



## A Dove At Midnight

*Rexanne Becnel*

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## **A Dove At Midnight** Rexanne Becnel

AS PAWN OR PRIZE ...

Born into a world of savagery and sorrow, Lady Joanna Preston had hidden her chaste, matchless beauty behind hallowed walls --- vowing never to love or take any man to husband. Never did she dream that one day a fierce and noble warrior-knight would come to claim her ... in the name of revenge and soul-searing desire ... with her liberty --- and her heart --- the precious prize ...

HE VOWED TO MAKE HER HIS OWN.

Swearing eternal vengeance against a royal enemy, Sir Rylan Kempe, Lord of Blaecston, had ridden out in search of the Lady Joanna --- heir to Oxwich Castle and the only woman who could help his worthy cause. He found her cloistered away in a convent --- a virtuous enchantress who stoked the fires of a sinful passion, yet defied him at every turn. As the treachery of kings bound them together in unholy union, his heart was conquered by this spirited maiden who demanded no less than her unconditional freedom --- and no more than his everlasting love.

## **A Dove At Midnight Details**

Date : Published May 1st 1993 by Dell

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Author : Rexanne Becnel

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Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Historical, Medieval, Medieval Romance

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## **From Reader Review A Dove At Midnight for online ebook**

### **Luci says**

Fun, mindless, exactly what I read this genre to get.

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### **Lea Hensley's Books in Print says**

3 1/2 stars

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### **Lindsey says**

I enjoyed the first half of the book, but in the second half Joanne just annoyed me.

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### **Nessa says**

I GOTTA AGREE WITH MOST THAT THIS WASN'T AS INTERESTING AS BECNEL'S OTHER BOOKS.

Everything seemed fine until Joanna returned to court with King John's men and everything was so political there it was a bore. Nothing extraordinary here

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### **Roberta Chesler says**

#### **Fantastic - don't hesitate- read this book!!**

I loved this book!! From beginning to end!! I especially loved that the cover wasn't cheesy. If you want a book that is historical with good sexy romance and well drawn characters then read this book. Absolutely wonderful- I can't wait to read more. I listened to this as an audio book and the narration was also great. Can't wait to read/listen to more by this author.

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### **Sumeetha Manikandan says**

I very rarely give a five star but this book deserves it. A perfect plot that captures the very essence of the period that it is set in. I enjoy plot driven novels where you don't really need a hot hero or heroine to sell the book. This is one such book though both the protagonists are well-matched. Joana Preston lives at a priory after her father cast her aside when he begets a male heir from his second wife. Destined to take the veil she

leads a simple fulfilling life at the convent.

Rylan Kemp is one of the Yorkshire noblemen who is up in arms against King John (of Robinhood fame) for undue taxation and other atrocities. When Joanna's father dies, his properties, land and fort is inherited by Joanna and the man she weds would command the land in the heart of Yorkshire. Rylan who had bolstered the support of Yorkshire nobles against the King is unwilling to give up these lands to some nobleman who supports John.

Will Joanna agree to marry someone (anyone) given the fact that she was destined for the veil? What will Rylan do? You will need to read the book to learn more.

What I really loved about the book was the language. The author brings out the anguish of Joanna so beautifully that you can't help feel sorry for her and the other women in that medieval period. Highly recommended. Go for it.

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### **Cherry-Ann says**

Good read. Some portions dragged a bit and the mysterious surrounding the mother's suicide still not clearly linked.

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### **KatieV says**

The book has an interesting historical backdrop. It's during the reign of King John of both Magna Carta and Robin Hood infamy. I kept waiting for the fabulous Sir Hiss from the Disney Robin Hood movie to make his appearance, but was sadly disappointed. I loved that movie. Anyway on to the review...

The heroine, Joanna, has lived in a convent for five years. And she's probably around 18-19 when the book opens. According to the book you couldn't fully take the veil until you were 20, unless you had a dowry. Joanna did not as her father didn't give a flip about her and was also most likely waiting around just in case an advantageous marriage popped up. She lived at the priory chiefly because of witnessing something horrible in her childhood that convinced her she did not want to be under the control of a man or anywhere near her cruel father. Like many she was drawn to the religious life because of the lack of alternatives in society, although I think she did make an honest attempt to embrace the religious life.

Her father, stepmother, and young half-brother all die in a 'sickness' that wiped out them and quite a few others in various keeps throughout England. Sounds like the plague to me, but it's not named as such. The point is that she is left as the only heir to her hated childhood home where her father was Baron. Stuck in an isolated priory she does not realize her father has died or that she has suddenly become one of the most important pawns in England.

It's a race as to who will get their hands on Joanna first. The king, who wants to secure her inheritance by marrying her to one of his men in the heavily anti-John area her property is located in or the hero, Rylan Kempe, an influential baron in the same area and one of the chief outspoken rabble rousers against the king. Rylan gets there first. He expects Joanna to be grateful for her release from the boring life of a nun and go along with his plan to marry her off to one of his buddies. Plus he's appropriately sexist for a man of his time.

He is honorable in that he has every intention of seeing her wed to someone who will treat her well, but has a know-it-all paternally sexist disregard for her wishes. Rylan himself is off the market as he has already made a purely political betrothal agreement with another ally for his daughter, Marilyn, who is one of the most wealthy heiresses in England. Her lands will make him extremely powerful and the king extremely nervous.

Of course, Joanna is anything but cooperative given her extreme aversion to marriage and men. Rylan ends up abducting her when she won't leave with him willingly. This part is where I think the author could have made some better choices. I hovered over the 'shrew' tag with her, but ultimately decided to cut her a break. There's no doubt that she was angry about the situation, but her constant bickering and hare brained attempts to escape the hero got old. That part could have been cut or altered in some way that didn't involve her running off into danger every time someone turned their back so she could pee. It happened 2-3 times, seriously.

Things pick up at the halfway point when the heroine ends up in King Henry's court. She actually shows some brains there and for the most part holds her tongue when it is wise to do so. As much as she hates all the games and manipulations at court, she's pretty good at subterfuge herself. This is the part of her that I would have loved to have seen in the first half versus foot stomping and running off into storms with no food, no horse, nothing. But I could have done without the anachronistic female power speeches. I'm all about having control over my own destiny, but it seemed out of place that the heroine had such a modern mindset regarding a woman's place in the world.

The hero had of course fallen in love with Rylan (why I'm not sure, since aside from her beauty and their chemistry, she and he never once had a conversation that didn't involve flinging threats and insults). Joanna learns she has feelings for him as well, but knows he's betrothed to another and thinks he plans to keep to his plan of passing her to one of his friends even after he took her virginity. So that's the crux of the "big misunderstanding". Plus she also has her childhood trauma to deal with.

An enjoyable read, but due to how the heroine was portrayed, it became a 'like' versus a 'love'.

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### **Julie says**

A Dove at Midnight by Rexanne Becnel was originally published in 1993. This is a DRC copy provided to me by Open Road Media and Netgalley for an honest review. This book is now available in digital format. Lady Joanna witnessed something truly terrible as a child. As soon as she is able, she moves to a convent and waits for the day she can say her vows and become a nun.

When Joanna's father and his wife and son died, Joanna becomes the sole heir. In medieval England, this places Joanna in the middle of a political tug of war.

Rylan decides that Joanna must be informed of her father's death and he must bring her back to be married to a man he will choose for her. This will prevent King John from gaining control of Joanna's kingdom.

When Rylan informs Joanna that she must return home and marry, she literally laughs in his face. She has no intention of leaving the convent. After his best attempts at persuasion, Rylan kidnaps Joanna.

Rylan has his hands full with Joanna. She is far from the plain, biddable, demure nun wannabe he expected. Beautiful and fiery, Joanna fights him every step of the way.

But, when they are waylaid by the king's men, Joanna finds herself in an even worse situation in the king's court. Joanna and her friend must marry men chosen for them based on political and monetary advantages. When Rylan arrives, things really get interesting. Rylan begins plotting to get Joanna away from the John's grasp.

Due to circumstances beyond her control, Joanna finds herself having to face the horrible demons of her childhood.

This was a great medieval romance. Joanna holds on to her need to stay unmarried and in control of her future with all her might. Rylan can't understand why Joanna is so opposed to marriage. He suspects something sinister, but Joanna will not confide in him. He is single minded about his task, believing Joanna will come around once she is wed. What he didn't count on was his attraction to her and her ability to out think him. Neither of them could imagine that one day they would work together for a common goal, and find true love in the bargain.

This one gets an A.

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### **Sandy says**

This is not a book that will change your life but if you're looking for a quick, undemanding & romantic read to provide a little escapism, give this a try. Especially if you enjoy historical drama. Set in medieval Britain, it tells the story of Lady Joanna Preston. She's a young woman sent to a convent at the age of 12 after her mother committed suicide. She saw how a "suitable" marriage could turn out so has sworn to become a nun. Unbeknownst to her, her father & his son are now dead, leaving her as the sole heiress to Oxwich Castle, a property coveted by King John as well as his enemies due to its' strategic location. She's now an important pawn in their treacherous games.

Sir Rylan Kempe, Lord of Blaecston, understands the significance of Oxwich & tracks down Joanna, determined to marry her off to a political ally. Much to his surprise, she has rather strong ideas of what her future will be & it includes a veil, not some stranger for a husband. But he's a man used to being obeyed so if he has to kidnap her to achieve his goal, such is life.

Before he can get her home, she's taken from him & sent to London where she becomes the ward of King John. He has another "suitable" union in mind to secure her birth right.

What follows is a story of political intrigue & machinations at a time when young women were expected to be seen & not heard while doing what they were told & popping out heirs. The author plays a little fast & loose with the customs of the time but, hey...this is romantic fiction.

Rylan is portrayed as an alpha type of guy, unused to being challenged by a mere woman. Joanna comes off as a bit immature but she did grow up in a convent. As expected, there is a budding attraction & the author provides enough scenes of steamy seduction to heat up the pages. There are several peripheral characters of note & side stories to flesh out the plot but our hero & heroine are front & centre and their HEA is never much in doubt.

Over all, an easy historical read that won't tax your grey matter & provide a little escapism from your tough day in reality.

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### **Mary Kate says**

This started off so strong. I loved Joanna. She was very much the insubordinate heroine. Fighting Rylan at every turn. Letting him know, no one is the boss of her. There escapades through the first part of the book were great.

Then she leaves him to go join the king. Which was awesome, don't get me wrong. Having a heroine who doesn't throw herself at the mercy of her abductor was refreshing. But this is where the book tapered off.

There was so much to work with. A king who doesn't want Rylan near this girl, Rylan's secret betrothal, Joanna's beauty. There was a lot of things that could have caused great conflict between the characters. Things that would lead to dramatic plot lines.

But no, it all worked out. Rylan tricks the King & Queen into letting him marry Joanna by making them think he doesn't want her. I was disappointed by that plot line, because Becnel had written such a devious Queen that seemed to see through people & their machinations. But not this time. She & the King fall for Rylan's trickery & he rubs it later in their faces at the wedding feast.

So yeah, the beginning was fun & full of adventure but the ending fell flat.

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### **Arlena says**

By: Rexanne Becnel

Published By: Dell

Age Recommended: Adult

Reviewed By: Arlena Dean

Rating: 4

Book Blog For: GMTA

Review:

"A Dove At Midnight" by Rexanne Becnel was a story of this medieval time in England's history where the you will see how their custom and politics played out to give the reader a 'well crafted love story' in this era. We find Joanna is scared on marriage and men due to what had happened to her mother. With the death of her father Joanna became a 'lynchpin in a power struggle of King John's reign.' With these times be most turbulent at this time, Sir Rylan Kempe who opposes the kind will kidnap her from the convent with the idea of marrying her off to a ally, however, Joanna will end the King's ward and later ...well to get the rest of the story, you must pickup "A Dove at Midnight" and see how, who and what will happen. I liked the story and if you are in to medieval history you will possibly enjoy it also. You will find all of the characters all very interesting in one way or the other. Some even colorful. Be ready for some interesting dynamics that will go on between Joanna and Rylan....with Joanna being so irritating and naive and then Ryan being the mature and arrogant and also 'politically adapted. All in all this novel will keep you turning the page will all of its twist and turns that are presented.

If you are in for a good medieval historical romance, I would recommend "A Dove at Midnight" to you as a good read.

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### **Ali says**

I wanted to like this more than I did. I went into it knowing it was written in a different era, but even with that knowledge it took me ages to get through, just because I couldn't get engaged with the characters. I'm giving it three, with the understanding that had I read this during the time it had been written, I likely would have had a different take, or if I had some nostalgic fondness for it, but for a fresh read in 2018, I would probably rank it as a two.

