



# Valentina

*Fern Michaels*

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## **Valentina** Fern Michaels

Sold into slavery, she vowed never to love. But he awakened within her, an unquenchable desire. Chosen by ancient Islam leader Emir Ramiff, to be his mistress and eventually his successor - Valentina feels trapped and controlled by others. But then she discovers Saladin and a new breed of emotions.

## **Valentina Details**

Date : Published April 1st 1998 by Severn House Publishers (first published April 12th 1978)

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Author : Fern Michaels

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Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Polyamorous, Harem, Historical

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## From Reader Review Valentina for online ebook

### Sabina says

totally trashy beach read but every few years i reread when i feel down and it lifts my spirits

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### Jaime Contreras says

I did not have high hopes for this book because I have only read six romantic/historical novels and only two were decent. Veteran writer, Fern Michales gives us a noblewoman, Lady Valentina who journeys with Queen Berengaria to the Holy Land. After, denying a romantic interest by the queen, Valentina's sojourn begins. Betrayed, sold into slavery, raped and then left for dead, Valentina will not fail her beloved King Richard. Yes, it is predictable and melodramatic but what do you expect from Fern Michaels. Actually, this early effort does not speak of her polish in the late-80s and 90s. I read it over a long weekend while on a business trip.

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### Dendera says

OK, for one thing I know for a sure fact the Fern Michaels is the last author to write a historically accurate HR novel, but this was just too disastrous. It wasn't the best novel I've read or the worst but fell somewhere in between. Yet it really annoyed & frustrated me at several points where it involved Valentina, the heroine. Michaels description of Saladdin is utterly disappointing as well. Saladdin was a great sultan of Egypt, and I know from my Muslim friends that Muslims really respect and revere him as a man of God, of country and honour. He is not some horny, lusty dog to drool over some whore from Europe. Michaels should be ashamed of herself for such disgusting characterisations of historically significant peoples.

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### Christine says

Oh my goodness, I can't believe that I ever read this bodice-ripper. : 0

I don't remember the story... just that I was 13, had nothing to read, was at my grandmother's house (the one who only read romance novels), and "borrowed" this without telling anyone. I also remember that it was quite "eye-opening" to a 13 year old. Ahem.

I think I had seen something about Richard the Lionheart in the blurb, and mistakenly thought it would be historical...

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### TheGeekyBlogger says

Bought from 2nd hand bookstore (this is out of print

(My Bodice Ripper Reviews will be a little different because you either love these type of books or you don't! So I am basing my reviews from the perspective that you love them, if you don't just skip the review)

What made this a good Bodice Rippers: Fern Michaels, bless her history re-arranging heart, managed to take a totally unrealistic "setting" (for lack of a better word) and turn it into a very classic Bodice Ripper love story. It had all the elements: 2 men, 1 woman, some heightened sexual situations, and some really great historical locations! It was sweeping, unbelievable (several times during the book), and the tension delivered in spades! When people ask me to point out a Bodice Ripper author Fern is one of the ones I always point out!

What complaints I had for this BR: Only that she might have "shot the wad" a bit early in the book. It would have been nice to see a little more of that story before it went Kabash (though I can't tell you what I am talking about because I don't want to give it away)

Why I gave it a 4: This is a classic BR with all the elements. If you like these books then you will like this!

Historical Character that really existed alert: Berengaria of Navarre. I really felt that she stole the scene everytime she was on the page!

About Berengaria: Taken from <http://womenshistory.about.com/od/med...>

Beregaria was the daughter of King Sancho VI of Navarre, called Sancho the wise, and Blanche of Castile.

Richard I of England had been betrothed to Princess Alice of France, sister of King Phillip IV. But Richard's father, Henry II, had made Alice his mistress, and church rules therefore forbid the marriage of Alice and Richard.

Berengaria was chosen as wife to Richard I by Richard's mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine. The marriage with Berengaria would bring a dowry that would help Richard finance his efforts in the Third Crusade.

Eleanor, though almost 70 years old, traveled over the Pyrenees to escort Berengaria to Sicily. In Sicily, Eleanor's daughter and Richard's sister, Joan or Joanna, embarked with Berengaria to join Richard in the Holy Land.

But the ship carrying Joan and Berengaria was wrecked off the shore of Cyprus. The ruler, Isaac Comnenus, took them prisoner. Richard and part of his army landed in Cyprus to free them, and Isaac foolishly attacked. Richard freed his bride and his sister, defeated and captured Comnenus, and took control of Cyprus.

Berengaria and Richard were married on May 12, 1191, and set off together to Acre in Palestine. Berengaria left the Holy Land for Poitou, France, and when Richard was on his way back to Europe in 1192, he was captured and then held prisoner in Germany until 1194, when his mother arranged for his ransom.

Berengaria and Richard had no children. Richard is widely believed to have been a homosexual, and though he had at least one illegitimate child, it is believed that the marriage with Berengaria was little more than a formality. When he returned from captivity, their relationship was so bad that a priest went so far as to order Richard to reconcile with his wife.

After Richard's death, Berengaria as dowager queen retired to LeMans in Maine. King John, Richard's brother, seized much of her property and refused to repay her. Berengaria lived in virtual poverty during

John's lifetime. She sent to England to complain that her pension was not being paid. Eleanor and Pope Innocent III each intervened, but John never did pay her most of what was owed to her. John's son, Henry III, finally did pay much of the overdue debts.

Berengaria died in 1230, soon after founding Pietas Dei at Espau, a Cistercian monastery.

About Bodice Rippers Anonymous on Goodreads:

Do you enjoy epic romance novels set in exotic locations with aggressive and possessive heroes and spitfire heroines? Whether you hide these "guilty pleasures" in a box in your attic and with deceptive book covers or you proudly display these on your family book shelf and on your coffee table, this group is for you!

Every month we will pick a title to read as a group. Be sure to vote in our monthly poll to help choose next month's title!

Each month will also have a Genre Read, where we explore different facets of the Romance Novel.

Come chat about your favorites and maybe discover some new (to you) gems!

Warning: Books read and discussed by this group may contain overbearing heroes, unruly heroines, drama galore, big misunderstandings, long separation of H/h, bucket loads of sexual tension, kidnapping, possible cheating and/or possible forced seduction.

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### **Tricia says**

I thought when I picked up this book that it was going to be the typical romance story line. It wasn't and I was pleasantly surprised.

Basically the story is that Valentina, who is lady in waiting to the queen, gets betrayed because of jealousy. She ends up being sold into slavery to the king who appreciates her talents and she rapidly rises in status in the harem.

As a side story is the tale of two royal brothers who are on different paths to destiny. One to rule a kingdom, the other to rule a secret order of assassins. Both of them have designs on Valentina but who will win her affections in the end?

While the story is still a romance and is therefore not the most intellectual literary material, I really liked the author's bravery to depart from the usual romance storyline. If you are in to romance and would like something a little bit different, I would give this one a go.

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### **Lorelle says**

This is an OTT BR with some bizarre WTF Moments, especially early on in the book. There is a tortured heroine, some lesbian Moments, rape, and treachery abounds. There is a love triangle that Valentine has with

two brothers, in which you are unsure for much of the book who would truly win her heart. But of course, one of them becomes a sadistic bastard who can't decide whether to truly kill her or force her into marriage. Goodness prevails and there is a happy ending.

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### **Leanne says**

I read this when I was very young and into the captive thing. That said...I loved the woman this story in about and would have read more books from this author if they had been this exciting and full.

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### **Karla says**

If there's one thing I've learned since reading bodice rippers, it's that if you expect a serious and impeccably realistic historical romance from Fern Michaels, you're an idiot.

Granted, I've only read this one and Captive Passions (henceforth CP) to base this on, but I feel pretty confident declaring such.

That said, after a WTF start in Valentina with rape, whipping, and lesbian molestation and resultant phobia, it did become a rather staid little historical with a beleaguered heroine very reminiscent of some of Bertrice Small's early heroines. The overall quality wasn't up to par with Small, nor did the characters really stick with me, but it was a solid romance that has a very dynamic love triangle that hinges on one's loyalty vs. another's treason.

Valentina is a childhood friend and current lady-in-waiting to Berengaria of Navarre, lusty and frustrated wife to that closet-case of legend King Richard the Lionheart. To satisfy her yearnings, Berengaria's taken on scores of lovers and even dabbles with a lady or two, including making some not-so-subtle moves on Valentina. While in Acre on crusade, things get tense when she catches one of her new lovers - Paxon, the Saracen Sultan of Jakard - macking on Valentina while en route to her queenly bower. That's where the whipping comes in and the queen has a *slight* reaction:

Valentina's body convulsed with pain. Her knees buckled and she hung heavily by her wrists from the sconce. The snakelike length licked through the air once again, slicing into Valentina's tender flesh. Still she was silent; no outcry escaped her. Berengaria was leaning against a chair back for support. Her breathing was steady and rapid, her hips swaying slightly with an internal rhythm....

Berengaria was gripping the chair back, her knuckles shining whitely in the gray dusk. Shudder after shudder coursed through her as she sank, breathless, to her knees.

This sexual jealousy doesn't stop with a mere whipping, and Berengaria plots to dispose of our heroine further. Fern's villainesses are bad to the bone, but Berengaria makes Gretchen in CP look like Strawberry Shortcake. Your garden variety bad girl wouldn't manipulate her husband into war criminal territory simply to dispose of a pesky rival, but Berengaria has no qualms suggesting to Richard that 2700 Saracen prisoners should be beheaded to show his strength, and she connives to have Valentina put in the middle of the wretched group. Quite an elaborate ploy, hmm? (Points to Fern for giving that decision of Richard's a rather

creative genesis.)

Well, like all plots of Bond villain proportions, it fails and our heroine naturally escapes, only to find herself in Saladin's camp and tended by a cagey heart-of-gold whore. Our heroine's woes aren't over yet, as she gets some sudden visits via both the front and back entrances (*if you get my meaning*) and she's shuffled off to the auction block when Saladin needs to lighten his army's excess baggage and people. But is this the end for Valentina? What further degradations will she have to suffer?

Umm, not all that many. The WTFery has shot its load and it's on a somewhat even keel in that department from here on out.

This Fern *femme* really is a cat who lands on her feet. She gets a good gig with a doddering old emir and has *unbelievable* good luck at hoodwinking people in her schemes. She maneuvers the touchy political ground with iron hands in velvet gloves, and does what she can to stay alive while surrounded by the enemy.

Valentina also finds her wounded little heart torn in several directions: she's finally shown the gentler side of love by rock star *du jour* Saladin, her body is revved by Paxon (who has trust issues with "the enemy" but can't cure himself of wanting her), and her soul soars with Paxon's half-brother Menghis, a man destined to be a neutral power player up on a mountain somewhere with his body enslaved in a psychic trance commanding a personal army of freelancers until he dies.

Yeah, your Earth logic is so cute. Leave it at the door. It's not wanted here.

While I didn't exactly enjoy this one as much as CP because it lacked the cheeseball *je ne sais quoi*, I felt more tied to the romance. Regan and Sirena in CP were pretty unrealistic - he was an unrepentant horndog and she was a total cartoon character - but Valentina does have a more solid personality and her conflict between the two brothers was rooted in issues of what constitutes treason and loyalty, and what one's humanity is worth in the gristmill of war. It wasn't exactly staggering or brilliant in execution, but it was done well enough so that I could see the good of Valentina having her HEA with either of the men. I wouldn't call it a book with two heroes, but it provided a love triangle - a device that I really like, even if here it tended to make the story lose focus now and then.

I've read better, of course, but there was enough here to keep me interested and curious just how it would all turn out.

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