



Refined Instincts

S.J. Frost

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Troy Raines wants it all to end. His pain, his heartache, his regrets. Having been in hiding to avoid capture from the Tribunal, he returns to Chicago believing since that's where everything began for him, that's where it should end, as well.

Renart Bellerose has known many regrets in his long life as a vampire, but few are stronger than what he has regarding Troy Raines. As the one to make Troy a vampire, he gave him power, money, anything he thought Troy wanted, but he restrained on giving him what they both needed.

When Renart and Troy face each other again, anger and passion explodes between them. Renart wants to help Troy find redemption, but as danger closes in, it might be too late to set right the wrongs of the past.

Refined Instincts Details

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From Reader Review Refined Instincts for online ebook

Rachel Emily says

Ug, I don't think I've given any book in this series a 3 star review. But this one needed it. I, for one, never saw Renart as someone who needed his own book. Yes, he was a side character that appeared in pretty much all of the previous books, but he just never seemed rounded out to the point where I was rooting for him and understood him. And even after his book, with backstory and everything, it still fell flat for me.

Also, the chemistry between Renart and Troy just wasn't there for me either. Give me another book with Titus and Andreas or Daniel and Ryu, they have smokin' chemistry. I don't know, I just wasn't feeling this one as much as the first 3 books in the series. I do hope that if there is more in this series, maybe there will be a new bunch of characters and vampires. I will definitely read the next book in the series, but do hope there is some improvement.

Adelaide says

Two stars because honestly, Troy is a piece of shit and should have been executed. He hadn't changed at all, not really. His attitude, constantly bitching at everyone and getting into arguments with people who have authority...He was rude, disrespectful to pretty much everyone he met, etc. I saw no redeeming qualities in his character. He wallowed in self-pity, instead of realizing that he was not the only who Renart had failed as a master, but he was the only one to start a rebellion, to begin instigating things and entertain those ideas. Some stayed loyal to Renart despite the fact he'd failed them, so to place blame on Renart is ridiculous. Troy was not some child abandoned by his parents, he was a grown ass man and every decision and choice he made - that's on him and only him. There is no excuse, he is a traitor and all around asshole and it is a pity he was spared and painted as some kind of a victim in this book. That was disgusting. Let's excuse all types of murderers and serial killers then, because they had a tough time growing up or whatever. That is not how it works. Sure he didn't kill anyone himself, but because of him many died so he is still guilty. He didn't really show any humility or remorse in his actions, still acting self-righteous and arrogant, as though everyone owed him something, like in that moment when the Tribunal was taking too long according to him and he wondered if he should knock on the door to hurry them up. Who the hell does he think he is? So yes, Troy is probably the worst character in the series and definitely did not deserve a book. I liked Renart and it's too bad that he got this piece of shit as his eternal partner.

Trisha Harrington says

Another book in this series that I've loved! Yeah, I will always prefer books 1 and 3 because Titus and Andreas are my favourite couple from the series. But I find myself a fan of the couples the author puts together. Even if I was surprised to see Troy get his own book.

If you are a fan of Vamp's and love a good romance, these books are going to be for you. There are some small things that annoyed me about this book. I would have liked to have seen Troy tell Renart about his past with Issac. Mainly how bad their relationship. There was one part in the beginning when he came up. Maybe I should have been shocked. Maybe I should have wondered why things had been the way they were. But I didn't. Dare I say, I wasn't shocked at all. I was glad it wasn't a book about Issac and Troy or I would have had a very low rating.

I was glad to see the other characters make small appearances in this. It's probably too much to hope I could get more Titus and Andreas. But I will hope anyway. There is a small bit of humor in the book. But like a lot of things, it depends on what you find funny. I found myself chuckling a few times. And that is another thing I love about the series.

Melanie says

Rating: 4 stars out of 5

A wonderful addition to an addictive and enticing series. Two memorable and not always likable characters from previous novels reunite in a conflagration that threatens to be either their salvation or final death. A must read for lovers of this series and vampire fiction in general. For my full review visit <http://wp.me/p220KL-1PI>

Another [ScatteredThoughtsandRogueWords.com](#) review.

Arch Bala says

I've always loved Renart since the first book and I thought he's got a very interesting story to tell especially now that his once minion, Troy came back (or trying to repent his sins). I enjoyed most of it but I didn't find least meatier than the first three books in the series. Wonderful writing still from S.J. Frost and fans of the series (like moi) will still enjoy this one.

Matthew says

Loved this book. It was good to get some closure in regards to Troy's story as well as Renart's. The story was that much more gripping because we've seen these characters in pretty much every book so it's been a slow but steady buildup. One thing that always irks me is Ryu. He just annoys me...always so much male posturing and trying to intimidate others. I know that's part of his character and samurai past but seriously he needs to dial it down a notch.

Bitchie says

First off- the positives: Troy and Renart both find their redemption in this book. I never expected it to be with each other, but it made sense the way it was told. We also got a few glimpses of Titus, Andreas, and the BFF Vamp brigade, which is always nice. A new vampire, Domingo, was introduced to us, and we got yet another glimpse of the very mysterious former assassin, Li. I hope we see more of these vampires.

Now, for the negatives: I felt a few things were forgotten. For instance, it appears that Vance and Niven are now in love, but I don't remember that happening in the books. They didn't have their own book, so I feel a bit robbed that we didn't get to see them fall in love.

Then there was Troy's injuries. At the beginning of the book, he is still in a lot of pain. He walks with a severe limp, sometimes even dragging his foot on the ground because it's so hard to walk. And yet, after just a couple of days with Renart, and yes, a couple of feedings, the pain seems all but forgotten. Yes, it's mentioned once or twice, when Renart tries to be solicitous and Troy takes offense, but otherwise, Troy seems to get around fine. It definitely doesn't seem to stop him from being VERY active during sex. It was mentioned how strong Renart's blood was, and that Troy felt better than he had in a long time, but no mention was made of his injuries being healed. I almost expect there to be a scene where they learned that feeding from an Ancient would help, or something, some kind of technique that Troy and Renart didn't know about, but alas, it just felt like an afterthought.

I also felt that Troy and Renart got over their issues too easily. They were still snarking and mistrustful, then after one night of super hot sex, they're all cuddly and affectionate, and all their issues seem to be behind them.

I just wish the story had been longer, and that we saw more relationship building and less fucking. I'd like to have seen them talk more about Isaac and his treatment of Troy, but all they really discussed was his place in the rebellion.

Beacullen says

So once again, when I realized this book was about Renart and Troy, I almost didn't read it. I am SO glad I did. There really is so much more to both of these characters than is told in the previous books. Troy is far from the evil boy that he appeared to be in the previous books, he was more of a lost boy looking for someone or something to make him whole. When he returns to Chicago intending to kill himself Renart is there to stop him. Renart has a lot of remorse for the way things ended up for Troy, and wants to set things right. These two are both so stubborn, but when they finally work things out, their story is very sweet. I really am sad that this is the last book in the series, I would love to read more about them all.

Ro Dubose says

Home for vampire Troy Raines is not a place but a person. Broken in spirit as well as his body, returning to the place where his vampire life began is a fitting place for his life to terminate. In spite of this, Troy's maker, Lord Renart Bellerose is able to persuade Troy that salvation comes only to the living.

Refined Instincts is the fifth book in the Instincts series. This is a series that is best read in sequence because the cameo scenes are main characters from previous episodes. The plot is a marvelously well written emotional romance blended with turmoil as well as sensual intimacy. The characters are especially realistic as well as engaging.

Renart is an elder vampire but not quite old enough to be considered an ancient. In his former life, Renart was an aristocrat skilled in the arts of fighting. As a vampire, he still maintains the deadly skills along with the manners of a highborn gentleman. Renart's past has taught him to hide his feelings. Although he was drawn to Troy upon first meeting, later Renart regretted his show of indifference towards Troy.

Deprived of any physical affection from Renart, Troy's desires morphed into hate. Lost without guidance in the strange new world of the vampire society, Troy relies on a combative attitude to mask his disillusionment. Troy also allows himself to be embroiled in a deadly scheme doomed from the start. Branded as a traitor, Troy expects to be put to death, yet help comes from the most unlikely of persons.

S.J. Frost has created another exhilarating installment to this series. What I enjoyed is the vampires are intelligent, powerful and deadly when necessary but choose to show compassion whenever possible.

JustJen "Miss Conduct" says

Review coming soon from The Blog of Sid Love.

I've been looking forward to Troy's story ever since Daniel threw him from the building, leaving him crippled. I just knew there was more to his story and was really happy to finally see that play out.

Sadly, when this starts, Troy is set on finishing things to finally end his pain and suffering. He returns to Chicago, the scene of the crime, so to speak, to make that happen. However, he didn't count on his master, Renart, stepping in and essentially changing all of Troy's plans. I actually always liked Renart, though I never saw him as Troy's match, though after the sparks fly, I have no trouble accepting it. Here, we get to see more into Renart's background and what made him the way he is today.

Things are going well for them as they finally decide they want each other. That is, until reality sets in and comes crashing down in the form of the Tribunal. Troy is wanted for his past deeds, and Renart is now on the radar as harboring a criminal. Thankfully, Titus has been making some headway with the way the Tribunal operates and seems to have become quite a powerful member. I quite enjoyed watching Titus throw some of his power around, and it was great catching a glimpse of Andreas and the other guys as well.

It was nice to see things finally work out for Troy and that Renart didn't have to go through a replay of what happened to him in his pre-vampire life. While this wasn't my favorite book of the series, I'm still hooked, enjoying it, and definitely looking forward to more.

Lily says

3.9 stars rounded up. Two emotionally complicated protagonists who each needed a different kind of redemption... I enjoyed the story very much, quite possibly the highlight for me in this series thus far.

Nikko says

I totally loved this one!! I actually liked Renard since bk 1 even he acts like a diva most of times.. So glad Troy found his hea even though he was a bad guy in most of the bks..

Susan65 says

We finally get Troy's story, and it was so worth the wait. I have had my heart set on Troy getting his HEA since he was crippled after being thrown from a building and when he ended his rogue vampire lovers life. I just knew that there was some greatness left in his misguided heart, and I was so glad to be proven right.

What I didn't expect was Renart to be his one true love. I was never a Renart fan because he was too uppity, too....refined. But having learned about his past...and ouch, what a horrible past he had, I no longer felt any disdain for him. He honestly is a good man and his refined, noble ways came honest to him. He wasn't pretending to be nobility...he was noble.

When Troy returns to Chicago to end it all, he isn't expecting to face off with his master, Renart. But face off they do...and the sparks fly. Too bad they both have a bounty on their heads, and it's only a matter of time before the Tribunal makes an appearance.

I am always happy to see Titus and Andreas. Renart was one fortunate vampire when he chose to be on Titus good side, because with Titus now on the Tribunal it is their only chance for a fair trial, and a chance for them to be together as eternal partners.

Of course this is a romance, so there is a HEA, and also a little bit of humor at the end. I guess you could call it gallows humor since it takes place in the Tribunal prisons, but nonetheless, it took a serious situation and added a bit of hope. Never have two men needed a bright future after suffering for so long.

As always, I love this series and hope for more. SJ Frost has a style of writing that calls to me and I look forward to seeing what's next.

See reviews at: www.heartsonfirereviews.com

Joyfully Jay says

This review was originally written for Joyfully Jay Reviews.

Read Melanie's review in it's entirety [here](#).

4 stars

Refined Instincts brings back two of the most confounding characters of this series, ones that the readers will have mixed emotions about, and unites them in a relationship full of regret, guilt, and passion. Throughout the Instincts series, Lord Renart Bellerose has been a sort of prickly, charming, and untrustworthy thorn in the side of Lord Titus Antonius and his lover, now Eternal Partner, Andreas Nikandros (*Natural Instincts*). Even more, his attitude toward those young men he Turned and the sheer number of Turned earned him the scorn of other Ancients as well, such as Lord Ryunosuke Kimura and his Eternal Partner, Sir Daniel Valente (*Enduring Instincts*). Renart has always hovered around the edges of the action in the preceding stories, a lively persona that picked at our curiosity each time he appeared on the pages.

Pianisuparse says

4.5 'My heart broke for Troy in the earlier books so I am a very happy camper that he and Renart found their way back to one another' stars.
