to my grandma to read, and unfortunately, they all happen to be the bodice ripper/historical romance books my grandma loathes. They always end up in the Goodwill donation pile immediately after receiving them.

But then I joined Goodreads, where there was this one particular person (:cough: Nenia Campbell :cough:) who is a bodice ripper fan. And through her wonderful group, Unapologetic Romance Readers (which you should totally join, cause it's awesome), I became acquainted with the bodice ripper/historical romance genre that I had so religiously avoided. And I thought that maybe, just maybe, I had judged these books unfairly. I've never been one to call myself a book snob.... but could I actually be one?

So I decided to step way out of my comfort zone and take the plunge. I found myself in the library perusing the shelves with a certain degree of shame, embarrassment, and excitement. What in the world would people think of me checking out something like this? Could I make it out of the library without dying of humiliation?

Then I came across this book. My mother had actually read some of her Sisterhood novels, so I figured it would be a safe bet to start there. So I checked it out and prepared for an adventure. I mean, how bad could it be, right?

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph it was bad. Really, mind-numbingly bad.

There will be spoilers, but ya know what? This book is so bad that I'd rather just give you the plot right now and have you NOT read this book.

So grab a snack and some wine, cause **IT'S GOING DOWN.**

So we have this chick named Katerina. She's a member of a legendary Cossack tribe who breeds horses, the most prized of them being a white stallion named Whitefire (get it? He's white? Whitefire?). She's also in charge of helping her father oversee the horses and the workers who help them. Well, one frozen day, Stephan the mute employee lost one the horses. How one can lose a big-ass horse I have no idea. But he somehow communicates to Kat that the horse disappeared after her father wonders where the fuck the horse is.

Being the strong, independent Cossack she is, Katerina agrees to go and find the horse. As she's riding along the cold, Russian tundra, she comes across a pair of Mongol warriors. One of these warriors is named Banyen.

Meet Banyen, everybody. Mongol warrior, MAJOR dickhead. His life philosophy pretty much consists of this...

"He chose his women with cool, calculating deliberation, the dark eyes measuring the curve of their breasts and the length of their thighs. If the return look was voy or vapid, he would go to the next woman, until he found a match for his own measured look. He liked fire in his bed, not warmed-over mush."

And this...

The original founder of the He-Man Woman Hater's Club, he sees women as nothing more as porridge, basically. He's just a Goldilocks living in a Bear World, so to speak.

"Men made fools of themselves over women. Men fought and died for women. Men lost empires because of women. The only thing he would give a woman was the honor of bearing his child and name."

Anyhow, he sees Kat riding in the frozen tundra, he feels that old fire in the loin. Wanting an opportunity to pooch her cooch, so to speak, he not so subtly chases her across the tundra in an attempt to have her (he's not a believer in consent, either, BTW). Kat tries the whole "lick my lips and swing my hips, all I gotta say is no" technique, and the super ninja technique that leaves a scar on his cheek that you'll be continuously reminded about for the entire novel. But none of that matters because he knocks her out like a light and then proceeds to brutally rape her while reassuring himself that he's not really a BAD person, just a sociopathic liar.

"Banyen took her brutally, savagely, again and again. His own words rang in his ears: 'I'm not a cruel man... I'm not one to inflict pain,' He shrugged. Every man was forced at one time or another to tell a lie. Why should he be any different.?"

Kat comes to and realizes what has happened, and she's MAD. Madder than mad.

"When I find him, and I will, I'll carve his heart from his body and hang it on a spear to dry. But first,' she said viciously, 'I'll cut his tongue from his throat and cut off his feet. Then I'll cut out his heart. There will be no pain in my heart when I retaliate for what was done to Yuri and my people. I'll feel only sweet blessed revenge.'"

YES, FUCK YES. SO MUCH YES IS SAID IN THIS QUOTE THAT WE HAVE REACHED THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF YESES.

And what do you think she does? What in the everloving name of monkey doo-doo do you think she does?

"I swore if he came near me I would kill him. Then my body betrayed me, and I allowed the Mongol to make love to me. When I'm near him I feel calm, and at the same time so full of... of... It's like when I come to you and talk to you and you become calm. That's what Banyen does to me. Yet he raped me brutally, and left me to die in the snow, and still I can feel something for him that I can't explain."

SHE FALLS IN LOVE WITH HIM. What happened to that beautiful plan where you were basically going to cut him up and put in in Mother Nature's equivalent of a freezer?

I don't even know where to start in the stupid logic of this.

HE RAPED YOU!!!

"Everything was forgotten, all the promises, all the dire threats she had made in silence against him. All she wanted now was to be near him, to have him be a part of her. He whispered soft endearments that were barely audible as he blazed a searing trail from her mouth to her neck to her breasts. Nothing matters, she told herself as she sought the devouring lips and the delicious feel of his body next to hers."

HE LEFT YOU IN NOTHING BUT A FLIMSY COAT AND LEFT YOU FOR DEAD IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE RUSSIA

"It made no difference that he was the Mongol from the steppe. She wanted him. She needed him."

MY GOD, WOMAN HE DOESN'T EVEN REMEMBER WHO THE FUCK YOU ARE OR WHAT

THE FUCK HE DID TO YOU!!! YOU EVEN SAID SO YOURSELF THAT IT SHOULDN'T BE POSSIBLE FOR A MAN TO FORGET SOMETHING LIKE THAT!!

"The Mongol who raped me is Prince Banyen, and he doesn't even realize that I am the one. Tell me, Zedda, how does a man do this to a woman and then not remember who she is?"

I don't care if he's the hottest thing since the sandwich was invented, no woman in her everloving MIND would fall in love with someone who did that to her.

And don't even get me started on Banyen's reaction. He becomes a changed man within the span of two pages (impossible), and uses his way with words and dickhead logic to explain to Katerina that it's tru wuv and that because of what happened, they're meant to be together.

"You belong to me now and forever, so that might ease your feeling about what I did to you."

UGH!!!

There are other subplots of this book that are just as ridiculous. Such as the one where Katerina and Banyen team up and trade unwitty banter as they try to train the Mongol army to take revenge on the czar. It mainly consists of Katerina barking orders, Banyen's scar throbbing, and the soldiers trading sexist remarks.

Then there's the one where Katerina falls in love with one of Ivan's soldiers Yuri and bones him even though they only met a hot five minutes ago.

"Oh, what did I do? How did I... I just saw him for the first time... oh, God!... I don't care!"

Then they all go and discuss marriage, since that's what you do after meeting someone only five minutes earlier

And don't get me started on the Ivan the Terrible subplot. Nenia said that Fern Michaels tended to go for the crazy sauce, and she sure wasn't kidding. Ivan was a trip and a half. Such as when he's trying to please his concubine.

"You may each pick a woman and fornicate here, where I can watch you. This must be a memorable evening for the princess. I want her to leave with happy memories. When I am seated, you will commence with your lustful ways."

Because nothing makes a woman happier than seeing bears mauling naked women while they're fornicating with the czar's soldiers.

So it's safe to say that I loathed this book. But it did happen to open my eyes to the world of bodice rippers. Will I keep torturing myself trying to find a decent HR/bodice ripper? Probably. You'll just have to wait and see!

Just don't wait and see with this one, haha!

Patricia Solla says

This is an early novel by the author. It's historical in nature and nothing like the contemporary novels she writes now. That being said; it was a good book. The setting is the Russian steppes and involves the breeding of a special kind of horse. Through the story we learn about the treatment of the Russian people from royalty to the fierce Cossacks.

JAC, Loner, Loser and Complicated Mess says

DNF after the first or second chapter. I can't remember which because I no longer have the book and I don't know which chapter that the hero brutally rapes the heroin in. Yes I said brutally rapes. The back blurb would have you believe it was a reluctant seduction but trust me it was not. He knocked her unconscious and violently raped her. There was absolutely no consent what so ever on her part. After reading this horrible crime scene I couldn't bring myself to read the rest without being sick to my stomach. As a victim of sexual assault I can tell you, with 100 percent certainty, that a woman who has been violently assaulted by a man will not go on to fall madly in love with him. Not unless she has some very deep, very dark psychological issues. This was the first book of Fern Michaels that I ever bought and it was the last. I don't care if every other one of her books is a literary master piece, I won't support an author that thinks rape is romantic.

Bonnie says

The love the way Fern Michaels writes...I know this is an older book of hers but I just love reading her books.

deleana Harrell says

Mehh

Hard to follow, inconsistencies through out. Narrative left a lot to be desired. I'm thinking I could be a writer.

Kristi Hudecek-Ashwill says

Nothing like an good old fashioned rape to start out a book. *sigh* But it was a good hook. I have to give it that. There weren't a lot of details, but it was clear what was going on and what had happened.

Katerina was raped by Prince Banyen, who in my opinion, wasn't a prince at all. He may have had the title, but he had no people to govern nor lands to claim. But it is what it is. Everybody knew him as a prince so a prince he will be. She was traumatized, of course and vowed to kill him someday, but it didn't stop her from bedding down with Yuri, a Russian envoy who had come to buy some of her horses for Ivan the Terrible, the Czar of Russia. How these horses are bred and made to stay pure was a Cossack secret and when Yuri was to return to Russia, some Cossacks attacked him and cut out his tongue and cut off his fingers. He was never going to tell how it was done and since Katerina's father came upon them while they were in the act, her

father believed that Katerina had told Yuri everything. Consequently, Katerina was ostracized for a year. Nobody was to speak to her for any reason, including her father.

But her village gets wiped out and her father and most of the others are dead. An old woman tells her it's her fault for revealing the secret and then she dies. Katerina is devastated and heads for the mountains to go to her father's fortress and tell the others there what had happened in Volin. With the grief comes anger and a desire for revenge. The marauding Cossacks had stolen all of the mares. Katerina still had the stallions and knew the mares were useless without them. This brings her to her uncle who is a Mongol Khan and a reunion with Prince Banyen.

Meanwhile, another story is going between Princess Halya and Ivan the Terrible. I don't know how much of this book is factual, but there's always some truth in fiction and in this case, Ivan the Terrible was a sick, demented lunatic. His acts were heinous and what he did for fun and entertainment was nothing short of evil. He tormented and humiliated Halya just because he could and delighted in berating her and making her feel bad. He was going to take her to wife and he couldn't remember how many wives he had. I'm not up on my history so I don't know how many he had, either or what happened to them. I felt bad for her on so many occasions and I wished she could get away from him.

As the story progressed and Katerina gathered her army of ruffians, I grew to dislike her very much. Unfortunately, I didn't really like her afterward, either. I liked Prince Banyen for the most part, but even he had me scratching my head a few times. He was in a tough situation with her. He was a part of her uncle's regime and he was told by her uncle that he was to take orders from her. This guy is a warrior and women weren't held in any sort of real esteem back then. He had some problems adapting, but I guess when a woman beds down with you, things take on a different light.

Ultimately, there is a war and Katerina and Prince Banyen are on the same side. A lot happens between their first meeting and the last page. It would take me hours to reveal it all in a book review. Suffice it to say, the book wasn't a bad book overall. There was a lot of action, well-developed characters whether you liked them or not, and a love story with a happily ever after.

*I borrowed this book from the library

Sarah says

I hate romance novels where the "heroine" falls in love with the guy that raped her....this would never ever happen. What a load of crap!

Wyldrabbit says

Highly enjoyable story. Touching and romantic.

Erin says

Read this book 4 years ago and LOATHED IT with a passion. Here is my review from Amazon circa 2010 I've starting reading Fern Michaels "Whitefire", can I just say how much I am really hating this book. I will probably not even finish it. I'm not a squeamish person but this book is horrible. It contains rape, not forced seduction. The hero has no redeeming characters as far as I can determine.

*****SPOILERS*****

This is a direct quote and mind you this takes place on page 18 of the book: "She felt a reeling blow to the side of her head, and then Katerina knew no more. Banyen took her brutally, savagely, again and again. Spent, he staggered to his feet and stood looking down at the naked body of the young girl. A pity he couldn't see her what she really looked like in the ebony night. His own words rang in his ears...I'm not a cruel man...I'm not one to inflict pain. He shrugged. Every man was forced at one time or another to tell a lie. Why should he be any different." Awww, isn't he just a great guy. Onward and upward, here is another quote from our sweet, manly hero, "He would rebuild his estates and get married and keep his wife pregnant nine months out of every year. He would have a mistress in his house and one in town for the awkward months" Argghhh, I'm not even out of chapter one at this point, and the book has met the wall about 3 times.

If this is your cup of tea, go for it. But I did want to give warnings on this book for those of us who don't like this type of book.

Another, thing that is bothering me about "Whitefire" is that it has been reprinted twice. I mean WTF? There are so many much more worthy books to republish, why this one? I still don't know and I'm scratching my head in puzzlement. The only thing going for "Whitefire" is the time period and location, Russia during the reign of Ivan the Terrible. I will be very happy to never have to read another of these type books again, they really make me feel dirty and disgusted.

Kathy says

Setting: 1500's Russia – Cossack village and winter fort/stables; Mongol camp; Terem palace in Moscow;

Theme: honor; love; respect; revenge

Imagery:

-the beautiful, white, strong Cosar horses especially as move through the snow – power, strength, loyalty

- the Cossack ideal – independent, warrior, light on feet, at one with horse (feed horse before himself), fearless, loyal

Characters:

Katerina Vaschenko – the new Kat... a young woman; as the only child, she trained with her father's men in the Cossack way; her father passed onto her the secrets of breeding the white, strong Cosars; she has a special affinity with the horses, especially the Cosars, and especially Whitefire; she tracks Stepan down the mountain in a blizzard after a fight with her father, is attracted to a fire – but the Russian prince at the fire sees her, and decides to take her – chasing her down on his horse, raping her, and leaving her in naked in the snow, only covered with his horse's blanket... In fighting him, she cut his face, leaving a scar. She hides the rape from all, but has nightmare every night of being chased... she is attracted to Yuri, the Czar's emissary in the purchase of white horses, and they have sex – though she is attracted to him, and loves him in a way, she knows he is not one for her whole self – but when dad catches her, and thinks he has seduced the

breeding secrets from her, her father brings her before the council and she is ostracized for the rest of summer (no one can speak to her) – until near the end of summer, as they ready themselves to return up the mountain to the underground stables, and the men celebrate with too much vodka, and she goes running off to bemoan her loneliness, the village is attacked, and all of the horses stolen (although their 4 best stallions had already been taken up the mountain), and all the men and villagers are slaughtered, including her father – when she returns, she vows to find a way to vindicate her name, and to rescue their Cosars and bring them home.

Mikhailo Kornilo and Stepan Prokopovich – Mikhailo is her and her father's first lieutenant and close friend and advisor; Stepan is a retarded man who is loyal and loves and cares for Katerina and the horses devotedly.

Katlof Vaschenko – Katerina's father – strong, unbending, didn't trust his daughter, drinking too much which gives his men permission to drink; too mellow and lulled into a false sense of security – and unprepared when attacked – dying along with them all.

Katmon Vashenko – Katerina's grandfather – who stayed up the mountain; he is aged and dying, but is Katerina's anchor, dispensing wisdom to her and ultimately Banyen.

Prince Banyen Amur – Mongol; at 6 years of age, he witnessed his parents and town viciously murdered by the Czar's men, and swore vengeance on Ivan... and eventually hooks up with Khan to lead an attack on Moscow.

Czar Ivan Vasilovich – his last years, his extreme craziness, most targeted at the boyars (nobility), leading to horrendous crimes – (like a naked woman he was parading around the dinner hall making a noise so he pushed her into the bear pulling her cart, laughing as the bear mauled her to death)...

Princess Halya Zhuk – brought to Terem with her 18 year old brother to be Ivan's 5th wife... she left the peasant man she loved, and rationalizes the use of her body to stay alive so as to have the hope of finding her love again. Sexually impotent Ivan is by turns indulgent then crude with her, blaming her. She loves her brother, and wants his protection above all else.

Yuri Zhuk – Halya's brother – training with Ivan's guards – and Ivan sends him to Katlof to spy and find the secret of the breeding, and to complete the transaction to buy the horses. Yuri falls in love with Katerina, and when her father finds them together, he cancels the bargain, sending Yuri off. Yuri promises Katerina he will return for her.

Gregory Bohacky – Terek warrior, greedy – went with Yuri; returns to steal the horses and the secret if he could – slaughters the villagers and warriors; takes the horses; demands double the payment for the horses – and Ivan eventually comes up with it...

Khan Afstar – Katerina's mother's brother – leader of the Mongols; Banyen's leader; planning an attack on Moscow. Treats his prisoners abominably, and agrees to give Katerina 200 of his prisoners (hand picked by her) to go back to her home and to train to be new Cossacks through the winter, men to assist her in getting her horses back – he also sends Banyen and 50 green soldiers to protect her, maintain the prisoners, and train with her.

Kostya – one of the prisoners, the first she picks, strong, a natural leader he ends up leading the ex-prisoners in their training, setting the tone – and for much of the time it was his men versus Banyen's men. He and Katrina play with an attraction – but only share one kiss. And he is Hayla's true love – and when he sees her again, their love blossoms. But as a man of his word, he joins Katerina in her quest.

Summary:

Katerina's plan is to turn the ex-prisoners into Cossack soldiers – in return for their freedom and a salary. She is tough on them, and strictly imposes six months of training (with punishments isolation in the cold barracks without meals) – months of Russian dance (light on feet), weapons training, one meal, and hours with their own, specific horse. The only fly in the ointment is Banyen – who watches her with a sardonic look, whose men won't take orders from her (though he enforces her orders), whose touch sets her into flames. And Banyen does not recognize her as the woman he raped, and when his scar burns, he thinks of her... and he comes to appreciate her singlemindedness, her accuracy in her training strategies, her body... and it challenges his belief of what a woman should be... and when he sees 2 of the white stallions that she had hidden, he tries to figure out where they are ... and she finds him in the room where the secret door is, following her kiss with Kostya – and he succumbs to his passion and seduces her and she melts into his arms... but once fulfilled, she makes it clear it is a one time deal. He becomes friends with her grandfather, eating dinner with him each night, and reading to him until he falls asleep... and one night, he overhears a distraught Katerina confiding in her grandfather of her history with and confusion over Banyen – of his raping her, of her admiration for him, of her attraction for him, which further confounds Banyen and his deepening feelings for her... and he stakes his claim on her, and she welcomes him... and they find the words of love ... when it is time to leave, she misreads his comforting of Hayla (who is distressed over Kostya's illness), and sends him off in anger (she sends her 4 white stallions – he refuses them)... and Mikailo makes her realize her error, judging him as her father judged her... she is eager to make amends – but leads her men to locate the Cosars... and they ultimately track down Gregory, take the gold given him by the Czar (with Katerina the one who battles Gregory, soundly beating him in a fencing contest)... and they join up with her uncle and Banyen (whose eyes meet, and all is well), and the Taters to make an attack on Moscow – the Taters get their women to sell as sex slaves, Katerina locates her Cosars, the Mongols defeat the Russians soundly – but Ivan gets away, and Banyen is left without filling his personal quest... but he realizes that killing the crazy Czar isn't really anything – and she is willing to give away her secrets of the Cosars (to Kostya and to her people) and to join Banyen as the new Mongol leader – but he does not want this – and wants to return to her home, to love her and to have children with her and to train Cossacks and breed Cosars. ahhhh
