



# The Reluctant Fiancee

*Jacqueline Baird*

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## **The Reluctant Fiancee** Jacqueline Baird

When Bea became a partner in her father's company, she was reunited with its chairman Leon Gregoris, her ex-fiance. But this time Leon wouldn't mesmerize her with their mutual attraction; Bea was no longer willing to be captive to chemistry! Then Leon announced they were engaged again...

## **The Reluctant Fiancee Details**

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# From Reader Review The Reluctant Fiancee for online ebook

## Leona says

I do so love a Jacqueline Baird romance. She has such an incredible way of building passion, tension, and that requisite angst without making her heroes so alpha that they are non-redeeming. I truly love her heroines. They have backbone, yet they bend for the love of a good man. If I had to pick one author to write the man of my dreams, I would leave it in JB's hands.

I was so invested in this story that I stayed up till 3AM to finish it. The hero has been in love with the heroine since she was a little girl. But given their age difference, he placed himself in the role of benevolent uncle which comes back to bite him when he realizes that as an attractive teenager she is interested in the opposite sex. The poor man panics so he coerces her into a secret engagement. The heroine accepts because to her the hero is everything.

Of course there is the "BIG" misunderstanding, the ugly OW, the twists and turns that separate them...but the hero never gives up, never stops caring, never stops looking out for her. He accepts that she is young and needs to work things out. There is a slight twist that changes him, but I could forgive that because the motivation was still one of love..and he does work through it.

This is a story about two people who love each other, lose their way, but find it again because they won't risk losing each other.

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## Kaycee ♥? says

### 4 Stars!

I promised myself that I'm going to finish my old/vintage/new HP-tbr-file but my job got in the way. Anyway, I'm glad that I picked this one. I highly enjoyed it. This was exactly everything I love about vintage HP. It was sexy, just the right touch of emotional, with a domineering-possessive hero, not a doormat heroine, the whole love/hate thing between them - it was at times funny, frustrating but it was very entertaining!

Leon. \*sigh\* I loved how he loved Phoebe. Despite the age difference, despite the years they we're apart, he still loves her and remained faithful. And let me tell you, when he sets his mind on seduction.. Holly molly! He knew that she belongs to him and no one, including her is going to keep him from the only woman he's ever loved. Yes, he was bossy, gruff, ass at times, caveman and does as he pleases with her, but oh so sweet and tender too.

And as for Phoebe, I liked her. She wasn't a total doormat or martyr when it comes to Leon. And although there are lots of TSTL moments for her, I still ended genuinely liking her. I liked that she gave as good as she got and didn't let Leon walk all over her.

Overall, **The Reluctant Fiancee** was a fun book to read. I liked this book along with the characters and their complicated love story. Plus the OTT obsession with the heroine made it worth the read.

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## **Linda Sims says**

### **DETERMINED HERO**

This authors books are a bit of a hit and miss for me. I liked this story, the characters were well drawn. I did think it was a bit off the way the hero had been waiting around for the heroine to be old enough for him to claim. He's 14 years older than her. So at 17 years old he proposes marriage, but she overhears a conversation he has with someone else and breaks off the engagement.

But now it's her 21st birthday, she has come into her inheritance. Which happens to be in the hero's company. Which both their fathers created. He's decided that now she's a full grown woman he can resume his pursuit of her. But it hadn't stopped him in the intervening years while he was waiting from having plenty of other women.

I did enjoy this even though the hero was very pushy, the heroine was determined to stand up for herself, but never seemed to quite manage it IMO. I would like to have seen her put him in his place more.

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## **Caro says**

El héroe es, para estas épocas, muy macho y stalker, pero no violento así que me gustó. La historia tiene muchos elementos como para entretenerse y es probable que en unos meses vuelva a leerla porque fue muy rápido y siento que no la disfruté como se debe (?).

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## **Sapheron says**

I think this is my second JB, and I was a bit reluctant to read it because my first experience wasn't so great (good writer but I'd found the story a bit 'ugh'). This book was soooo cute though. Yeah, there is borderline forced seduction, in that Leon was GOING to have his way with Bea, but she wanted it too and didn't deny it to herself.

I liked the extra elements of Leon's kidnapping and the earthquake, often, I appreciate something that adds other dimensions to a story and these did serve their purpose.

It was quite obvious that Leon has always loved Phoebe, he even reminds her of the many times they met before she ever knew she'd met him. He fell in love with her at fifteen and stayed away because of it (he was then, almost thirty), but kissed her into a secret engagement two years later after jealousy forced him to act. When she's eighteen, he makes their engagement real, but the splendor is short-lived because Bea overhears something (from the most paltry OW evah) that makes her think he doesn't love her. Fast forward to her 21st birthday, Leon shows up in her life once more and things start getting sexy again.

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## StMargarets says

Smitten hero.

A May/December romance that broke up because of an over heard conversation.

A Kidnapping.

An earthquake.

A declaration with the admission it doesn't pay to "play God."

All great stuff. But something was missing for me? The heroine just didn't seem that into him? I mean, she liked the sex, but she never confessed to herself that she was in love until the very end. She was a bit too cool in her thoughts - so it was hard to see how the hero was fulfilling a deep need/want in her. The hero, whose POV we don't get, was more transparent.

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## Grace says

Hmmm. I wavered between one star and five stars simply for the full-blown wtfery that was this book. I ended up calling it even with three.

I devour category books in between full-length books as sort of a snack but seldom do I write a review unless it merits one. I thought I should write one for this in case I should read this book again. Because it wasn't until the end that I realized I must have read this book before. Several times, actually. But it never stuck with me because I was so uninvested with all the characters. In fact, I added a new bookshelf, rapity-rape-rape, to commemorate this book, because that was essentially what this book entailed.

The older man, Leon (older by about 15 years) has had his eyes set on Bea ever since she was, literally, half his age, at 15. When her father dies three years later, he pounces on her, smooching her at every opportunity. They get engaged secretly, because he thinks she's too young, but not young enough to be secretly engaged. He goes off around the world on his business trips and is seldom at home until he finds that she's been hanging out with a childhood friend (a male). He hotfoots it back to make the engagement official and hussles her off to his Greek island along with his stepmother, half-sister, and half-sister's venomous, evil, horns-growing-on-her-head-wouldn't-make-this-official-enough American friend. Also, nationalities are super important.

At some point, Bea overhears Leon being accosted by the friend with the accusation that she was pregnant with his child. Approximately 5 months along, and him saying, "WTH, you did that on purpose, you biatch," and she realizes that he had been stringing her along because he wanted to get his hands on her and her shares in the huge company. She breaks it off by saying she misses home and that he was too old for her. Hella yes.

Now that she is 21, a very advanced and mature age to come into her inheritance, he comes back into her life (now 36 or 37) and gives her a birthday present (which was her engagement ring reset into a necklace). He

makes oily innuendos and paws her in her library, during which time her strapless dress has the opportunity to come off. Then he hussles off again with promises to come back for more. Might I mention that at all times, she's saying, "No, no, no!"

New day at the office. She has a date afterwards and he forces her into accepting a lift, making, again, sexual innuendos of the awkward variety, such as heh-hehing whenever she says, "What do you want, Leon?" There are more instances of him pawing her and forcing her to accept his creepy caresses until they are interrupted by a third party. Then he pulls her aside and says that he will be back for more. This formula never fails for him, and he uses it repeatedly. That is, until he is kidnapped. Then the situation escalates.

Leon then plans a more elaborate scheme of the tried-and-true version, involving telling the press they were engaged secretly (what, again?? please don't fall for this again, press) and then taking her to his Greek island (what, again??) Yes, my dear readers. Leon is nothing but not formulaic. And Bea obediently falls in with this plan even though it has played out before.

She is then completely kept as a prisoner and on the first night, he forces himself on her. LITERALLY, as she is crying out for him to stop, he is taking away her virginity by pounding into her. And damn good it was too, because this was a Harlequin Presents, and not another publisher. She finds that she's not allowed to leave the grounds, and that the housekeeper is a smiling moron who thinks they are such a romantic couple. There are guards with automatic rifles everywhere and a ten-foot wall around the entire place. He is "keeping her safe" from potential kidnappers. Other than himself, of course. To maintain her feelings of safety, he has taken away the key to her bedroom and on the one night she tried to lock him out, he climbed the balcony to get into her room so that he can force his innuendos and person upon her.

She has a special treat in the form of an outing on the mainland, during which there is a massive earthquake. When they come back, an old worker is killed, and Leon finally wakes up or is exorcised. He tells Bea she is free to go. At this point, she is set on their private plane back to England when Leon's stepmother, planted in the plane next to her, reveals her evil plot and that she was behind the demon inside Leon after all.

Ha-ha! Just kidding. That doesn't happen. But Leon's stepmother goes on for some length about how Leon is just like his father and how he plays around with women a LOT but is faithful to only one. I'm not quite sure how that works, but that's totally, ridiculously hot in a man, of course. And so that American friend (evil skank that she is) had tried to ensnare him, but he, like the discerning, faithful-to-one, loving-only-one-girl-since-he-was-30 man that he is, dated her for a couple of years and happened to get drunk and pass out naked next to her while he was secretly engaged to Bea. The first time. Even though he vowed to always make Bea his wife, of course.

"Oh," said Bea with wonderment. "Why, that makes total sense, step-mommy."

"So, go back to Leon and his excellent lovemaking," Tany the stepmother said lovingly. "You certainly won't regret it. Their men are known for their excellence in overachievement in that field. I know," she said with a knowing wink, revealing that the penchant for innuendo ran deep in the family. "And that's why I've never remarried!"

"Oh, I shall!" said Bea.

And immediately upon landing in England, without stopping to refresh herself in the bathroom, she tells the pilot to turn the plane around and head back to Greece. She's 21, of course, and now outrightly co-owns the company co-owning the plane.

The End.

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### **Romance\_reader says**

Hot read. The H and the h had great chemistry and their romance was well developed. My only issue with this book was the h's persistence in trying to friendzone the hero - even after she'd responded and yielded to him in non-platonic fashion. The earthquake depicted in the book was also a bit of an overkill I felt, and unnecessary. But other than that, this was good and steamy, with the right amount of angst and obsessive love- on the hero's part.... Just the way I like it.

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### **Roub says**

awesome one ! i absolutely love smitten heroes and Leon surpassed most of them. he was nuts over Phoebe! he was utter jealous and very possessive where Bea/Phoebe was concerned. i fell in love with him along the way ! so dark and delicious, just like i love them ! Phoebe played the bitch well and she was very naive where Leon was concerned. bcoz it wud be obvious even to a blind man dat Leon wanted only one woman and dat was Phoebe ! so how she did not guess it, unbelievable !

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### **seton says**

There is a fine line between devoted hero and creepy stalker would-be-rapists in the world of romance novels.

This crossed over that line for me.

The heroine has known the hero all her life. He's 14 years older and always been possessive of her. He even got engaged to her when she was 17 but it didnt work out.

The novel starts on the heroine's 21st birthday party and I thought the hero came across a bit of a loser with his corny sexual come-on lines and spying on her dates.

The plot was kinda choppy too with things starting in the workplace and then diverging into a kidnapping and then, an earthquake. That was a bit too much in a 189 page novel.

Tropes: older man

Content warning: borderline forced seduction

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### **Naima says**

I found this to be a lovely guilty read - a story of an older hero who has a history with the heroine. Once he was an uncle figure, but then he morphs into bula matari and takes the heroine to bed. There were some interesting things that happened a long the way, but I found the heroes response to being taken captive an the

earthquake a bit severe and think perhaps it would have been a more satisfying ending if he was in therapy or was not so polished on the last page.

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### **Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says**

This was an interesting exploration of what it must be like for a man to fall in love with someone who is a lot younger than him and to have to allow her to grow up so they can be together. There is nothing dirty here. While Leon does fall in love with Bea when she is a young teen, he doesn't act on it. In fact, he deliberately stays away from her. When he realizes she knows about his sexual escapades as a younger man, it shames him. He doesn't want her to see that side of him. When she turns eighteen, Leon is eager for them to begin their life together, but what Bea perceives as a betrayal leads to a broken engagement and a three year separation. When Bea turns 21, she is a college graduate and she's ready to take up her role in the company that Leon's father and her father forms together. Leon is back in her life, and he seems to want to have a hands on role that she isn't at all interested in. Not knowing what he did, and believing he was romancing her just to get control of the company. Leon gets kidnapped, and it has a profound effect on his psyche that leads to further problems between them, but also opens the doors to truth-telling so they can have the relationship that they both want.

I liked this book a lot. While Bea is younger, she's not callow or facile. She has a maturity despite her young age. It was interesting that the age gap is presented realistically. Leon is 35 and she's 21, and there is a huge gap in interests between those ages. Bea plays the age card to make Leon back off, but what she doesn't realize is how deeply in love with her he is and can't easily let go of her. I like that Leon does feel a bit of chagrin about the age difference. It seems as though men are cavalier about being with much younger women and it's no big deal. I think it very much is. I liked seeing the evolution in Bea's view of things. She comes to realize how much she means to him when it's almost too late, but fortunately, she listens to some good advice that makes her willing to take a chance on Leo.

This is a good HP, with plenty of passion and intensity, and the drama isn't contrived. Baird has been one of those authors that I have read plenty of, but I tend to take for granted. She's a good writer.

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### **Debbie DiFiore says**

I am speechless. This book sucked. I hated both of them. He honestly was a pig and he forced her to have sex. She of course was overcome by the passion and succumbed. I want to throw up in my mouth. He was absolutely unhinged. He needs meds. Badly. She is just stupid. I finally understand the acronym TSTL really means. She is the poster child for it. And to kill off the old caretaker was just stupid. I hated that. The book was just plain tacky. He swears he was faithful from the moment he kissed her when she was 17 (can you say yuk) but I highly doubt it. She heard his ex-mistress say they woke up together in bed two months before, and that she was pregnant, but he doesn't 'remember' anything except he woke up naked with her. It wasn't his baby and he swears he never touched her but whatever. He just sounded like a dirty old man when he made his sexual innuendos. Grossed me out. I really did not like this book.

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## **Booked says**

He kisses her senseless in the middle of the street and their banter is laced with wicked spice. I love the characters.

Second-time seduction!

Bea has been reunited with Leon Gregoris, her ex-fiance. But this time Leon won't mesmerize her with his dark Greek-Cypriot good looks. Bea is older and in charge of herself now; she won't be captive to sexual chemistry!

Then Leon announces they are engaged again--which is news to Bea! Before she can protest, Leon has whisked her away to his luxury villa in Cyprus. And guess what: that same mutual, intense physical attraction is as strong as ever. Bea might be unwilling to be Leon's fiancée a second time, but it's proving harder to steer clear of his bed!

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## **Megzy says**

Really enjoyed reading this one.

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