



## **Sin Row**

*Scarlet Blackwell*

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On Sin Row, the cops are more bent than the criminals...

Getting sexual favours from rent boys on Sin Row is a perk of the job for corrupt cop Blake Astor and his partner Ronnie Kemp.

When Io Spencer appears on the scene, though, Blake's seldom-troubled heart gets involved.

When things escalate out of control, is he prepared to risk everything for Io?

Reader Advisory: This hard hitting book has sex scenes that some may consider contain dubious consent. There are also scenes of double penetration and ménage à trois.

## Sin Row Details

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Author : Scarlet Blackwell

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# From Reader Review Sin Row for online ebook

## Julio Genao says

Don't look at *me*; this is happening bcuz EMMA IS FILTHY

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## Feliz says

Like Simsala wrote, this was mostly Porn with Plot - a little bit of plot...

In a dystopic future ten years from now, Blake and Ronnie are bent cops in Machon, a city in ruins not far from the Canadian border. Their main task seems to be arresting whores who they then blackmail into giving them sexual favors. So far, so good, until Io comes along, a beautiful rentboy who has a special effect on Blake. Between coaxed blowjobs (even one threesome with Ronnie, Blake and Io) and Io's cruel pimp George, Blake starts to develop a soft spot for Io. While he always thought of whores as pieces of meat before, like everybody else does, Io strikes him as human, as a person he begins to care for. Io, on the other hand, has quite the crush on handsome Blake right from the beginning.

Ronnie has the hots for Blake (and vice versa by the way) but never acted on it so far. When Ronnie notices the sparks flying between Blake and Io, he takes advantage, forcefully fucking Io with Blake watching and consequently unable to abstain from joining, which gives Ronnie the opportunity to have sex with Blake on a halfway consensual basis. With the two of them focusing so much on Io, things escalate, and the fragile equilibrium between the real baddies on Sin Row and the dirty cops tips over, which results in several deaths on both sides. Almost to his own surprise, Blake suddenly finds himself on the run with a badly wounded Io who has turned wanted criminal by accident....

Yes there was dub-con sex, violent sex and general violence in this book, but it also had some of the hottest sex scenes I've read in quite a while, including one steaming threesome. There's no depth to this, the characters are sketchy at best, and the world around them is only hinted at. It felt like 75% sex, some kind of Pretty Woman tale for adults with dicks and police batons instead of locks and pretty dresses. To me, this book rung true with the sheer joy of walking on the edge of total taboo, along with as little plot and as sketchy a worldbuilding it could possibly get away with. It's a good thing this is fantasy, otherwise it might have come out as disgusting - like this, it was actually quite entertaining for what it was.

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## L-D says

I actually was reluctant to read this book and fully expected not to like the characters due to their blatantly corrupt natures. I think, however, because this book was set in some sort of dystopia where everyone is fighting to survive and ALL cops are dirty and it's just part of what they do I found it fit well into the overall story arc. Blake is a corrupt cop who, with his partner Ronnie, has no qualms about arresting prostitutes and getting free services before letting the prostitutes go. Blake doesn't feel like he is forcing the hookers into doing this, because they do have the option of going to jail instead. This is one of the perks of being a cop and it would be unusual if you went into an interrogation room with a "suspect" and didn't shake some tables.

After reading the reviews of some of my friends, I was expecting to hate the main character, but I actually liked him because you can see him gradually grow in his feelings for Io, the hooker. In this society, fighting

against corruption is not the norm, and to go against his partner or what other cops expect is dangerous. As long as you can take yourself out of real societal values and try to understand the world that these characters are living in, I can definitely understand why readers detest Blake's character. I on the other hand slowly started to root for him.

I felt that this book was more of a relationship book, oddly enough, because there was not a lot of external conflict. There was one "event" at the end, but there was no great detective mystery to solve which would have made this book more interesting. But I did find it interesting and I kind of liked the dark themes of corruption in the book.

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### **Vio says**

I actually don't know what possessed me to read it.....I must have been sleep deprived, I ignored the warnings big mistake, for me this was horrible I disliked it with a passion. Blake and especially Ronnie were unfeeling, ruthless, sadistic, corrupt and absolutely showed no remorse, I would have been quite happy to have seen them both killed off, I felt sorry for Io he suffered he got that extra star or else it would have been a one star rating from me!

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### **Emma Sea says**

Okay, I admit I read this because it was tagged for DP. And indeed there was. The story, however, is an outline. It's when you get the idea out and onto ~~paper~~ a screen, sketch some key scenes in more detail, and *then* you go back and actually write the book. Here, however, Scarlet forgot to go back and flesh out the bones.

Plot = dirty and corrupt = 4

Writing = 1

DP scene = kind of hot even though not fully realized = 3

Number of times Blackwell uses "oddly" = 5 (I think)

I'm surprised this is from 2012. I've only read two others by Blackwell, *Inferno* (2012) and *Rescue Me* (2010). I assumed that this must be an earlier work, but maybe it was written earlier and only published in 2012. Because this is not well executed. At all. Seriously. It's not like she's Walt Whitman or anything, but she's better than *this*.

Overall I'm giving this a 4, because I enjoyed it a whole lot. Some of that was a snarky, sneering enjoyment, but the pleasure was there nonetheless.

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### **Ami says**

#### **3.5 stars**

I'm trying to form my opinion on this one because (1) It is definitely not a romance for me; well, not romance in a traditional way, and (2) It pushes my limitation in stories because it has a) sex in every chapter b) scenes of ménage à trois and double penetration.

Then again, I know what to expect from Scarlet Blackwell's stories. I switch my "Scarlet Blackwell" mode on when I read this (hey, I survive a rape scene on one of her stories, so this one should be easier). And for me, the sex scenes in every chapter actually record the progress of Blake having a change of heart when it comes to Io. Blake is a cop that used to get his way, no matter what and in the beginning, the sex is pretty "cold", Blake only sees Io as a whore that he likes to use.

Then as the chapters go, readers can feel how Blake starts to get more involved, how he starts to see Io differently, even during the ménage à trois or when Blake and his partner use Io to every scenario that they can think of ... up until that last decision that Blake makes to save Io. At that moment, Blake acknowledges that Io is no longer "just a whore", but someone he cares for, and even willing to sacrifice his job at the police department.

So despite all those plots that usually turn me off, I do enjoy it. However, I like Ms. Blackwell's stories; I could be biased :). It's not for everyone though ...

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### **Td says**

[use of foreign objects, humiliation (hide spoiler)]

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### **Susan65 says**

This story was so far out of my comfort zone I'm surprised I finished it. No romance, but in a post apocalyptic society I guess that's the way it is. If so, I hope I don't survive. It's way too harsh for me.

Io is the rent boy who is treated like shit by the cops and his pimp. Living in a hellhole and seen as property, not human.

Blake is a corrupt cop who spends his days in the interrogation room getting blow jobs from the men he arrests. He sets his sights on Io and then shares him with Ronnie, his partner.

Ronnie dies, and good riddance to him too. Io's pimp dies, no loss there either.

Blake and Io have a strange relationship that goes beyond the physical, but not until the very end of the story, but I am not sure if Blake can redeem himself in the sequel. I am reading it next just to find out.

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### **agirlwithoutwings says**

There were many times I couldn't help pitying Io, he was the only character I liked, and many moments I couldn't get Blake and his indecisiveness. There was also Ronnie in the middle which was making me so confused and gradually I was expecting him to make a disaster which he did but not in the way I expected.

Still, I found the ending a bit more like *Into the Light* by the same author.

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## **Serena Yates says**

*Sin Row* is not a book that will appeal to everyone. It is, as the reader advisory states, hard hitting, not a traditional romance and will make quite a few readers feel extremely uncomfortable. I must admit that the setting intrigued me and that I expected more of a – traditional resolution, despite the non-traditional setup. It wasn't what I got, and for a while, I struggled with that. Having had a few days to let it sink in, there are a few undeniable truths that come to mind.

What really makes this story work is the clarity of the characters. Io is as convincing in his way, long suffering though he may be, as Blake. Life as a prostitute is never easy. In the setting *Scarlet* has created here, where the cops are possibly more corrupt than the pimps, it leads to suffering without a single hope of ever getting better. That is the life Io faces and he does so with a degree of dignity, but also enjoyment where he can take it. And who can blame him?

Blake started off as a real a\*\*hole. There were only a few hints, his apparent weakness for Io the biggest one, that he would ever be able to change. His character development was so gradual it was almost unnoticeable at first. The slow pace, with Blake not willing to admit what was going on for the longest time, was extremely well written and made it utterly convincing to me. Don't get me wrong, he is no 'romantic hero', or 'white knight' even at the end of the process. Words of love are never mentioned. But his actions speak for themselves. To us, running away may seem cowardly, but, really, in the world he and Io face it is the ONLY sensible thing to do.

Like I said above, this is not a book for everyone. But if you like darker, gritty stories which might make you scream in anger and frustration at people's idiocy, and don't mind dubious consent (justified in this context), you might like the very subtle moral this story imparts. For me, it took a while, but this one definitely grew on me.

NOTE: This book was provided by Total-E-Bound for the purpose of a review on Queer Magazine Online.

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## **The UHQ Nasanta says**

### **3 stars**

This book confused me. On the one hand, I liked it - or rather, I liked the ending (Io and Blake together). On the other hand, some things seemed to be missing and affected how I viewed the first half of the book.

The world sounded pretty interesting. Unfortunately, there didn't seem to be too much effort in world building. There were just enough descriptions to get a sense of what the world was like. I would have liked more but I guess for the less demanding, it was enough.

At first, I couldn't really "feel" the characters. Io seemed interesting upon first impression - though despite his

life and what he had to do. I didn't like either Ronnie or Blake. I didn't care about any of the characters. At first. But it started to change a little as we got more signs of Io's and Blake's mutual attraction for each other.

While I didn't quite buy into Blake's "softness" for Io nor his sudden interest in the well-being of Bentley's whores, I found him to be quite a fascinating character. He was not very likable but his need, desire and unfamiliar fondness? for Io makes him seem more human. Ronnie seemed like the typical bad-guy-is-bad character. He was actually more detestable than the usual bad guys I find in typical (het) romances.

The ending made it feel as if I was left hanging. It was a HFN that somewhat satisfied me. I would have liked more.

**In short**, I guess what I liked most about this book was Blake's gradual and limited transformation. While it seemed forced, I liked how it led him to care for Io, which in turn allowed Io to soften and warm up to him, and allowed me to believe in the HFN.

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### **Simsala says**

WTF was that?

Porn with plot? Trio Infernale? Playing bad cop,worse cop? M/M romance "noir"?

Everything of the above,certainly provoking and almost - almost - out of my comfort zone.

Sin Row is tough,fast paced,cruel and dirty - with seriously hot,non-consensual(!) m-m-m sex scenes.

(You`ve been warned!)

My niggle:The abrupt ending.The story is not finished and I hope there will be a sequel.

LOVED it,more please...

4,5 stars.

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### **Alina says**

I actually like non-con (although in my opinion there wasn't much - if at all - here, since Io was willing every time) and I have a huge soft spot for the abuser/victim twisted relationship, which later develops into something more deep, so I liked this story a great deal. I think in this rather short book Blake's transformation and his growing feelings toward Io were shown fairly believable. I even - gasp! - felt sorry for Ronnie, sure he irritated me at times, but certainly not enough to wish him dead.

PS. Oh, and the cover's fantastic!

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### **Lexi Ander says**

[As it is, I gave it an extra star because Ronnie did get capped. He was borderline psycho. I seriously thought that he was going to hurt Io. Since we don't get Io's POV I am pretty sure that half the stuff they did to him coerced his response and I felt that he was raped. I hated that Ronnie kept pressing that Io was a whore so

therefore I liked the

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**Purplegirl says**

That was quick and dirty, literally.

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