



Ruined

Shiloh Walker

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From the national bestselling author of *Busted* and *Razed* comes an unforgettable story of a love that transcends tragedy...

As one of the Barnes brothers, Sebastien has always felt blessed. Not only does he have an amazing family, but he's become a Hollywood golden boy who has everything he's ever wanted—with one exception. He's had a thing for Marin since he was a kid, but when he finally summons the courage to ask her out, she turns him down. Marin is ready to settle down, she wants commitment and stability, and Sebastien is still too much of a playboy, caught up in the wild life of the spotlight.

Still reeling from the rejection, Sebastien's luck runs out later that night when he saves a girl from an assault. The shining knight role fits him just fine, but his armor—and his perfect life—become tarnished when the near-deadly attack lands him in the hospital. Physically scarred, he gives up acting and retreats from everybody.

If anyone can pull Sebastien back from the abyss, it's Marin. But first she has to convince him that beauty is *not* only skin deep...

Praise for the Barnes Brothers novels:

“Sexy and poignant.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

“Walker delivers a solidly satisfying romance, with tangible chemistry between the leads, a healthy dose of steamy sex, and a sweetly sentimental theme of family running throughout.”—*Publishers Weekly*

“A touching romance...[with] plenty of sizzle.”—RT Book Reviews (4 1/2 stars)

Start at the beginning—read Shiloh Walker's *Wrecked*.

Ruined Details

Date : Published July 19th 2016 by InterMix

ISBN :

Author : Shiloh Walker

Format : Kindle Edition 201 pages

Genre : Romance, Contemporary, Fiction

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From Reader Review Ruined for online ebook

Caz says

3.5 stars

An enjoyable friends-to-lovers romance about an actor who goes into a downward spiral when he is badly scarred, and the long-time family friend who helps pull him out of it. One plot point is a bit difficult to swallow and there's a big ol' cliché that pulls things together towards the end, but it's a quick read with sizzling chemistry between the two leads.

Romance Readers Retreat says

4.5 Stars

Ruined is the fourth book in Shiloh Walker's contemporary Barnes Brothers series. I suggest reading the previous books in the series before picking this one up so you can get the full effect for the back story, but it could be read as a standalone. I've enjoyed all four books in this series, but this one is probably my favorite. I have always had a fondness for stories with injured heroes and age gaps.

Sebastien has led a pretty amazing life. He's got a wonderful family, a great acting career and plenty of women to keep his playboy lifestyle full. The only thing he wants that he can't get is, Marin. She is a fellow actor, they are good friends and he has always harbored a crush on her. When he finally mans up and asks her out she turns him down. Marin is at the point in her life where she is ready to settle down. She has already lived the fast life in hollywood and knows that Sebastian is still sowing his oats and not ready for the simpler life she wishes to lead.

Sebastien's life takes a drastic turn when he is injured trying to rescue a woman being assaulted. He goes from being Hollywood's golden boy to hiding out thanks to his newly scarred appearance. Marin attempts to get him to look at his life and realize beauty is more than skin deep and Sebastien attempts to once again convince Marin that he is the perfect man for him despite his old lifestyle and their age difference.

I loved Sebastien so much. I have been looking forward to his story and Shiloh Walker did not disappoint me. He turned out to be a sexy man full of heart and determination who had to overcome a terrible event to finally realize his dreams. I loved Marin too, even though I wanted to shake her at first because of her reluctance due to their age difference. This was a perfectly written love story full of heart and lots of steamy moments.

Sandy S says

4 stars

ABOUT THE BOOK: Release Date July 19, 2016

As one of the Barnes brothers, Sebastien has always felt blessed. Not only does he have an amazing family, but he's become a Hollywood golden boy who has everything he's ever wanted—with one exception. He's had a thing for Marin since he was a kid, but when he finally summons the courage to ask her out, she turns him down. Marin is ready to settle down, she wants commitment and stability, and Sebastien is still too much of a playboy, caught up in the wild life of the spotlight.

Still reeling from the rejection, Sebastien's luck runs out later that night when he saves a girl from an assault. The shining knight role fits him just fine, but his armor—and his perfect life—become tarnished when the near-deadly attack lands him in the hospital. Physically scarred, he gives up acting and retreats from everybody.

If anyone can pull Sebastien back from the abyss, it's Marin. But first she has to convince him that beauty is not only skin deep.

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REVIEW: 4 stars—RUINED is the fourth installment in Shiloh Walker's contemporary, adult BARNES BROTHERS erotic, romance series focusing on the Barnes brothers. This is actors Sebastien Barnes and Marin Lassiter's story line. RUINED can be read as a stand alone without any difficulty. Any important information from previous story lines is revealed where necessary.

Told from dual third person perspectives (Sebastien and Marin) RUINED is a friends to lovers romance wherein our couple have been in love with one another for years but Marin is seven years Sebastien's senior and ready to settle down; Sebastien has a reputation as a playboy and isn't looking for anything but a good time. When an attack against Sebastien's ex leaves our hero scarred both inside and out, he walks away from his career, leaving family and friends in the dust. The only person Sebastien is willing to acknowledge is the woman he has loved from afar but their last encounter before the attack was met with rejection, and Sebastien isn't ready to face the world or the woman who broke his heart. What ensues is Sebastien's year long struggle with guilt and remorse, and Marin's battle with her heart - a drunken one -night stand is about to change their lives forever.

All of the previous couples play secondary and supporting roles including the Barnes parental units who are heartbroken at their youngest son's inability to move forward and let go of the past.

The world building continues to focus on family and friendship; love and lost. The premise is dramatic and intense; the characters are emotional and passionate; the romance is fated but struggles with personal guilt, personal trauma, and misunderstanding.

Copy supplied by the publisher through Netgalley

www.thereadingcafe.com

Pam says

This is book four in the Barnes Brothers series and Sebastien's story is as enjoyable as the others. I love this close knit family; you can feel the love and support they have for each other, yes even when they are fighting.

Sebastien is the youngest of the boys in the family, a bit spoiled and many will say he glides through life with ease and a superficial attitude. As a famous young actor, he is enjoying his life. That is until tragedy strikes leaving a good friend dead and his life in turmoil. He retreats to his home, cutting everyone out except the one woman who has stood by him and his family for years.

Marin has been a friend of the Barnes family for years. A fellow actor, Sebastien and her have been at the highs of their career together for several years. She is a few years older than Sebastien and she has watched him travel through life untouched and having the time of his life. There is an unspoken attraction between the two but they have never acted on it as he is a player and she is ready to settle down. When Sebastien is in trouble she is the only one he keeps in contact with, pushing everyone else away. She eventually gets him to be part of the living world again but things change when they share a night together.

This is the fourth book in the series but it can easily be read as a standalone, the family is tight and most are featured during the story, but the author brings the reader up to date and they do not miss a step.

Sebastien's story is a very emotional tale; the golden boy in Hollywood that can't seem to do anything wrong and is always getting the next big role until he is in the wrong place at the wrong time and falls down a hole of guilt, loss and remorse, feeling he did not do enough and someone close to him died. He is in a dark place for over a year but he surfaces a few times when his family needs him, showing that he does still care.

I love Marin; she always had a soft spot for Sebastien but knew he was not at the same place in life as she was. The fact that she never gave up on him no matter how nasty he became is truly the test of a great friend. They had a great relationship that smoldered underneath ready to become a sizzling romance if given a chance. The chemistry between the two glows and the scenes together are amazing.

The Barnes family is remarkable; I have read the other stories and enjoyed each one. They truly care for each other but each brother can throw a good punch at times when a fight between is needed to cool hot heads. There is humor and tears as they feel Sebastien's pain and wish him well as he goes through the months of healing both physically and emotionally. This is an emotional story full of love, laughter and romance.

Copy from the publisher for an honest review

Saly says

This book had potential but it never got me there. Older heroine - check (heroine is 7 years older) & best friends with hero's older brother.

Hollywood hearthrob hero - check

But the romance which had so much potential fell flat. The prolonged misunderstanding just annoyed me. And then bam with not much space devoted to seeing these two develop a relationship we get ILU and marry me. And what about the other actress Evie? Was the hero actually dating her? I just felt the book skipped a lot of steps.

1-Click Addict Support Group says

If you let your heart make decisions, love can happen...

When I need to read a story that has emotional depth, with characters I can love and hate in equal measure, I can always count on this author. Marin and Sebastien's story is the perfect example. I LOVED this latest installment of the *Barnes Brothers* series!

Sebastien and Marin are friends, fellow actors, and they feel the undercurrents of attraction between them. There is an age difference, agreed, which is highlighted a lot in the story and which may account for Marin's resistance early on. There are other factors, of course, but that one...that one I can only disagree with. Of all the things in this modern, complicated world to worry about, a birthdate is going to be the last one on the list...

Friendship, professionalism, family—pick the reason—but they were not going to give in to their feelings, despite Sebastien's very persuasive manner. When tragedy strikes, though, everything is thrown out the window.

“You make my brain melt.”

A case of role-reversal has resistance now on the other foot. When Sebastien turns his back on the world, only Marin seems to be able to get through. It's complicated, tragic, harrowing, heart-pounding and tissue-grabbing as well. Marin is stubborn in her determination to be there for Seb even as he does everything to push her away. It isn't easy; Marin isn't a doormat and she has to dig deep to understand her complex feelings for a man who has changed not only physically but in all ways that matter.

Sebastien is a tortured man, tortured inside and out by the violence that has brought him to this new, horrible reality... His strength in pulling himself out of self-destruction, watching his path to acceptance and forgiveness, with Marin dogging his every step, had me glued to my Kindle...

And not only were the main characters everything I hoped for, the Barnes family provided humor, love and that feeling of safety and warmth that only people who always have your back can give... There is sizzling chemistry, quiet insightful moments and emotion to spare as this couple work through every forward and backward step. My heart was all, all in... *cue deep soulful sighs* ~ Diane, 4.5 stars

Catherine Bibby (Rochelle's Reviews) says

I received a copy via Net Galley in exchange for an honest review.

After reading *One Of The Guys*, I couldn't wait to step into another of Shiloh Walker's fictional worlds and get to know Sebastien and Marin. *Ruined* is part of the *Barnes Brothers* series but having never read any of the previous books, I still fell madly in love with the Barnes family. Now I can't wait to go back to the beginning and delve deeper into the sexy, broody Barnes men and the gorgeous head strong women that caught them. Sebastien and Marin are stubborn, sizzling, and kept me guessing what was going to happen between this Hollywood couple next.

Marin Lassiter is a 32 year old actress who loves her job but is tired of being in the spotlight 24/7 and is looking for someone who wants to settle down and not spend all of their time in the limelight. She has always felt a connection with Sebastien Barnes, even though he is many years her junior but knows that he is

not ready to step out of the spotlight and grow up. That is until an accident leaves him disfigured and standing in the dark. Marin is a sassy leading lady who knows what she wants and isn't afraid to go after it. I love how independent and headstrong that she is....the perfect match for the likes of the scarred, handsome, and mulish Sebastien.

After the horrific accident, Sebastien Barnes has spent the last year wallowing at the bottom of a bottle with no help of crawling his way out. He has pushed everyone away from him including his acting agent and his close knit family. The only person he has allowed close to him both physically and emotionally has been Marin. Sebastien goes through such a harsh and tragic transformation from the beginning to end of his story that you can't help but feel his pain and guilt well up within you as you read. I couldn't wait to see fruition come from all of his erotic dreams and fantasies about Marin and see him follow his heart.

Shiloh Walker delivers another steamy tale about the gorgeous Barnes men that leave readers salivating and waiting for another helping of these yummy, broody heroes. I highly recommend for a read full of heat and passion among the glitz and glamor of Hollywood. Until Shiloh gives us another leading man to drool over, I am excited to return to the beginning and learn more about this family of entertainers and delve deeper into the lives of Zach, Zane, and Trey in *Wrecked*, *Razed*, and *Busted* who I am sure will provide hours more of melt your kindle scenes.

Christie72 says

Loved, loved this book! I wasn't sure in the beginning if I was going to like, much less love, Sebastien. He seemed like the quintessential Hollywood playboy in the beginning, but he proved himself by the end. I absolutely adored him by the last page. Sebastien has a great family, great friends, and is living the dream as a Hollywood star. He's been friends with Marin since they were young, and he's had feelings for her for years. But, she's ready for the future, and he's living in the "now," not thinking much about his future. When he gets his nerve up to make a move, she rejects him. You might be thinking this is your normal romance of girl rejecting boy, and boy realizing he wants a future and fights to get the girl...and he does in the end. However, you would be mistaken. One night, Sebastien life is changed forever as he tries to save a girl during a vicious attack. He is also attacked and almost loses his life. He thinks the scarring on his face will end his career and life will never be good again. As he pushes those who care for him away, Marin refuses to let him go. As they spend more time together, each realizes their feelings run deep for one another. Will they ever admit to their true feelings for one another and grab the HEA each deserves?

At first glance, you might think it's like so many other romances today, but there are some things that pleasantly surprised me. I love their chemistry...their flirting and banter was soooo sexy! And...the sex scenes, ladies, they are HOT!!! Sebastien grew so much from the beginning of the story. In the beginning, I thought he only had lustful thoughts of Marin, and he was shallow. As he surprised Marin, he surprised me. He was so strong and brave, fighting his demons and trying to just live a normal life. His emotions were raw and realistic. He couldn't have a better cheerleader than Marin. She would be someone I would want in my corner fighting for me. She never gave up on him, even though any other person would have at times. They were a great couple, and I really wanted them to have their HEA.

Ruined is the first book I've read by Shiloh Walker, and I enjoyed every word. Her writing made me want to keep reading until I was done. I'm so excited when I find a new writer whom I love, and I do love Shiloh. So, I will definitely be reading her other books.

Read and reviewed on behalf of Once Upon an Alpha

Copy provided in exchange for an honest review.

Maria Rose says

This review appears in a blog post as a mini-review at All About Romance:
<http://allaboutromance.com/midweek-mi...>

Shiloh Walker has come up with another entertaining and emotional romance in her Barnes Brothers series with *Ruined* in which Sebastian the golden boy of Hollywood gets to play the hero - in a way he never expected. While he's had a crush on Marin, a close friend of his older brother (and a fellow actress he enjoys working with) for years, she's been careful to stay clear of anything intimate with him, his easy playboy ways not what she's looking for in a partner. But when Sebastian's ex-girlfriend comes for a visit and ends up dead, with Sebastian having taken the knife from her abusive lover and killed him with it in turn, the physical scars he's left with are no match for the emotional ones. Through his year of recovery from the trauma, Marin stands by him and is the only friend who he can countenance being around. With alcohol a complement to his pity party, his memories of some of what happens when she is around are fuzzy. But when the alcoholic fog clears, and he sets his sights on the future, he knows what he wants - and it's Marin. But will his efforts be too little, too late?

Despite the traumatic nature of the attack that Sebastian is involved in, the overall story while being emotional at heart doesn't descend into too much angst. Sebastian is definitely within his rights to struggle with the fact that his ex-girlfriend is dead, that he's killed her abusive lover, and that his physical good looks are ruined by the scar on his face. As the attack takes place fairly early in the story, the majority of the plot deals with the aftermath, and the relationship he has with Marin. From friends to lovers, their relationship is complex and fraught with memories and dreams. They've both secretly lusted after each other but neither made a move to change that, until Sebastian's injury changed his view of the future. I like the way the story progresses, the steamy scenes between the two of them as they struggle to figure out just what their relationship is, and how Sebastian becomes a man of much more depth than seen at the beginning of the story. There are a few scenes of misunderstandings and miscommunications that were sometimes frustrating for me as a reader and at times I wanted to give Marin and Sebastian a little corner time to talk things through. But overall I really enjoy them as a couple. Plus, it is nice to see an older woman/younger man romance in a Hollywood type story. Definitely worth the read!

Note: a copy of this story was provided by the author for review.

Francesca the Fierce (Under the Covers Book Blog) says

3.5 stars

I have been wanting to know more about Sebastien Barnes since the beginning. He's the younger Barnes brother and a movie star. While his older brother stepped away from the limelight, Sebastien has been nothing but successful in it, he's become quite the popular actor and even named Sexiest Man Alive! He can have any woman he wants and usually does, except the only one he's always really wanted sees him as a friend and family. He's had a crush on Marin, his older brother's friend and fellow actress, since he was a teenager. His first (and only) crush. But other than getting close to her during filming, she won't give him a shot. He's too much of a playboy, and enjoys the Hollywood lifestyle more than Marin wants at this point in her life. She's older and she wants to settle down in a nice and quiet life that she knows Sebastien wouldn't be able to give her.

But everything changes after an attack that leaves Sebastien scarred both physically and emotionally. It's been a year since that day and he's still not ready to face the world. The only one he lets in is Marin, but he doesn't think he's good enough for her anymore.

This story was so sweet! I loved the setup of Sebastien being in love with Marin, even though he didn't know it was love, from when he was basically a kid and then now finally getting the girl. He had to grow up, and it took something very hard and difficult for that to happen. But through all that, his love for Marin always showed. Their chemistry was great on and off the screen.

My one complaint with this story is how there's one issue of miscommunication (or lack of communication) that gets dragged on for a bit towards the end. We all knew it had to come out and be talked about, so the beating around the bush and allowing misconceptions to form got on my nerves a bit. Pet peeve of mine. But with all that aside, I thought they were adorably cute together. This is a trope I don't read often where the hero is younger than the heroine, and it was nice to see that she didn't automatically treat him like a kid just because of his age.

I enjoy reading this series because I know I can always count on emotion, chemistry and the sense of family. *RUINED* is another great installment of that. It was nice to see the family rallying around Sebastien, getting mad at him at times when he was being hard headed, supporting him when he allowed them. As always, I'm ready for whatever Ms. Walker will write next!

Katie Michaels says

Ruined is book 4 in Shiloh Walker's Barnes Brothers series, and though I didn't read any of the previous books, I didn't feel the lack. This works just fine as a standalone.

I rarely read contemporary romance, but I've read an entire series under Walker's pseudonym JC Daniels, and I like her style. Plus, this features a wounded/ scarred hero, which is probably my favorite trope. It didn't let me down.

Sebastien is a young and completely gorgeous Hollywood actor, who is smitten with his co-star Marin. The thing is, Marin is seven years older than him; and while she feels the same attraction, she realizes that she wants something more serious than a playboy like Sebastien will be able to give. So when he asks her out,

she turns him down flat, protecting both her heart and their friendship.

Then, the unthinkable happens. Just when Sebastien is catching up with an old flame, her newest ex attacks them both. Sebastien escapes with his life, but his ex-girlfriend is dead and his face is ruined. On top of that, he must deal with the fact he had to kill his attacker in order to survive. The ordeal basically ends Sebastien's life as he knows it. He starts drinking and shuts himself off from everyone, except Marin, who never gives up on him and remains a steadfast friend no matter what.

Obviously things do progress beyond friendship, as they reach a point where they both give in to that smoldering attraction. And Walker does a fantastic job, really bringing the heat. The story moves quickly to that point, totally pulling me in. Until the great misunderstanding. I don't want to spoil too much, but the big conflict here is less about Sebastien's scars than the fact that he and Marin simply don't talk to each other and lay everything out on the table. All the (important) things left unsaid drove me slightly crazy, since these two are so perfect for each other that only a blind man could miss it. Ultimately the story satisfies, but this conflict device is what bumped this down from "great" to "pretty good."

Even with the frustration I was feeling, I couldn't help but root for this couple to make it work. Their feelings rang true for me and their sexual tension was muy caliente. The book also gets points for interesting secondary characters. I want more from Sebastien's brothers, especially the broody Travis. I think if I see his book coming down the pike, it would be hard to turn it down.

Rating: B

**ARC provided by publisher*

Kim says

I'm disappointed. After reading and liking a lot of Shiloh Walker's books, I'm not sure I really cared for this one. It's a lot of angst and generally stupid behavior. Especially on the part of the heroine.

It has the same basic premise as one of her earlier books, "Her Best Friend's Lover" - girl sleeps with best friend guy while he seems perfectly sober, but is basically blackout drunk - so much so that he can't remember he slept with her in the morning. And, of course, some arc happens that causes her to leave before he wakes up in the morning. So, he never knows. She gets pregnant and lets him believe the father is someone else.

In this case, Sebastian is 27 and Marin is 35. They're both actors and have known each other forever. Sebastian asks Marin out and she refuses giving him the excuse that he is not in the same place as she is with her wants related to her career and her life. He basically admits he's had a thing for her for a while, but accepts her refusal. That same evening, he goes out for dinner, runs in to the previous love of his life, Monica, and ends up getting between her and the man Monica left Sebastian for. The man, Hanson (I think was his name), comes after her with a knife and gun.

Monica ends up dead.

Hanson ends up dead.

Sebastian is left with a large facial scar and lots of emotional issues.

Sebastian withdraws from life. He stops acting. He pushes his friends and family away. He starts drinking heavily. The only person he allows in a little is Marin. She visits his house - brings him food, pours out his alcohol, etc.

One day, about a year later, after he seems to be tackling his demons, Marin shows up at his house with a manuscript to try to draw him back in to acting, but finds him drinking and watching online videos of the stabbing/shooting of Hanson/Monica and his part in it. He's pretty far gone. But she convinces him to dump the alcohol and then he touches her and again admits he's had a thing for her for a while and she gives in.

They have unprotected sex. He passes out. He comes to and they have unprotected sex again and then he calls her "Monica". She runs out because she thinks he's stuck on Monica. Despite having said multiple times that he's had a thing for her (Marin) for some time.

She gets pregnant. She doesn't tell him. She works on set acting opposite Sebastian for a movie. She "dates" another actor, Dash, who is also acting in the same movie. Sebastian finds out she's pregnant and thinks Dash is the father. Marin does nothing to disabuse him of this idea.

Sebastian does his best to avoid Marin. Sebastian lets another actress, Evie, hang on him, kiss him, etc., in front of Marin. Marin supposedly "tries" to talk to him to tell him about the pregnancy, but she doesn't really. There's no real effort on her part to "make" him listen because she's hurt that he called her Monica after sex and she's jealous over Evie. Previously, Marin went to Sebastian's house whenever she felt like it. But, now, suddenly, it's impossible for her to get over there. So, no real effort to speak the truth, as far as I'm concerned.

She doesn't actually tell him that he's the father until the situation on the movie set is so bad that Sebastian attacks Dash and the director has to halt production to deal with their drama. Sebastian thinks that Dash is stepping out on Marin and not being there for the pregnancy, so he calls Dash repeatedly over a period of time to give him a hard time. And he attacked Dash because he thought Dash made Marin cry. Keep in mind, Marin is a 36 year old woman. And she's just letting all of this play out without saying a single word. Not only does she suck for not informing Sebastian that he's going to be a father (whether he loves her not, he should be told), but she's a selfish and inconsiderate friend for allowing Sebastian to harass Dash because she has lied by omission.

So, it's stated that Marin never hooked up with Dash - she tells Sebastian in no uncertain terms. But, it's never stated whether Sebastian hooked up with Evie. In fact, Evie disappears after Marin tells Sebastian the baby is his. It's like she went *poof* from the earth - Sebastian never contacts her to explain why he isn't seeing her again, etc.

Honestly, I didn't find this story romantic. They didn't spend any happy time together. Even during the last 5% when stuff was "resolved", it didn't seem all that happy.

Anika says

I really liked the premise of this story - an emotionally damaged, physically scarred man who was once almost physical perfection, getting together with the woman he has been in love with for years.

Unfortunately to get to the HEA we had a heck of a lot of assumptions and misunderstandings right from the beginning primarily from and caused by the heroine.

Before the scarring he asks her out, they've known each other for more than ten years at this point and are supposed to be friends, she refuses because they're in different places. I found the reasoning to be really spurious - they're friends, she should know him well enough to know that he's not willing to jeopardise their friendship just for a fling.

The hero was the perfect tortured hero but the heroine - Marin - got on my last nerve. She friendzoned the hero but was attracted to him - sent out mixed signals. (view spoiler). Instead she allows a misunderstanding develop. (view spoiler).

I bailed on this book around the 65% mark when it looked like a second love triangle was about to develop. Ultimately I felt if the heroine had been honest about her feelings and fears from the beginning and given the hero a chance, what happened to the hero would not have happened. It was just poorly manufactured conflict for the sake of it. The book gets two stars purely because I really liked Sebastien.

♥Rachel♥ says

3.5 Stars

I loved the premise of **Ruined**, a once beautiful man, scarred and emotionally damaged getting the girl he's been in love with for years speaks to me. After an assault, Sebastien tries to shut everyone out, except for Marin. Marin won't go away and he loves that she is a constant in his life even if he thinks it's just out of pity that she keeps coming around. Marin didn't want to open her heart to Sebastien before, because she wanted a family and commitment, and Sebastien didn't seem like he was on the same page. He was living like a playboy taking all the benefits a much sought after, gorgeous movie star could take advantage of, but all that changed after the assault, and with all the time Marin spends with him, it's impossible to keep up that guard.

I actually read **Ruined** in one day, because I had to find out how it all turned out, but there was a fair amount of angst and drama, and that prevented me from completely loving the story. A lot of that could've been avoided if both Sebastien and Marin didn't assume they knew what the other was feeling, and also if Marin would've cleared up a misunderstanding right away, instead of letting it go on. With all that said, I did enjoy the romance, it was pretty steamy! Marin and Sebastien were so hot for each other; there was longing on both sides. Plus, it contains a trope I do love (I won't spoil the plot by telling which trope) so even with all the drama I did end up enjoying the story more than I thought I would. I would say if you're a fan of angst **Ruined** will definitely be right up your alley. If not, I'd still give it a shot, because it still might work like it did for me.

A copy was kindly provided by Intermix in exchange for an honest review.

Anna's Herding Cats says

Reviewed for herding cats & burning soup.
Amazon: <http://amzn.to/2ajLHIJ>

Damn. I'm gonna need me a Barnes Brother. With each book in this series I'm all 'omg, this is my favorite hero!' *swoon* and then I meet the next brother and he's my favorite. lol Walker just writes a damn fine male. Mmhm!

Ruined surprised me. I don't read blurbs and was just expecting a lighter fluffy-sweet romance and got so much more and in such a different unfolding. The quick of it is that Sebastien's life was completely derailed one horrifying night when he tried to save a lady being attacked and wound up terribly injured both physically and emotionally. It sent his life spiraling and he did his damndest to push everyone in his life--family, coworkers, friends,etc--away. The one person who stuck? Marin. A woman he's known practically his whole life and loved for nearly that long but never managed to make it past friendship and working together. He's at that point he's got to choose to live again or become lost in a bottle of booze and dark thoughts. Ah!

I loved Sebastian. He's struggling through his own personal hell and has pretty much hit rock bottom. It hurt watching him try to pull himself out of that and mend all of the relationships he'd pushed away. But it was also inspiring and incredibly moving. And Marin. The girl sticks. She's the type of person everyone needs in their life. That doesn't run when things get hard. That fights for those she cares about even if she's fighting against them.

Their romance is slow going and their relationship as friends hits some pretty rocky moments but I never stopped thinking they cared for one another. They've an unconventional start but when I closed the book I believed in their love and that they'd make it. I may have gotten a little teary eyed too. Oh and the heat. Yeah. The heat. These two are hot and the pull between them is intense. There's a good bit of self lovin' too which was crazy sexy. Whew!

It's definitely not all light and airy--dealing with trauma, life changing scars, alcoholism (or the makings of it), dark thoughts and hopelessness--and it made for some difficult moments. But it's also not all dark and depressing. There were funny moments as well that had me chuckling and smiling and it was just a wonderful mix of emotions and growth.

All in all, Ruined was a fantastic addition to the series and proof, once again, that Walker hands down knows what she's doing. Beautiful and heartfelt. Ruined touched the soul and warmed the heart. Another winner from Walker.
