



Cinders' Bride

Kathleen Ball

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Shannon McMurphy travels to Asherville, Texas as a mail order bride expecting to marry a rancher. Instead, her intended is a saloonkeeper. Her refusal to marry enrages John Hardy and he slices her cheek with a knife so no other man would want her. She runs into the street and no one helps her until blond, blue eyed Cinders rescues her.

Sexy, rancher Cinders saves Shannon and offers her a job. To protect her reputation he must marry her. They both agree it's a marriage of convenience. He admires her spunk and willingness to learn everything about surviving the Texas frontier. He waits for her to ask to go home but she never does.

They learn a lot about each other through, stolen horses, Indian troubles, a cattle drive and the busybodies of the town. Their attraction for each other grows, but can they learn to trust enough to love? Join me in Asherville, Texas and see how this love story unfolds.

Cinders' Bride Details

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From Reader Review Cinders' Bride for online ebook

Bigedsgirl1 says

Kathleen Ball has a way of writing characters that interact in ways that draw her readers in and make them feel a part of the story immediately. The way Cinders comes to the rescue of Shannon is exactly what one would expect from a rugged rancher with no tolerance for cruelty to women. The impact of that first encounter between them and its effect on a small western town makes for a satisfying beginning to a captivating story that you don't want to miss out on!

Widala says

3.5 stars rounded up.

A very sweet love story.

Shannon was a headstrong woman but she managed to adapt without losing herself. And though she had dreams and wants but she always grateful of what she did have.

Cinders may had caused some pain to Shannon but you can't really hate him for he's not malicious, only doing things the way he knows and reacting out of experience. And he's not afraid to apologize and change his way when he learned that he's wrong.

Overall it's enjoyable, but there's some issues that needed to be solved in my opinion, but the author failed to address them. Well, I just had to be satisfied with love conquers all.

Gloria Antypowich says

I am a big fan of Kathleen Ball's writing—I believe I have read all of her books. Cinder's Bride was a change up for her. It is a historical western romance novel set in post civil war Texas.

I will confess that at first I had a bit of difficulty relating to the shift in her writing, but there was a great deal about the book that I liked.

I found Shannon McMurphy's character to be believable, and I could sympathize with her insecurities and understand where she came from. She had made the choice to risk travelling to an area that she knew nothing about, to become a wife to man she didn't know, in hope of having a better life than she would have had before. That took guts. When she realized that the man who sent for her had not been honest about himself or his intentions, she refused to marry him. That took guts. To punish her for refusing him, he left his mark on her... one that she would see every time she looked in the mirror. He thought she would bow to him, but she didn't.

Cinder was a kind man and in good conscience he could not leave Shannon at John Hardy's mercy. Since it seemed the only answer, he married her and took her to his ranch. But he is a man who is dealing with his own demons, and they are reflected in how he communicates with Shannon.

Thank God for Cookie, who became Shannon's staunch ally.

Life in those times was very different than today—I think the author did a good job of portraying how it was. And no matter what decade people live in they are still human beings and have all the emotions that come with being a person. Their culture and past experiences will affect how they react, but they still fear, love, hate, get angry, make mistakes (yes I realise that's not an emotion), feel insecure, worry...and yes they have sex.

There were a few editing errors. But overall I like the book and recommend it to anyone who likes historical

western romances.

Sandie Grise says

This is the first time I've listened to an audible book by Kathleen Bell and it won't be the last! This story took on such a powerful countenance with narration. You could feel the emotions coming through as the narrator spoke. Julie Hoverson did a wonderful job as narrator.

You feel for the plight of our heroine of this book as she's finding out the hard way that no one is quite as they appear to be. Remember this is the Wild West not modern day. A woman has limited means of employment.

So much emotion and detail went into this story. At times I found myself with tears because you can feel the despair and sadness of our heroine. Poor Shannon, she tries so hard to be a good help mate. But will that be enough?

Cinders is a man full of regrets about love and marriage. He lost his first wife while she was with child. He treats our heroine with indifference at times because he's an emotional mess. It's because of Cookie that he gets the "talking to" that kind of snaps him out of his emotional confusion. He gets his act together and starts in making amends to Shannon.

You need to keep in mind that the timeframe for this story is not now in modern times where we wouldn't hesitate to tell the guy where to go. This is during the times of the Wild West when women were property and didn't have a voice. There were very little proper employment opportunities for young ladies in those times. Being married was the only option for a secure and safe well being.

Jessica's Totally Over The Top Book Obsession says

Cinder's Bride really pissed me off. Poor Shannon was a total doormat. Shannon was tricked by John Hardy a Saloon keeper to come marry him. Of course he never planned to marry her, just sell her body at his saloon and then give her to a Indian for a toy. When Shannon found out she was tricked and confronted John he cut her face up and then planned to rape and sell her. Cinder at first seemed like a good guy. He stopped John and married Shannon himself. Now here is were it goes south for me. He starts pushing her away, then kisses her, then yells at her or acts like she doesn't exist. On top of that instead of defending her against John the man that cut his wife's face up scarring her for life he paid the man for her train ticket. Of course that's not good enough for John he goes around and tells everyone she is a whore and the whole town treats her like shit. Cinder sits there like a pussy and lets his workers, the towns people and he himself at times treat his wife like shit, call her a whore and hurt her over and over. I felt so bad for Shannon. I wanted her to run away and tell Cinder to kiss her ass. I hated Cinder's weak ass. I hated the asshole towns people. I hated John's guts and I can't believe nothing happens to him. Overall I wish I had never read this book!

Sharon Obelenus Holland says

Great read!!

If you like the old western romances this is for you. Imagine, taking the chance of going west to marry a stranger that owns a ranch, only to find out he's a lying sleazy saloon owner. That is what Shannon is facing. When she decides she won't marry him he cuts her face. But luckily Cinders is in town. After talking to the judge about the attack, Cinders and Shannon marry to protect her. But sometimes there are hidden things that you can't be protected from.

Barbara says

I read this all in one night.... not that it was short, mind you! It was a good length but I couldn't put it down and read for over 3 hrs and didn't get to sleep until 2 a.m. I loved Cinder. He is the hero you dream about. I felt so angry at her "intended" for what he did in chapter one. I don't want to spoil this for other readers, but he is a cruel, mean character and at first I wondered about his actions. Too harsh? Not for that time and place. It was very appropriate and believable. Did I find any editing issues as another reviewer mentioned. No, the book was perfectly fine. I loved the way the characters were flushed out and I loved the actual storyline. I wanted to give it 4.5, only because I wished Ms. Ball had given Shannon a bit more characterization before the incident in the saloon. Yet, I rounded it off because the rest was definitely worth of a 5*.

Cathy Brockman says

Cinder's bride is set in the old west. Shannon has decided being a mail order bride is better than having to go to the work houses after her parents were killed. She is raised in the bad neighborhoods of New York City and used to danger but nothing has prepared her for what's in store for her in the west.

She learns her first lesson the hard way when her so call husband is not a handsome wealthy rancher but a saloon owner. When she defies him he cuts her face scaring her. Still she holds strong and refuses to be one of his whores.

Cinders a handsome rancher drives up just in time to save her from being dragged into the saloon. The judge says the only way he can take Shannon to his ranch is to marry her. Just being widowed he didn't want another wife, but something about Shannon captivates him so he marries her and takes her to his ranch.

Things are not easy for either Cinders or Shannon as they develop a deep friendship, she likes the ranch and ranch hands and brings it a joy and togetherness his deceased wife never did.

Ok first off I must warn you this is one you won't want to put down once you start. I was up all night reading it. There is lots of action, lots of twists and some fun as well. There is no hot heavy sex scenes but there is one sweet sensual one that is mostly off page. I have to say I was glad it was more story than sex and I also liked that it wasn't love at first sight but a deep bond that grew and grew.

My favorite part is a small touch of humor where Shannon often calls Cinders an off the wall name trying to guess his first name. It was a delight when it was revealed.

I highly recommend this to anyone that loves the old west, strong female leads and of course sexy cowboys. I am waiting impatiently for the next one!

Jane says

Actual rating 1.5 stars.

Did I read a different book than every other reader here on Goodreads and Amazon? Everyone seems to praise the book to heaven and back while I found it to be both too simplistic and over the top at the same time. I didn't really enjoy the experience I had with this Kindle freebie (it was free when I acquired my copy on December 20th, 2015) and I fail to understand the appeal everyone else is praising ...

More of my thoughts on this book can be found link: [HERE](#).

Lynn says

I've never read a wild west historical because I've long suspected that they wouldn't be my thing. Since this was free I decided to give it a chance. From the description you'd *think* it had a nice guy hero so I thought that might make it more palatable.

This has got to be one of worst books I've read in a while. The hero saves the heroine, Shannon at the beginning of the story from the cartoonish, mustache twirling, cackling villain...uhm, I mean saloon guy John. John had ordered a mail order bride and Shannon arrived only to find out that John had lied and he really was looking for another whore for his saloon brothel. Or maybe he really wanted Shannon for a native American's bride. The story can't really seem to decide which it is.

At any rate the hero, who goes by Cinder, comes along right after after John has sliced Shannon to scar her and "ruin her" and is trying to drag her into his saloon of sin. Cinder rescues Shannon only to get himself, in a very contrived plot twist, married to Shannon though he doesn't want a bride. It's just to play hero because darn it he's sworn off marrying and babies since his wife died with a child 4 months ago. Side note, he hasn't sworn off dallying with women however as he cavorts with our second mustache twirling villain. I mean, oops, the widow who I forgot her name. At any rate, here is our dear, sweet, perfect, Shannon's second enemy of the book because the widow had her marital sights set on Cinder.

Oh, by the way, Cinder won't give Shannon his real name until the very end of the story. Cute. At any rate, much is asked of our doormat, I mean heroine. She is grateful for any scrap thrown her way. Cinder really gives her virtually nothing but she is delighted whenever he does. Of course whenever he does he usually undoes it by being a putz. Seriously, this guy just kept getting douchier and douchier as the book goes on.

He takes her virginity out on a cattle drive after having slept beside her at their house for a long time and refusing to touch her. It was seriously the least romantic scene I've read in some time. He does this just away from all the men who know what's going on. Shannon in her mind can't refuse "marital rights" so it's not as if this innocent dove would tell him to save it. Keep in mind this is after a long hard day of working and riding on the carriage with the cook. She is hot, dirty and really sore/achy. Afterwards he ignores her even when one of his men make rude comments to her. That cattle man tells him that his former wife cheated on him so he throws himself a pity party for the rest of the cattle drive and ignores his poor wife who feels used and discarded. He blames all women for his ex. Then on the day when many of the men go to town (and it's implied they're going to bed some of the town's fallen doves) she does her and Cinder's laundry only to see him riding off all spiffed up into town. He's gone longer than everyone else and when he does return it's with the widow like they'd been hanging out all day (wink wink, nudge nudge...you know what I mean by hanging out).

Naturally it's all a big misunderstanding but she doesn't know this. He continues to make a mess of things by doing things like ignoring her when she's crying one night when he leaves to go to bed. Doesn't bother to say

a thing to her. All if forgiven when he finally walks up to her and tells her he loves her. All done and forgiven. BLECH! What a slimebag of a hero. What a spineless wimp of a heroine who has zero self respect. Because the guy rescued her and she has a scar that she thinks makes her unattractive she puts up with all this garbage. This is not romance

FicCentral says

Seeking to better her lot in life, Shannon responds to an advertisement for a mail order bride and soon finds herself on the train to Texas. Expecting to marry a rancher, she's horrified to learn that her intended is a depraved brothel owner. Refusing his offer of marriage seems like the only safe option, but he doesn't take her rejection well, pulling a knife and leaving her bleeding in the street. But before he can make good on his vile promises, a handsome cowboy steps in...

But... As much as I enjoyed the story, there were a few not so great things that jumped out at me. First, there's that apostrophe issue in the title, though that's probably the fault of middle school English teachers. I suppose it would be difficult to get students to understand punctuation that has become a permanent replacement for letters no longer used in our language, but they're just perpetuating mistakes like this one. The thing that nearly ran me off, though, was the synopsis. Instead of piquing interest, it reads like the author (or whoever put it together) is trying to condense the whole story into a couple of paragraphs, much like my niece does when she's rambling about a movie she saw. It doesn't reflect the story quality at all, and you have no idea how badly I want to rewrite it. As for the story itself, it felt like there were some loose ends when all was said and done. Did Hardy ever face any consequences for his ongoing deceit? Did the townspeople ever truly get past their misconceptions? It felt like everything on the ranch was resolved, while things outside their property were left completely up in the air. But perhaps those ropes will be tied off in the coming books.

(E.T.A. - As it turns out, the author was following the advice of a style guide that discards certain punctuation requirements and suggests that they are a matter of personal preference, so middle school English teachers are off the hook. That style guide, however, should be burned.)

Judging Covers: It was actually the cover that drew me in. I'm a glutton for romances, especially anything with a cowboy/western theme, and huge bonus points if it's historical. But most of my searches for new reads in this particular genre come up empty, primarily because so many of the covers are just awful. As much as I know it's what's on the pages that really counts, it's hard to get me to take a closer look when what's on front is a weird paste job with modern hairstyles and bad fonts. The cover for Cinders' Bride is truly one of the best I've come across in a while — a great modern layout for a story from another time.

The Verdict: I think Cinders' Bride has ruined me for a while. It's been a long time since I found a historical western romance that I enjoyed this much, and as much as I want to tell everyone how great it is, I'm also itching to find more great reads in this genre now!

Shannon's life has been one long struggle, but it wasn't without its bright moments. Raised by parents who taught her the value of hard work, she's been making her way on her own in the city, working in a factory since they passed away. But the big city is no place for a young woman on her own, so she responds to an advertisement by a man seeking a bride. But her dreams of making a family out West are dashed when she arrives in Texas to discover that her would-be husband is not the man he pretended to be. Faced with a saloon and brothel owner instead of the rancher she came to meet, she refuses marriage, only to be viciously

attacked, with no way back home and no one to turn to for help.

Cinders never planned on marrying again, not after losing his first wife in childbirth. But when he sees a scared and bleeding woman in town, he feels compelled to step up and help her. Knowing that taking a single woman to stay at his ranch would incite cruel gossip and ruin her in the eyes of the town, he pays off her travel expenses, offers marriage, and soon returns to his ranch with his new, unexpected bride.

Their relationship starts out much like you'd expect. With a marriage in name only, Cinders goes about running his ranch as usual, and Shannon is determined to earn her keep and pay her debt. Cinders hardly seems affected by the change, save for having to share the one bed in the house. Shannon, however, feels like a burden, and her confidence is further lowered by the scar she's sure to have once her stitches are healed. Any chance at a real marriage is complicated by Cinders's fear of losing another wife and Shannon's insecurity about her appearance and place in his life.

For all her meek ways, though, Shannon's got a silently strong side. She demands nothing, is considerate of everyone around her, and soon wins over not just the hardened cook at the ranch but Cinders himself. She also knows what people think of her, that the man who falsely advertised for a bride has lied about her to everyone in town, and that even Cinders assumes her background includes work in a brothel. At first, I really wanted her to stand up for herself, to insist that everyone know the truth and see with clarity that she was decent and virtuous, but then it dawned on me that it wouldn't have really fit her character. She's more the type to prove her goodness through deeds than words.

As hoped, Cinders begins to have feelings for Shannon, though it pains him to think about putting his heart on the line again. And with the lack of any real communication between these two, forging ahead with a true marriage isn't something easily done. But danger, judgement, and a cattle drive all lead to some chivalrous and romantic moments that combine their fates. It all adds up to an incredibly romantic story, pretty true to the time period, and perfect for readers who like to revisit times past.

Cinders' Bride is everything I look for in a historical western romance, with classic characters who somehow defy cliches, a surprisingly complex plot, and a truly sweet love story. My only real disappointment is that I have to find something else to read until the next book in the series is released.

This review was originally written for:

***FicCentral received this book from The Romance Reviews for free in exchange for an honest review.

V.L. Locey says

This was quite an enjoyable historical western romance novel. Generally I don't read many books in this genre but the cover and description of *Cinders' Bride* captured my attention. I found myself swept up into a lovely little romance tale with enjoyable characters, sweet dialog, timid love scenes (timid in comparison to my usual reads) and a good feel for the era and setting. Any fan of the genre should enjoy this latest from Ms. Ball.

♥ WishfulMiss ♥ says

This book gave me SERIOUS whiplash. One minute the h was happy, sad, hurt and then right back to happy.

The H was nice/polite one minute and the next would be furious and acting like a huge douche bag?!?!?!?

There is nothing I hate more than having MCs in books that can't make up their minds. I understand that sometimes the author will use this melodrama to move the plot along or to add some angst and emotional turmoil but there is nothing appealing about adults who say yes but mean no. (this isn't just one time people, it happens up until 95% of the book!) I read romance for the Romance, and there was nothing in this book that I would call remotely romantic.

Something else I should mention the h, Shannon, was too naive, too forgiving and straight up a push over. She gets scorned by everyone, including Cinders (that name was just ridiculous!) and she never stands up for herself. I got tired of rolling my eyes at her constant belittling and how quickly she let this go when it had hurt her so much. I just didn't get it. Also the confession of love at the end was rushed, unbelievable and just reeked of BS. It was all one sided and hollow sounding.

Cookie and Keegan stole the show for me, but both MCs left a hell of a lot to be desired. I wont be checking out any more from this series. Not for me.

Yvonne Wohlfeil says

I liked this book! The Story was well written.This book held my interest. I will say Cinder should have used old west justice on John. I'm afraid I would have punched Polly in the nose a few times. With that being said please read the book I think you will enjoy it.

Hot Reading Mom says

Shannon is a young heading West to marry. She arrives and things are not as promised. This small town is full of righteous people who make judgement based on gossip. Cinder the hero in this saga is no better. Just when I thought we would finally get some understanding the story was wrapped up in a big HEA. Not her best work but ok.
