



Dishonourable Proposal

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Pleasure before business

No teenage crush, Katy's love for Jake Granton was as real as the searing heartbreak of his betrayal. After four years of modeling--and all the male attention a woman could possibly want--she'd actually convinced herself she was way over him.

But when she left the limelight and joined the family business, Jake was waiting for her, his possessive kiss reducing her to a mass of aching desire. His reputation as a businessman was ruthless, but his proposition was all-out blackmail: become his mistress or her company would suffer the consequences.

Dishonourable Proposal Details

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From Reader Review Dishonourable Proposal for online ebook

Roub says

this was one hot read! jake and katie had a love/hate relationship due to a past misunderstanding involving heroine's petty stepmother. i loved how jake was totally besotted wid katie. however, i had doubts about his supposed innocence, concerning monica. i think maybe he did have an adulterous affair wid the woman but he really loved katie. he was insanely in love wid katie which she was really unaware of, and it must have been painful for him. it was also slightly awkward, him being crazy about a 14 year old girl. i did not know he developed this crush DAT way back! this is not healthy and he did show it by his rapist/aggressive attitude.

boogenhagen says

Re Dishonourable Proposal - or Jacqueline Baird's treatise on Why HP Hero's Don't Date.

JB, the Queen of Blackmail in HPLandia, brings us another example of her favorite trope. This one involves a 22 yr old h and a 34 yr H who have a past.

When the h was 14 her mum died and the 26 yr old H was a good friend of her cheating father and delivered the news to the h at her boarding school. He fell instantly in love (and that was pretty ick for me.) But when the h's father remarried to the prerequisite evil Step Mother that the h did not get along with and who made the h's father sell the h's beloved country family home, the H tried to soothe the situation over. He advised the h to just passively go along with the woman to get along. He also kept in contact with the h while she was at school via postcards and eventually occasional visits.

When the h turned 18, he and the h had a lurve club event and the H indicated he loved her and wanted to propose as soon as she graduated. The h, who had walked into her home unexpectedly late one night and saw the H and her evil step-mother with their arms around each other and seeming to refer to a prior intimate moment, took off for France and art school instead, claiming she wanted to see the world.

The h never mentioned the incident to the H, but she figured she was being duped as a blind for an affair between the H and her step-mother and she would be willing to face the heat death of the universe rather than admit she got her heart totally broken and all other men were ruined for her from then on. The H showed up in France two years later, but the h pretended to be involved with the man she modeled for, and the H had a big shouty moment and then stormed off.

So she spends the next four years as a top fashion model and becoming the pin-up of the French Navy due to a lingerie photo of her in a basque and knickers. There are a lot of rumors that the h is a wild man-eater, but as the H has already ruined her, we know that they are just that - rumors. Now the h is retiring from modeling and planning a design career in her family's ancient established like Wedgwood china factory.

The H believes the rumors tho, and he is writhing under the spears of unrequited love and jealously as the h goes out of her way to 'flaunt' her man eater ways to him, (and he has been celibate for four years, so there is no way he is thinking coherently in any way, shape or form and this soon becomes really obvious.)

The book starts with the h conned into accepting a charity date with the H, where the battle lines are drawn and the H offers every tart insult known to man to the h, while she does her best to totally wind him up. After they both berate each other for not visiting the h's now divorced father more and the h scores a huge point on the H's tart shaming when she remarks that he is a hypocrite, as he certainly wasn't the virgin she thought he was when he seduced her at 18 and he was 30.

He attempts to get her into bed, and the lurve mojo force is strong, but she fends him off with her supposed charging for extra play time-and the H doesn't carry £500 in cash. He storms off in disgust and the h has herself a little mopey moment for nice girls forced to act like tarts in self defense and the futility of falling in love with a cheating nematode sewer slurper.

But as these things go, the h's dad wrecked the china company speculating on property development and is in dire need of funds to pay off the loans or the china company will fold and people who worked for the h's family firm for years will be out of work. The H, who is a big time conservative banker, has controlling interest in the firm and the proxy to vote the h's now ex-stepmother's shares she won in the divorce, offers the h a proposal. The h claims she would rather die than marry the H, he says he only wants a shop worn wench like her as a mistress, but if she will move in with him as his personal tart, he will save the family firm.

The h gives into the blackmail after her father has a drunken pity party moment and confesses that he cheated on the h's mum because he found her in bed with another woman and it destroyed him - he really loved the h's mum, but he was shattered by the discovery. The h feels bad she judged her dad so harshly and to save the firm and her dad, she moves in with the H.

There are many lurve mojo moments and many, many fights. The H flaunts the h all over town in the hottest nightclubs and they ride around in an OTT white Rolls. The h hates every minute of it, being paraded around as a wealthy man's toy is humiliating, but she feigns her indifference everywhere but in bed - she is in the throes of a bad case of very treacherous body illness.

Eventually the H forces her to go to Venice and meet his grandma. But he can't take his tart to meet his grandma, so he gives her a huge ring and calls it a fake rock for a fake woman and buys her a new wardrobe to convince his grandma that the two of them are engaged. The h feels bad about lying to a grandma, so as soon as they return, she hands the ring back and the H goes ballistic, again.

Then the H and h go off on their separate ways for a weekend - the H goes to ski and might even be meeting up with the h's ex step-mother, as apparently they like to rendezvous at ski chalets together, or so the step-mother said. The h, meanwhile, goes back to France for the birthday party of her god child - whose grandfather also happens to be the h's old modeling fashion designer that the H thought was her lover. (He isn't, he is the father of her BFF.)

The H comes back early and finds out the h is in France and has a huge hissy fit cause he thinks the h was stepping out on him, (and for a guy who is even older than the H is to add insult to injury- but the fashion guy was also a heck of a lot nicer.) The H kicks the h out. The h is now preggers and she is very upset, the H just bullies and pushes and treats her like dirt and she loves him and he is a lying hypocrite too.

She is leaving all right, but he is going to get a piece of her mind and he can keep all the tart payment jewelry he gave to her as well. She is going to shove them all down his throat, starting with the emerald pendant pay off piece he gave her when he seduced her at 18.

She goes and yells at the H about how he is a dishonourable, lyin' cheating slime swiller parasite who carried on with the wife of his supposedly good friend for years, then seduced his daughter and proposed to cover his affair up. The h throws the jewelry at the H, tells him she is not and has never been a tart, there has only been him for her - but he obviously has no problems spreading it all around, cause look at who gets to vote her ex-stepmother's shares.

The H is stunned, he thought the h had dumped the pendant he gave her at 18, but if she still has it maybe she will return his love. He kinda kidnaps the h by telling her he will take her to her apartment, but in actuality he takes the h to his country home. Which is the h's childhood home that the H bought from her father when he married the evil step-mother because the h loved it and the father wanted to dump bad memories - the H even sold his own childhood home when he bought it.

Then the big explanations begin. The H claims he never slept with the step-mother - maybe she heard something that night and was trying to make mischief, but he did wind up with her at a ski lodge one weekend on a group trip. Nothing happened as they both had broken legs or ankles and the H swears he wouldn't do that with the wife of one of his friends.

Then we get to the really icky part where the H rhapsodizes about how the h looked at 14 in her little white tennis skirt, long legs and long blonde hair and how the H was entranced. Then plotted for four years to seduce and marry her.

The H felt guilty tho, cause he was almost thirty and had a life before the h and she was only 18 and hadn't gotten the chance yet. So he let her go to live a little and then lost his mind in jealousy and celibacy was REALLY hard on him and his temper, when he thought she was making the rounds while he was languishing in self-denial.

He also explains that the white Rolls and all the parading about in nightclubs were his attempts at courting her, cause he figured one of the reasons she dumped him is that he never took her out. The engagement ring was his grandmother's, and it was real, as was their Venetian engagement party - he figured he could just do an end run around a real proposal and get the h on a technicality.

But then she gave him his ring back with a lecture about deceiving nice grandma's who think it is perfectly fine that a 28 yr old man lusts after a 14 yr old - apparently in Italy they do it all the time. The whole upshot of this is that he loves the h madly and has since forever and will she please marry him and put him out of his jealous, neanderthalic misery?

The h really does love him and she is pretty much ruined for other men anyways. So even tho she doesn't quite believe him on the evil step-mother count, he promises to ditch the woman's business from his bank and she agrees to marry him for the big HEA.

This isn't JB's best blackmail book, it is still early HP outing days for her at this point, but it does finally provide an answer as to why HP H's don't date.

HP Hero's don't understand the difference between a mutually agreed upon enjoyable outing and the tart shaming parading of a skeevy pervy guy trying to flaunt his trophy piece mistress.

Because this kind of misunderstanding leads to huge shouting matches with their prospective heroines, HP Heroes as a collective have forsaken anything that resembles courtship or a date before marriage. After they have bullied, coerced or entrapped their heroine into a wedding ceremony, dinner out at a local eatery and a

movie on Netflix is fine, but until the h has said the magic words "I do", nary a date will they ever get to go on with the H.

*Except for a Charlotte Lamb Hero - he needs the food porn to work his seduction techniques on the heroine - so her h's always get a gourmet's delight dinner.

So read this book for a pretty entertaining but slightly icky HP outing, but also read it cause HP voyagers every where have wondered why HP Heroes Don't Date - and now we all finally know.

FeliciaKaren says

'Yes, my darling Katy, I could throttle you with my bare hands, but first...' his eyes raked her crumpled form and with a minimum of effort he stripped the clothes from her body '... I am going to expunge the touch of your friend Claude from every pore of your body.'

'No, you've got it wrong!' she cried. 'Let me explain!' But she was too late.

Jake lowered his body on to the bed, trapping her slender body with his own. His mouth covered hers, insensitive to the pain he was causing as he savagely kissed her until she felt the taste of her own blood on her tongue. But the ravishment did not stop with a kiss.

His mouth searched and found the rosy tip of her breast while his hands roamed the length of her body with devastating thoroughness, teasing and tormenting until she whimpered in despair at her own frailty.

Mindless, she wrapped her slender arms around him— she had no idea when he had shed his clothes—and her nails raked his broad back. She almost screamed as his mouth travelled lower to achieve her ultimate devastating capitulation. She heard her own voice begging him to take her.

Jake complied with one single savage thrust; her body arched off the bed and her long legs wrapped around his waist. Her keening cry was trapped in her throat as his mouth closed over hers again.

Later, how much later she had no idea, Jake rolled off the bed and stood looking down on her nakedness.

'You're a beautiful woman, Katy, but with the soul of a whore. I thought I could...' He stopped.

Katy flinched at the unadulterated hatred that shone in his dark eyes. 'Could what?' she whispered.

'Nothing. Pack your bags and get out. I never want to set eyes on you again.' And with that, totally unconscious of his own magnificent nudity, he casually picked up his clothes. He cast her one contemptuous glance and added, 'I want you out of here in half an hour. Anything you leave I will send on to your apartment,' and he walked out of the room.

StMargarets says

I love alpha logic, I really do. And this story is a case study in alpha logic.

Fall in love with jail bait heroine when she is 14. Wait until she is 18 to seduce her and get engaged. When she abruptly says she wants to live in Paris instead, accept that she is young and she should have some time on her own before settling down.

So what's wrong with this? Poor guy is in love. Sure he's bought her childhood home when she was 15 and didn't tell her but this is all sweet until ---

The hero goes into modeling and the hero is convinced she is now whoring herself out to all of her admirers. Instead of speaking to her, two years later he bids on a charity date, wins, and tries to rape her.

When that doesn't work he buys out her dad and waits for the heroine to retire from modeling so he can blackmail her into being his mistress. Then he makes her move in with him, have lots of sex, buys her lots of clothes, gives her an engagement ring and an engagement party in Venice. He also parades her around in public places and calls her names. When she goes to Paris for her god daughter's birthday party, he thinks she went for a dirty weekend and throws her out.

That little litany of events is alpha logic in action. But alpha action needs fuel. And in this case, it is fueled by the heroine's willful misrepresentation of herself and her refusal to tell the hero why she broke it off with him the first time. Only when he tries to kick her out does the heroine finally, finally let him in on the truth. (She thought he was having an affair with her stepmother)

The hero then confesses he wanted to make her love him (by name calling and coerced sex?). And he's loved her all along. Heroine somehow follows this alpha logic and it's an HEA with a baby on the way for these two obsessed souls.

This is an old skool hero who was celibate the four years they were apart. No wonder he was so edgy.

Vintage says

DNF.

I just can't do it.

Jenny says

I adored it! Passionate, angsty, emotional this book is everything! I love this author's super jealous cruel heroes. They are so damn sexy! And he was faithful to the heroine even while they were apart and he thought she left him for other guys. He is a keeper.

Chitra *CJ* says

"The Dishonorable Proposal" is the story to Jake and Kate.

When Kate decides to leave modeling at the pinnacle of her stardom and concentrate on being a designer with the help of her father's company, she never expected that she would have to face Jake, her first love and ex who broke her heart into pieces.

How she gives into his dishonorable proposal as his mistress forms the story.

Tbh the heroine was a really confused character! It is she who agrees to be his mistress and pretends to be

promiscuous and sleep around- and when he judges her for the same she gets angry?! She wallowed a lot in self pity.

The hero was average- I love how crazy he was about her but he did have his faults too. Loved that he remained celibate too, not just her.

Overall a good read.

Safe

3.5/5

Onu says

It was a typical Harlequin. Loved it!

An older besotted, jealous, alpha hero.

Misunderstanding and angst

Some fabulous writing by JB.

Romance_reader says

Another winner of a HP from JB. I really liked the book and the besotted H (and by God, was he besotted!). The H and the h were once in love till a misunderstanding tore them apart and the plot revolves around the H trying every trick in the book to get the now uber successful-supermodel h back. And it makes for a wonderful read.

I have to say something here, nobody does sexy Heroes like Jacqueline Baird. Of all the different types of obsessed/besotted Hs that we come across in HPland, I think her heroes are hands down the most appealing and sensuous (along with Michelle Reid's Heroes.) Read this book for the Hero and the crackling chemistry between the protagonists (which in my mind was absolutely perfect in spite of the 'thunderclap' beginning). Also, the reason for the h's father's estrangement from her mother was an absolute revelation. And I quite liked that twist too.

Four and a half stars. (only because I've read even better books from this author.)

Kiki says

What doesn't work for me:

1. He calls her name throughout the book. Even when he's supposedly trying to desperately retain her he calls her a "stupid bitch"
2. The fact that he almost raped her and then threw her out without letting her explain but then when time comes he DEMANDS a chance of explanation as she owes him that. How he figured that out is beyond me. You didn't let her explain, called her a whore, USED her as a whore and now SHE owes you a chance if explanation? You lost me buddy!
3. The fact that he actually pretty much carried her out and put her on a cab and was about to let her walk out of his life a second time. She'd have been long gone if it wasn't for the fact that SHE finally lost her cool. And I can't even pretend he was banking on that effect because he truly believed she was whoring around

while he stayed celibate for her. So he pretty much ended the relationship and did nothing on his part to redeem himself or mend it until she lost it and SHE was finally walking out. Once again, he was ok throwing her out, almost made sure it happens, but the moment it's her doing the walking he turns all macho and suddenly it was never his intention to let her go.

So no. I don't believe in the HEA. It was not his undying love, rather, once again his hurt ego.

What DID work for me:

1. The fact he stayed celibate even with the indication she may not have. Which shows the glimpse of an understanding adult man who knew he was forcing a kid into an adult relationship far too early! However throughout the book I never found that man again.
2. I really DO believe he stayed celibate from the moment he accepted his feelings for the heroine because he has some of those Italian honour ingrained in himself. I doubt he looked at any other woman AFTER buying a house for the heroine and for which he sold his paternal house.
3. Him letting heroine have her share in life even though it might have killed him because he was an experienced man and he really believed that sex wasn't love and didn't differentiate that between genders and thought if she loved him she'd come back to him at some point of time.
4. He extended his hand of friendship to a 15 year old when he was ashamed of his behaviour, he didn't act rashly, didn't try to date others rather tried to build a secure future for both of them.

These were actions of caring committed men which really didn't add up to the abusive arrogant bastard he was later. So the whole romance was no longer believable. If he really was this caring person then he'd have showed his caring side throughout the affair. He didn't. He treated her like a mistress and issued threats. So I don't see why she fell in love all over again. But that's HP for you.

Tia says

I thought this novel was pretty damn amazing. I adored the heroine and her bravery but some of it was purely stupidity because the hero and heroine could of saved a lot of time and trouble if they had just been open and honest. I did really love the ending though. It made the novel pretty much perfect.

Leona says

I usually enjoy Jacqueline Baird, but this book just didn't work for me. Its whole premise is one big misunderstanding that gets propagated and viciously fed for four years, because the heroine decides it's better to lie than to tell the truth.

However, what I actually found more intriguing, is that authors can write heroines who would prefer to sell themselves than openly admit to being hurt by past injustices inflicted by the hero. Somehow they feel that admitting being hurt makes them look weak. So to solve this unfortunate dilemma, they allow the hero to abuse them, degrade them, subject them to public scorn and ridicule, and in some cases force them into selling their bodies..all for the sake of keeping the past hurt a secret. They don't seem to care about the present hurt.

Now somehow this logic just never seems to make much sense. It certainly doesn't feel romantic...and I can not understand how anyone could feel sexually attracted to a person who could do these things. Interestingly enough, in this book..there are several places where she does actually freeze up on the hero and can't physically connect. Unfortunately, it doesn't last long.

Just one other note of contention...in the end he explains how he fell in love with her at first sight. However, that first sighting was when she was 14 years old walking out of the principals office in her tight short little uniform. Very UnPC

Aarann says

This was a buy from one of my occasional Old Skool batch purchases, where I get on Amazon, root through my Wishlist for promising-looking books only available in paperback, and put enough in my basket to get free shipping.

Honestly, this wasn't bad, but it could have been better -- I find I say that a lot with Jacqueline Baird. Katy (a.k.a. "Lena") was in love with Jake when she was 18 and he was 30 (yep, it's one of those) and after a chicka-chicka-bow-wow night together, they were unofficially engaged to be married. She found out that he was lying to her (view spoiler) so she broke off the engagement, telling him she was too young to be married, then sent him a "Dear John" letter a few months later when he still didn't take the hint stop contacting her.

Now, after retiring from the supermodel world (yes, really) at 22, Katy has decided to come home to her family's China business (the dish type, not that the business is *in* China) to design. In the intervening years, she has allowed Jake and the rest of the world to believe she's a big ho (primarily thanks to a poster that hit Farrah-like fame and because she's pretty and famous, so ho-dom must logically follow... I guess...) so that he won't contact her. At the beginning of the book, she meets up with Jake again after he has purchased a night with her at a charity dinner. Believing "charity dinner" equals prostitution, Jake attempts to seduce her, while repeatedly calling her a whore. What a guy.

Of course this leads to the eventual A-plot of the book, which is where Jake offers Katy the chance to be a true whore and become his mistress so that he will save her family's ailing company. Katy agrees and they shag and they argue and he calls her a whore, and then he gives mixed signals that Katy of course misses, and then they shag and they argue and he calls her a whore, *et al., ad nauseum*.

I was entertained by this one (reading between the lines, it's pretty obvious Jake's actually after marriage, only he's too busy calling Katy a whore, so I get why she wouldn't see that), but it was really hard to like either of the characters. I think I've made it clear why Jake was hard to like -- hardly a virgin when he met Katy, he nonetheless thinks her ostensible promiscuity equals "whore" status, then has no problem putting her in an actual prostitution situation. Katy, I'm a little less clear on why I never totally warmed up to her. She stood up for herself occasionally, which is a nice change from most Old Skool heroines, but it just made the times when she didn't stand out more. She also made some pretty TSTL decisions at times in the book (view spoiler), so that probably has something to do with it. The fact that she didn't call him on his bullshit earlier in the book might have also had something to do with it -- but then if she had, the book would have been, like 100 pages shorter.

Am I sorry I spent money on this? Hmm... No, probably not, although I would have been happier to find it at the library. I'm not sorry I spent the time reading it as I get entirely too much pleasure out of these old M&Bs.

Ria says

The only thing that sticks to my mind when i remember this book was the time when Jake thought Katy just came from her lover and he forced himself on her to expunge the smell of her lover. I love it on how he asked her to leave the house nicely.

KatieV says

This is the exact crazy over-the-top type of book that keeps me coming back to HPs. It had all my favorite ingredients. The secretly in love, jealous, vengeful tycoon who goes through ridiculous gyrations to get the heroine. The supermodel heroine who is also secretly in love and determined to hide it due to their ridiculous misunderstandings.

Seriously I could have shaken the heroine (wait, that's the hero's job in an HP). 2nd day in a row I've read an HP where the heroine deliberately sets out to make the hero think she's a woman with no morals to protect her pride. I'm still not getting how being thought of as basically a prostitute is better than having them realize you have feelings that may not be reciprocated. I'm a proud person to, but draw the line at pretending to be a pseudo-prostitute. Jeez. Then again, this is HPLandia where logic is dangerous and probably illegal.
