



The Beauty of Surrender

Eden Bradley

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Shibari, the ancient art of erotic restraint...Its finely knotted ropes are a turn-on, a sexual experience...and, for some, an absolute necessity.

Serving the Master: Desmond and Ava

At a San Francisco sex club called Pinnacle, Ava Gregory seeks something she cannot quite describe. But of one thing she is certain: the moments when she feels her most beautiful and complete are when she is tightly restrained in the Shibari ropes. At Pinnacle, she's paired with a master: Desmond Hale, who thrives on control. But something surprising happens when Desmond binds Ava's willing body and takes her to the edge of ecstasy. And now the two are taking their relationship out of the shadows of the club, sharing secrets unleashed and bodies unbound....

Soothing the Beast: Marina and James

An art dealer and Shibari master, Marina has never hesitated to dominate anyone. Until she meets James, a dark, gorgeous, towering journalist who's survived horrors around the world. James confesses that submission is the only way to clear his troubled mind, but Marina is instantly overwhelmed by his strength and magnetism. To share the pleasures of bondage, something must change between them. When it does, it will come with an explosion of unexpected pleasure—and a relationship that neither could ever have imagined....

The Beauty of Surrender Details

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From Reader Review The Beauty of Surrender for online ebook

Susan says

You can read my review at Romance Reader at Heart

Jane says

Didn't finish. The way the heroine was described as tiny and doll-like with baby-soft skin got quite off-putting and the first bondage scene was so polite and tepid I just couldn't be bothered to read on. No zing at all. The characters kept telling themselves to forget past traumas and move on and somehow you just knew it wasn't going to happen without a lot of angsting.

Kitty Berry says

I just finished this 2 part story in a few hours. It was a fast and easy read. Eden Bradley uses reoccurring characters and locals in these 2 short stories. Very steamy and emotionally charged

Mrs. Missive says

This is two companion stories. I will admit, that I didn't connect with the first as much as the second. The first was a D/s story with heavy emphasis on the rope work. Now, let me say that the author has an exquisite way with words, and even the parts that I didn't enjoy, I felt were sweet and beautifully written.

There was a lot of talk about his sub being his little "doll" and that he was undressing and caring for his "doll". I had the mental image of those life-sized real doll sex toys that I could not shake.

That might have just been a case of "not my kink".

The second story I really enjoyed. Although I wish that Marina had really taken complete control at least once from start of the encounter to the end. Other than that, I loved these two screwed up people coming together and loving the hard reality of each other.

I was not thrilled with the cost either. But this author is a great read if you are looking for a story that has very sweet sex scenes, and allows you deep inside the characters head.

Wasn't a home run for me, simply because I didn't connect with the personalities of the characters as much as I had with previous works by this author.

3 stars for the first. 4 stars for the second.

Tiffany says

Eden Bradley became auto-buy with her last full-length release, *A 21st Century Courtesan*, which was incredible. This book, while not quite as great, was still solid. It's comprised of two novellas, *Serving the Master* and *Soothing the Beast*. The stories moved quickly and largely centered around the relationships' development. The first one featuring Desmond and Ava was my favorite. The hero was sexy and the heroine was sweet, I liked her a lot. Both couples dealt heavily with past issues and came together in a believable way, and I always feel like an author who can successfully accomplish a love story that really makes me feel it in the shortened space of a novella is one who is very talented. Eden Bradley is definitely talented.

Marleen says

I received my copy from Black Lace.

Before I start my review of the story in this book there are a few thoughts I want to get out of the way first; thoughts that are more about the way in which this book was published than the actual story.

For starters, according to the description on Amazon this book counts 320 pages. And, to be fair, it does. However the story itself is over on page 240. What follows is an interview with the author and previews of two other, yet to be published, titles by Eden Bradley.

And then there is what I referred to as “the story”. This is not so much one novel as a bundle containing two stories. The stories are connected, both through subject matter and characters that make appearances in both, but they are two different stories with two separate titles. And the blurb as shown above only refers to part one. In keeping with the way the book was published, I will review the two stories separately below, and conclude with a few comments on the whole book.

“Make it as much an inner journey as it is a physical experience, and you’ll reach the deepest levels Shibari can take you to.”

1. *Serving the Master: Desmond and Ava* (128 pages)

Ava Gregory finds peace and fulfilment when she submits and is bound tightly. While her sessions with Marina have been exhilarating, they haven’t been able to bring her the peace and release she’s been longing for. Something is holding Ava back from completely surrendering to the experience, and Marina knows that she isn’t the person who will break those walls down.

“You might finally get what you’ve wanted, and that can be terrifying sometimes.”

When Marina introduces Ava to Desmond Hale, a Shibari Master, the connection between the two of them is instant. But while Ava has life-long issues with allowing herself to give in to what it is she needs, it is Desmond who can't bring himself to commit to anyone.

"Maybe what was really bothering him was the dark suspicion that this girl was the one who could actually make him lose control for once in his life."

And if there's one thing Desmond fears it is losing control. If he isn't in control he can't keep those he loves safe. And if he can't provide that safety, he can't allow people to get too close to him.

While Ava finds everything she's ever dreamt of in submitting to Desmond and his ropes, he grows more scared as his connection to Ava becomes ever stronger. In the end it will have to be the submissive who challenges her Dom to conquer his fears and face an uncertain but very promising future.

"You are stronger than I am, Ava, do you know that?"

2. Soothing the Beast: Marina and James (105 pages)

James Cortez, a six feet plus, tattooed and dangerously handsome journalist is looking for:

"A way out of my own head, maybe."

He needs to find a way to get a handle on the memories that haunt him; memories of the horrible scenes he has witnessed all over the world. He thinks, hopes that submitting to Marina and her ropes might take him there.

Marina Marchant is a Shibari specialist with very powerful reasons for not wanting to work with male subjects. Having lost the man she loved once she is not prepared to risk the pain again. She'll stay in control of her life and her emotions even if that means ignoring the obvious chemistry between herself and the beautiful man asking for her help.

But, as Marina soon discovers, it is one thing to rationally know that staying away from James might save her from heartbreak in the future. Especially when it causes heartbreak in the here and now.

"Marina, there are no guarantees in life. I can't say I won't get hit by a truck tomorrow. But God damn it, how can you do this, manifest the loss you're so afraid of? You're making it happen. It's not fair!" – James

And while James is battling darkness and numerous fears, he is smart enough to realise that the connection – love – he feels when he's with Marina is not something he can or should walk away from.

"I never thought it could be this good, and this torturous. I never understood until I met you. Until I loved you. But I'm not stupid enough to turn away from it. To turn away from you. I can't do it." - James

Like I said, there are clear connections between these two novellas. It is Marina who introduces Ava to Desmond and it is Marina to whom Ava turns when she needs advice in the first story. Just as Marina turns to Desmond when she finds herself in need of someone who will listen.

“Don’t we tell submissives that they learn the most about themselves when they push their boundaries? And shouldn’t that apply to us as well?” – Desmond to Marina

And, here is another example of that continuity; two cases in which the Dom(me)s have to admit to their own weakness:

“You’re so much braver than I am.” – Marina to James

I really liked that these two stories showed that even in a D/s relationship it isn’t always the Dominant partner who has all the strength, all the power and all the wisdom. I loved the way it showed that having the need to control can be a handicap just as much as it can be a delight. Those who submit in these stories aren’t weak, just as those who dominate aren’t the stronger party in the relationship. There is a difference between the dynamic that plays out when one partner submits to the other and the feelings that such a dynamic might arouse. It was wonderful to see that so beautifully portrayed in these two stories.

Fedora says

Four and a half stars.

The Beauty of Surrender is two loosely connected stories set at the Pinnacle, an exclusive club in San Francisco. Both feature shibari, the art of knotted rope restraints in bondage.

Serving the Master is about Ava and Desmond.
Soothing the Beast is about Marina and James.

All are seeking acceptance and love, and all ultimately find what they need within the structure and restraints of the ropes and rules that bind them.

Ms Bradley does a beautiful job of bringing these couples to life, and of giving us insight into their journey to pleasure and passion.

Beenee Reads says

I didn't like this book simply because it's too much talking. Now don't get me wrong, I enjoy talking in books especially when it adds to the story or is a light diversion from dark times but the talking in this book was all about emotions. The characters were just too pansy for my taste. Even the supposed Dom in the first story was all weepy and sorry for himself.

I doubt I will read more of her books after I finish the one other I have. Maybe the next one will be better.

Erin says

it was ok... there were some hot scenes, but all the rope work did not interest me and i found myself getting

bored. 2.5 stars

Karmen says

Very very simplistic. Assigned two stars for effort in novella format.
The prose, however, is more in line with romance than kink.

Kat says

This book was just ok for me. I liked that the characters were older and have life-experiences in their pasts.

Especially in the first story, I did not really connect with the characters. The dialog didn't seem natural to me. I also did not like the "baby-skin" and "doll-like" references. It just made me think of a blow up doll.

The plots themselves were ok. I liked the 2nd story more. I thought the characters were more interesting. The 2nd story could have been longer.

Nicole says

Beautiful, erotic story. Shows how the courage of surrendering oneself can give you freedom.

Joy Boutwell says

This book was OK. It has two different stories in it. The first story- Serving The Master has a lot of talking and uses lame phases. The second story Soothing The Beast has a submissive guy in it. I like my guys to be Dominant.

Amanda says

1.5 stars

See my full review at [The Discriminating Fangirl](#).
