



Empires and Kings

A.C. Bextor

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I was known as the traitor's daughter.

When I was five years old, my father was tortured, branded with the letter 'Z', then beaten and left for dead. The grueling punishment for his crime was a reminder to all others who dared threaten the Russian's reign.

I was the young girl left behind. A living piece of the traitorous puzzle the Russian leader tried so diligently to ignore.

Until I grew up. No longer could he deny how much my existence had always been intertwined with his. And in order to survive the life I was thrown into, I was forced to learn my place inside of it.

Vlad Zalesky was a tyrant to the lost.

I hated him.

He was a terror of mass destruction.

I was afraid of him.

He was a tormentor of the weak.

I only wanted to hide from him.

But not far beneath the venomous man's outward indifference was something else.

Vlad Zalesky carried secrets of unrestrained burden. I wanted to know those secrets.

And because of the decisions I made, someone in our family had to pay.

Authors Note: This is a dark romance. Due to content, this book should be read only by those over the age of 18.

Empires and Kings Details

Date :

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Author : A.C. Bextor

Format :

Genre : Dark, Romance, Mystery, Crime

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From Reader Review Empires and Kings for online ebook

Tammy Anderson says

5 Jaw Dropping Stars!

Wow!!!! AC Bextor just punched me in the heart with so many different emotions; Sadness, anger, hurt, laughter, kindness, love, meaning of family, and REVENGE!!!! My jaw dropped, hit the floor and it took me a while to pick it back!!!

I don't want to give too much away... There were a number of characters in the story and let's just say you will have a mixture of different feelings for each one. Some you will love, hate/love, want to kill and smack up-side the head.

Vlad (H), possessive, a man who does not easily trust, a ruthless man in business and protector of what is his; family! Once you are in his inner circle/his family. There is nothing this man wouldn't do to make sure you are protected... You see all sides to Vlad in this story!!! And boy can he be a Monster!!! But no matter you will fall in LOVE with this man!

Klara (h), has seen/been through a lot at her young age. The tragedy she witnessed did not change her! She grew up to be a strong, kind and loving woman who's heart is so huge for those she loves and considers family!

If you have read AC Bextor's books you know you will not be disappointed. She will leave aching for more Vlad! Can't wait for the second book!!

Keep on keeping on AC!!! I sure do love you!!! <3 :)

Espresso-Girls Just Wanna Have Books ; A Mafia Romance says

EAK is the first story I've read by this author. From the prologue Bextor had an unbreakable grip on my senses. As I read this story, I felt as if I was back in one of my beloved ungrad lit classes! I absolutely love the word flow! The words massage as well as present a story in a genre where word flow comparable to poetry is not the "norm".

EAK is a Mafia story. A very graphic and dramatic one. Vlad is wow! A Russian powerhouse. He and his word is LAW. Klara has been a part of Vlad's household since age 5. How and why? That's a very interesting story and very well explained in the beginning of the story. Lots of intrigue and danger before anything remotely romantic occurs between Vlad and Klara. Vlad is not soft. He only knows how to use and discard. I am completely in love with this guy. He's an alpha among alphas!

EAK has earned a place on the mafia Hall of Fame list. The story is graphic, tragic, and beautifully written! The characters are very well developed, extremely realistic, and just plain ole fabulous! I must convey the kill scenes although written poetically, the scenes are seriously graphic and messed up! Thank the book gods! It's the mafia and there's nothing pretty or romantic about the mafia!

Five amazing stars!

Kat says

This is not usually the type of book I would read but I took the plunge and could not stop reading it.

It is a mafia romance with more emphasis on the mafia part. It also has a forbidden romance element. The hero, Vlad, is a mafia boss. He raised the heroine, Klara, after she saw him kill her father when she was 5 years old. They become a couple when she was 20 years old to his 35. The sex scenes, when the hero finally gives into temptation, are hot.

I love when possessive and protective heroes show jealousy and that happened here, much to my delight. Vlad is OTT in his reactions to other men showing interest in Klara, threatening them with losing their body parts if they touch her.

There were however, things that I disliked. One of those things that the story included a manhoe hero and the pining virgin heroine. So over that scenario. Klara, who is a virgin, pined for the hero waiting until he noticed that she grew up & returned that attraction before she even kissed someone. Of course, Vlad fought that attraction in the stereotypical way of having sex with his steady hoe, one who managed the hoe house. Of course too, being that it is typical for this type of story, the heroine walks in on him having sex with the hoe. For a few minutes he continues to have sex with the OW while looking at the heroine. Why even include this? Not only was it unnecessary, it left a bad taste in my mouth and is the reason that I did not give the story a 5 star review.

The other thing that I did not like is that the story ended with something bad happening and the hero and heroine's relationship is on the rocks. I understand that there is another book in the series but the ending still tanked and was not one I wanted.

Despite those things I am not sorry that I read the story and will be reading the next one in the series when it comes out.

Snow says

4.75 "Empires, yes BUT only one King can prevail"

Fuckin BRILLIANT!

Vlad Zalesky

A leader of a Russian mob in Chicago, a tyrant, a tormentor, cruel ruler, a monster, a punisher...

Klara Koslief

a collateral, a daughter of a traitor, a witness of her father's demise from Vlad's hands, the same hands that kept her in place, under his roof for 15 years, until her very presence became noticed...

As she became accustomed to the life under Vlad's wing, the man under the cruel, monstrous feature and action, became a lure to her until the moment he changed his perception and she became his - fully, totally, completely...

Two enemy mafia families - Russian & Italian at the verge of *constant lingering conflict, the conquest of territory, interactions that go beyond the ploys, threats, danger and death* , will *push them both, beyond their emotional comfort zones as they unravel the connection between them, the uncharted territory beyond possession, it's more than a love story behind the scenes of crimes, it's the lifeline they each found in one another!*

Effortless writing, intriguing plot, constant thrive in action, and a ruthless, fabulously portrayed anti-hero can actually be enough to bring you thrill and excitement while reading!

Denisa says

DNF. Not my style.

All I can say is that the writing seemed pretty good and it's worth trying out, if the blurb seems interesting. You can always DNF, right?

NMmomof4 says

3.5 Stars

Overall Opinion: I did not realize this ends on a cliffy!** I hate when I don't notice these things and I get to the end and start thinking "oh crap, it's a series!". It's all on me though. I enjoyed it. It did take a little while to get into it, but it might have just been me being anxious to see them get together. Because of the cliffy, we have a lot of unanswered questions that I wish were answered -- but it is what it is ;). I think I'll probably be looking for the next in the series, Saints and Savages, when it gets released...

**After looking into the next book in the series it looks like it is about a different couple! That honestly makes me really disappointed in this ending! I hope we get some closure in that book for them!!!

Brief Summary of the Storyline: This is the start of Klara and Vlad's story. 5 year old Klara is taken in by Vlad and his family when he kills her father for being a traitor. The story starts when Klara is almost 21 and they are both starting to see each other in a different light. The sparks fly, and neither of them can deny their connection. There is some dancing around each other, some mafia drama/violence, some sexy and some sad times...and we get a cliffy.

POV: This alternated between Klara and Vlad's POV.

Overall Pace of Story: Ok. I thought it was slow starting, but I never skimmed and I thought it flowed well otherwise.

Instalove: No, they've known each other for years.

H rating: 3.5 stars. Vlad. I liked him, but I wish he was more up-front with the h.

h rating: 3.5 stars. Klara. I liked her, but there were a few times that I wanted her to be a little stronger when it came to the H.

Sadness level: Low, no tissues needed. (view spoiler)

Push/Pull: Yes (view spoiler)

Heat level: Good. They have some good tension, chemistry, and scenes -- but not so much it takes away from the story.

Descriptive sex: Yes

Safe sex: No (view spoiler)

OW/OM drama: Yes (view spoiler)

Sex scene with OW or OM: Yes (view spoiler)

Cheating: No

Separation: Yes, very short (days?). They still live in same house though. (view spoiler)

Possible Triggers: Yes (view spoiler)

Closure: This had a cliffhanger. It wasn't the worst cliffy I've experienced, but we definitely aren't left with closure here.

How I got it: It was part of my kindle unlimited subscription.

Safety: This one is probably Not Safe for most of the safety gang.
(view spoiler)

Shari Kay says

Nope nope nope and WTF?

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

Elfina Renee says

Another mafia extraordinaire, five bullet casing stars. A.C. Bextor brings heart stopping action, phenomenal romance and the addiction to keep reading.

Couldn't set this book down for a minute. When I tried, I was thinking of the storyline, imagining what was gonna happen next, before you knew it the book was back in hand and the pages were quickly turning.

I have a love hate thing going on with Vlad. Would classify him as asshole extreme! Unapologetic, arrogant and spine chillingly dangerous with no sense of repentance! He wears power and wealth like a cloak, and if you cross him.... well that's your funeral!

Imagine being Klara, the daughter of a known traitor. Oooosp, you can figure the rest out....happy reading enjoy!

Eve Recinella (Between The Bookends) says

Klara was just five years old when she witnessed her father being labeled a traitor and murdered by a man named Vlad. Brought into his house to be raised as a reminder of his first kill, Klara has always been fascinated by the man she calls "V".

Fifteen years have passed and Klara is now a beautiful 21-year-old woman. Her feisty spirit and regular disobedience have Vlad paying more than a little attention to her. Giving into his attraction for Klara is not something Vlad can allow himself to do.

When Klara takes matters into her own hands those sparks ignite into a raging fire with repercussions that could burn them all.

So WOWZA was this book good. The writing was fantastic. The plot was fast paced and intricate. It was gritty. It was heartbreaking. It was tragic. The characters (both main and secondary) were well developed. The relationship between Vlad and Klara was slowly built up and multi-layered. I loved so many of the secondary characters and I hope we will be seeing more books with them in it. Lastly, the ending GUTTED

me...I was bawling my eyes out. WHY Miz Bextor...WHY?!

Two HUGE thumbs up from yours truly!

Michelle says

4 Stars!

Loved this one and can't wait for more. Why not 5 stars? Well I wish I could say I felt the love between Vlad and Klara but I didn't. But I still really enjoyed. Vlad is complicated. lol

Even though this one ends on a cliff that didn't really leave my mouth hanging open it still leaves you wanting more. I can't wait to get to know Liam in the next book:))

Sabrina says

Get it here:

[Amazon](#)

Empires and Kings was my first book by A.C Bextor and I can say with full certainty that it won't be my last. In the beginning I was wishing for a little more darkness, and then near the half-way mark it was like this author heard my wishes and gave me all the darkness that she could. I loved the twists she took with the plot and how there was no holding back who got hurt or how. It's these kinds of books that I love because of their unpredictability.

I honestly can't even pin-point what it was about this book that had me so obsessed with it, but I do know that once I started I was unable to put it down. I became crazed with my need to read until I got all my answers and I don't regret becoming so angry at the people that tried to interrupt my reading. Take this as a warning and pick this book up when you have a few hours to do nothing but read.

Maria11 says

Ah man a cliffy?!??

So good, but darn now I have to wait to see what is going to happen!

Interesting read with lots of ups and downs. It is brutal in some spots. Mafia is a big part of the story. It isn't

just mentioned it is the life of the story.

I will read the next.

Erin says

[The H kills the h's father (which I could get over) and forces her mother into prostitution and away from the h. Her mother eventually kills herself by overdosing (can't get over this part because the H forced this to happen). The h is forced to live away from family and with H... this is when she's 5 mind you. When the heroine grows up the H becomes infatuated with her. This is a little too close to

Candace says

If you like Mafia-themed romances, then you'll probably enjoy this one. It was one of the recommendations that popped up when browsing Kindle Unlimited, based upon my Amazon purchase history. In the past, I've not had much luck with the computer-generated "recommendations". However, this time the computer finally got it right!

'Empires and Kings' is the first book in A. C. Bextor's 'A Mafia Series'. Right from the start, I was captivated by this story. The circumstances of these characters' lives was brutal and tragic. This is certainly a romanticized account of organized crime, yet the author doesn't entirely shy away from some of the hard truths.

As a young Vlad Zalesky rises through the ranks of his father's criminal empire, he is forced to become a man of violence. The night that he kills tortures and orders his first kill, he can no longer hide from the darkness that lives within him. When he comes face to face with the young daughter of the traitor, he is forced to see himself through her innocent eyes.

Nonetheless, Vlad must stay the course. To send a message to any others that might dare to cross him or his organization, he decides to keep the girl. The traitor dies thinking that his daughter will be forced to spend her life working in one of the organizations' many houses of prostitution.

Klara has lived with Vlad since that horrible night, when she stumbled upon the murder of her father as a young girl. Despite the fact that her father was a traitor, Vlad has allowed Klara to grow up in his mansion and have a privileged life. She is more like part of the family than a prisoner, babied by Vlad's sister and a sort of sister to his son.

For the most part, Vlad has ignored the girl living under his roof. Of course, now that she is growing into a young woman he is having a harder time dismissing the beautiful Klara. He wants her badly, but doesn't want to steal the last bit of innocence that she possesses.

Eventually, Vlad and Klara cross that line and their relationship changes. No surprise there. After all, if they didn't find their way to each other there wouldn't be much of a romance here.

Along the way, there is plenty of angst and drama. Vlad is a complete Alpha-male a**hole and I loved him

for it. (I'm sick like that.) He does plenty of infuriating things along the way that will have you wanting to strangle him.

Klara is the stereotypical innocent virgin. Know that going into this story. If that trope irritates you, then you will be seriously peeved with this book. I happen to love it, as cliché as it may be. So this story worked for me.

There are plenty of disturbing scenarios presented as well. I read a lot of dark stories and didn't find anything to be too graphic, but I have a high tolerance for dark content. If you are easily "triggered", then I'd steer clear of this one.

I enjoyed the many layers that were presented in this book. The characters were complex and intriguing. I found myself completely absorbed in this story from start to finish.

My only complaint is that there were a few times when I thought the author tried to venture into "dark" territory, only to chicken out. That is a big peeve of mine. I think if an author is going to write a dark story they should embrace the dark side and not be afraid to take it all the way.

One scene, in particular, had the potential to be a really pivotal dark scene, but it ended up being underwhelming. The author did a spectacular job of building suspense and pulling emotions from readers, only to not carry out the scene, having Vlad fail to carry through with the threatened action against Klara. After waiting for what was bound to be an emotional and traumatic event, I was left feeling a little ripped off. Then, it was hard for me to buy all of the coldness and turmoil that followed when Vlad didn't even do what he set out to do.

Overall, this was a great read for me. I will definitely be reading the next book in the series when it is released. There were a few things that I would've changed, but I couldn't put it down until I finished it. If you like stories that have a little dark content, or if Mafia books are your thing, then you won't be disappointed with this one.

Kira says

2.5 stars

I wasn't feeling the chemistry with Vlad and Klara. Aside from that there were a few reasons their relationship was messed up. Vlad had her father killed when she was 5. Klara walked in on it, so she knew it happened. He didn't raise her himself, but she lived in his home with his family after he killed her dad and sent her mother away. He avoided her at all costs until she was an adult and he realized how beautiful she was. Who the hell falls in love with the guy who does that? She should have hated him instead of being entranced by his sexiness.

Vlad had a son who was 4 years younger than Klara. They were raised like siblings. That's just creepy on Vlad's part. I felt bad for the son because it must have been weird as hell. Vlad was a complete asshole. There were never moments of him being nice. Klara seemed younger than her 21 years, which made the relationship even more disturbing. However her naivete made sense considering she was extremely sheltered for her whole life.

The mafia part of it was okay. Vlad was one of those people who underestimated his enemies and associates. Even when others hinted they thought people were capable of more he didn't believe it. Many of the bad things that happened could have been avoided if he had been proactive.
