



Knight In Black Leather

Gail Dayton

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A chance meeting on the dark winter streets of Pittsburgh brings widow Marilyn Ballard face to face with streetwise young biker Eli Court when he scares off a trio of wannabe gangsters. Later, she returns the favor, rescuing him from a beating, and their encounter becomes a chance to grow and heal from the pain scarring both their lives.

Marilyn's family disapproves of the relationship because of Eli's disreputable past, as well as their age difference. That past life--years spent in the deepest cesspools of the city--reaches out to pull Eli back into its depths, and he fears dragging Marilyn down with him. But she refuses to let him face his past enemies alone, even when his vow to protect a young boy exposes the still-open wounds of her heart, and puts them all in danger. Can they build a new life together, or will those long-denied secrets pull them under?

Knight In Black Leather Details

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From Reader Review Knight In Black Leather for online ebook

(?) Hache says

WOW

I really wish I knew how to write a praising review of this book, the characters the emotion just everything! I really did love it.

At first I really didn't think that much of it, I saw the cover (the one of him on a bike, so ugly) anyway I took a chance on it, was longer than my usual books so of course I thought I'd end up giving it up. I read the free sample pages on amazon, I usually give a books 1-3 chapters till I pull the plug but within the first chapter not even 3 pages I was hooked. I loved the immediate meeting of these two! It was hilarious!!! actually this book was very funny at times. Lots of grinning, laughing and awww moments. I swear my face would hurt to the amount of grinning I did.

Marylin - Some heroines I love in the beginning of books then I tire of them and hate them towards the end but Marylin... I loved everything about her! from beginning to end. I never got enjoyed with her, she didn't make stupid choices or was too naive. She makes me want to be a better person. I loved her motherly affection when she needed to take care of something to her overwhelming need to see the good in someone.

Eli - LOVE LOVE LOVE HIM! He's the type of boyfriend that you want!, even though he's described as 'young' 25 he was a total sweetheart, very protective and loving, I swooned over everything he said and did.

"I want to hug you," she said finally, "but I'm afraid I'll hurt something."

"Do it anyway." He tugged at her hands clasped around his, wanting that hug, wanting her arms around him more than he'd wanted anything before in his life

"If you break me, you gotta fix me." He wiggled his eyebrows, turning it into a joke.

"Kiss it and make it all better."

"I am not kissing your backside."

Eli laughed. "Come on, Marilyn, say it. Say ass."

"I'm about ready to turn you over my knee and spank yours."

"I'm not really into kinky sex," he said, his voice all smoky-sounding, "but if that's what floats your boat, babe, I'm willing to give it a try."

I loved how she took care of him and took him to her tiny apartment with the pull-out couch where they both had to sleep on. Come on! we all love it when a guy or girl has to sleep in that persons bed just because there's nowhere else to go. =)

Marilyn turned onto her side, toward Eli, and her hand brushed his. She started to pull

back, but his hand turned. His fingers tangled with hers, and held on.

""Night, Marilyn," he mumbled, mostly asleep.

"Good night, Eli. Sweet dreams.

He was rock hard with wanting her and knew he'd never have what he wanted. He slid a hand down to hide his condition in case she could see in the dark.

What did annoy me was the constant 'she doesn't love me' 'he doesn't love me' or when she kept wondering when he was going to up and leave, or him thinking when she didn't want him around anymore. I just wanted to bang there heads together because it was obvious how deeply they where into each other.

"Long as you don't kick me out, babe, I'm all yours. Anything you want."

She smacked the back of his head. He was beginning to think of those light blows as love pats.

(view spoiler)

(view spoiler)

By the way.. that new cover, yes its a bit better. Not sure he looks 25 and wheres his nipple piercing?

LOVE LOVE LOVE this quote near the end while there making love

(view spoiler)

Just reading that bit makes me smile

So once again.. going into this I thought it would either be a fluff read or DNF but instead its turned out to be one that I'm going to remember forever and anytime I need to make myself smile or laugh I'm going to come back to this and read the highlighted text that I've saved on my ereader. GREAT BOOK!

Jennifer says

Oh, wonders of Goodreads, I add Gail Dayton to my feeds (she's the author of one of my favorite books, New Blood, which I will shamelessly recommend to anyone) and see that she has a digital release out. It's an unusual love story set in Pittsburgh. Of course I had to get it. I ended up reading it within two days (thank

you Kindle Cloud Reader...). Dayton has the ability to create characters that you can sympathize with and root for (even if they are struggling to believe in themselves). A solid, quickly moving story. There's some dark moments, but it will give you the warm'n'fuzzies. Plus, any book that works in a Squirrel Hill reference gets five stars.

Found another Gail Dayton book to shameless recommend. Looking forward to reading more of her fantasy novels, but enjoyed this contemporary romance.

Similar to this title from other authors: Finding Home and Fallen from Grace.

Saunders says

Fairy tales are good for our imagination. They stimulate it and help our creativity grow as well as taking us beyond our every day lives.

There is also a moral behind every fairy tale and they teach us how we can be better, generous and that we all have strength – we only need to call upon that strength to believe.

Eli Court did not believe in fairy tales until he met 39 year old Widow Marilyn Ballard. A chance meeting on a dark night brings Marilyn face to face with the street wise biker when he comes to her rescue. Eli Court is 25, he wears leather, has piercing and he rides a Harley. He is no Prince Charming.

Marilyn Ballard has a past, an 18 years old daughter and long denied secrets.

What I like about Gail Dayton is that she has created a beautiful story which deals with complex issues. The characters are well developed real, sincere and honest and they have to deal with so much sorrow and heartbreak throughout the story. Gail Dayton makes you feel their emotion and what they went through.

This is a well crafted story between an older woman and a younger man.

So if you want to find out if Eli and Marlilyn get their happy ever after then read this story. It will fill you heart.

Gitte TotallyBookedBlog says

Ok let me start off with how much injustice the cover of this book does to the content!! I really dislike the cover but I LOVED the story!! So don't let it put you off if you're anything like me...This is one of those you wish you'd read sooner!!!

The characters were brilliantly written, so passionate and complex but most of all they felt REAL! The

journey this book takes the reader on is very intense, emotional and full of twists and suspense with some pretty gut wrenching drama tossed in too. It made me cry!

Marilyn is a 39 year old widow who has a daughter at college and a pretty messed up family (don't get me started on the mother!!). I loved Marilyn, she was one of the most 'normal' heroines I've ever come across. Nothing about her annoyed me. She was real! The things she had to go through broke my heart!!

Eli is a 25 year old former street kid. He is Marilyn's polar opposite what with his pierced ears and nipple, black leathers and his Harley. However, Eli has seen more drama and heart ache than someone twice his age which means he has had to grow up way before his time. His story made me cry....

I loved how Eli and Marilyn met. They became each other's heroes by rescuing each other one fateful night. But they rescued each other in general too. Yes there is quite a big age gap, but I never felt it and I have to say that except for the reminders I would have forgotten because this story was about so much more than that. The romance between Marilyn and Eli was intense and passionate but so touching too!

I love a book that makes me laugh, cry and gasp in surprise...this is one of them!!!

Michelle [Helen Geek] says

3.5 Stars

This was an enjoyable read. I started it on an airplane and it kept me engaged. It flowed well, but lacked a bit of imagination. The characters were fairly well developed, but a bit boring.

It started with Meredith leaving a community center where she is a volunteer mentor to children. She sees Eli who is standing outside waiting and is a bit apprehensive. We never really know why Eli was outside this building when he was. Meredith is accosted by some young gangbangers and Eli runs to the rescue; running them off. She leaves, but oops... she forgot something and heads back to get it where she finds Eli getting his head bashed in by three guys with ball bats and tire irons. She rescues him, calls the police and goes with them to the hospital. He needs someone to care for him and she takes him home.

Meredith has lost her husband and her daughter has recently gone off to college. She is 39 and trying to figure out how the rest of life will be and to recover from her losses. Eli is a child of the streets. He is 25 and has had a few good things happen. He is trying to save a friend who also just happens to be his child's mother. These two meet and seem to have affection for each other immediately. There is a bit of intrigue as the reason for Eli intervention with his son's mother comes to light. We also have the relationship issues with Meredith fighting with her family over Eli, his background and the 14 year difference in their ages.

The story is sound. It flows well, but lacks imagination. The characters are likable, but nothing really pulls you. Overall, the story is mediocre enjoyable.

You may find this Happy Reading!

Jena says

I am literally at a loss for words. This book was INCREDIBLE! The love story combines scorching passion and sweet sensuality to perfection, the characters are complex and real, the love scenes should require a fire extinguisher, and the most heart-melting facet of the novel is how slow and sweet and "true" the development of the love between Marilyn and Eli feels as you read. I am in awe of this author's ability to create such a beautiful and sincere love between two characters who begin this journey worlds apart. I am simply . . . in awe.

Marlene says

Originally published at Reading Reality

This is a story about two people who rescue each other. And keep on doing it over and over until they can't resist falling in love, in spite of all the reasons why they supposedly shouldn't.

Marilyn Ballard is a 39-year-old widow. Most of her family thinks she's crazy for closing up the suburban house she lived in with her dead husband and moving to a tiny apartment in the city. She's also started literacy tutoring at an inner-city youth center. The problem is that she forgets to go home at night because there's nothing there.

Enter Eli Court. He's 25 and trying to protect the mother of his son from too many bad things on the streets that he's left behind. He's not even with her any more, but he helps her out to keep the kid safe. Safer. But when he spots a bunch of would-be muggers glopping onto Marilyn one night, he can't seem to stop himself from stepping in to save her. Eli doesn't recognize that saving people is what he does.

She circles back that night because she forgot something, discovers a different bunch of gangbangers beating on Eli with baseball bats and tire irons, and she saves his ass with a judicious amount of horn honking and headlight flashing. In spite of his best attempts to throw her off, she won't let up until she not only takes him to the nearest hospital, but until she gets him home, too.

She brings him home with her, even after he tries embarrassing her by claiming to be her lover. He wants it to be true. She can't believe he could mean it. He's young enough to date her college-age daughter, and she knows it. But he saved her that night, and now it's her turn to help him with his broken arm and leg.

And she needs to help someone. She needs to matter to someone. She needs to argue with someone. She needs to react to someone and with someone.

And Eli needs someone to give a damn about him. He needs someone to be there for him. And he likes riling her up and watching her blush and stammer. Their age difference doesn't matter to him.

But all of it matters to her family. Even though all that's happening is that she is helping him, everyone reacts as though something obscene is going on--as if something could be going on. Both Marilyn and Eli are over the age of consent, and both are single. Marilyn has been a widow for 4 years. It should be her business,

but it's not.

Everyone interferes and does it badly and nastily and destructively. No one can hurt you like family, and Marilyn's does nothing but prove that. Eli supports her, and she supports him.

As Eli physically heals, both he and Marilyn reveal secrets to each other that help to explain why this relationship can and should work. Even as more and more outside forces try to tear them apart--one way or another.

Escape Rating B+: This was an amazingly solid romance that did a terrific job of selling the reason why these two people made sense together.

Any time there's a significant age difference between the hero and heroine, whichever direction it goes, the author has to handle (or should) how the couple deals with the experience gap. This is particularly true when the woman is older. In real life, this has to happen either way, but in a romance, it frequently gets glossed over if the man is older, but highlighted if the woman is older. Eli's life has been hard in ways that have made him not just mature for his age, but have given him a ton of tough crap to deal with. (Laura Leone's Fallen from Grace tackles this same problem in a similar fashion, Donna McDonald's Dating A Cougar gives her hero a military career-ending injury to "toughen him up". Both stories are awesome, but Fallen goes dark and Cougar goes for the laughs.)

One part of the story that was difficult to read was the way that Marilyn's family reacted to Eli's presence in her life before their relationship took a romantic turn. Except for her brother Joey, the entire family was belittling, demeaning, nasty, rude...I could go on and on and not get close to how rotten they were. Their collective reaction was beyond over-the-top, and it didn't feel like it was explained by anything in the story.

Both Marilyn and Eli each had a big secret. Eli's secret was pretty obvious but the way it came out added emotional depth to the story. Marilyn's secret just about knocked me over. It's one that makes you re-think everything.

MelissaB says

The story in this wasn't bad, in fact it had some interesting aspects - older woman/younger man and a tortured hero. I liked that it was set in Pittsburgh and you can tell the author has actually been here before. The reason for the 3 star rating is that the story was slow in spots and focused on so many external factors rather than the romance. I also found her Mom and daughter kind of annoying. So overall just an okay read for me.

Kristiej says

Some of my favourite books are older women/younger men books – maybe because it's my advancing age though I think it's more than that – I've loved them for years. One Summer by Karen Robards, Fallen from Grace by Laura Leone, Family Blessings by LaVryle Spencer, Rainbow Season by Lisa Gregory (and WHY hasn't this come out as an ebook yet?) are some of my favourite comfort reads. So when I came across Knight in Black Leather, I knew it would be joining all the other books on my Ipad.

Before I go further though – ignore the cover – either version – as they are horrid, horrid, and horrid. I'm not the first to say this and I'm sure many a review after me with say the same. Eli Court and Marilyn Ballard first run into each other when she's leaving the place she volunteers at in the rough side of town and she's confronted by a couple of thugs and Eli helps her out. Later that same night, she helps him out when she sees he's being attacked. Turns out he was hurt pretty bad, a couple of broken bones, and she brings him back to her place to help recuperate. Marilyn is a 39 year old widow who is trying to work out issues. Her husband has been dead for a few years now and her only child, her daughter, is off to college. She moves out of her house and into a tiny apartment as she just can't face a big empty house. Her family, her mother in particular, loves her, but smothers her at the same time and they don't even try to understand what she is going through.

The arrival of Eli in her life is a catalyst. He's much younger, 25, but he's lived a wild life. Though he is somewhat stable now, he has some real ugly ghosts in his closet. They are attracted to each other, but Marilyn can't understand why someone so much younger would be interested in boring old her and Eli can't understand why someone who has it so much together would be interested in him and all his baggage, including a young son he fathered at age 16.

This book very much has the feel of Fallen from Grace to it. I didn't enjoy it quite as much – but almost – and I have no hesitation in recommending it to readers who enjoy this particular trope. Both Eli and Marilyn are caring people, Eli in particular. He supports Marilyn 100% in whatever she decides. It's a rare thing for her. She has one brother who supports the relationship that is developing between Eli and Marilyn but that's it. The rest of her family is dead set against them and insists she dump Eli. But he's the one who is bringing her back to life.

There are a few flaws I found with this book, how quick she is to take him in and how she rejects her family seemingly with no qualms whatsoever, including her daughter. I thought this should bring a little more angst to Marilyn for making the decisions she does and Eli for supporting them. But it didn't take away the fact that I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book.

Another winner in what is shaping up as a stellar reading year so far!!

Christine Klocek-Lim says

When reading a romance novel, one jumps into the thing with a single, solid certainty: the book will always have a happy ending. This book doesn't disappoint with that, of course, but the journey toward that ending is so freaking awesome that I stopped thinking about it halfway through the first chapter. Another staple of the romance genre is the role of hero and heroine. My biggest pet peeve with romances is when these characters are stupid and fight all through the book about dumb things. A great many writers do this to create tension but it's really just lazy writing, in my opinion. This novel does not fall prey to that problem. Eli, the hero, is one of the most likable characters I've read. He always keeps his promises. The heroine, Marilyn, is also incredibly decent. Neither of them fight over stupid things. Instead of fake tension created by fake problems, every single one of the plot points in this book arises out of who these two people are, how they got to be where they are in their lives, and how those experiences (both painful and joyful) cause them to react to each other in the midst of the larger plot. The sheer brilliance of the writing of these two characters makes me utterly grateful that Gail Dayton is alive and can type and apparently plans to continue for the foreseeable future at those tasks.

Eli and Marilyn felt real to me as I read their story. Neither was perfect yet neither was so completely a caricature of brokenness that I grew exasperated. I adored the way they met and how they grew to know each other. I would've been perfectly content reading about their love story, except the book managed to introduce supporting characters that were just as real as Eli and Marilyn. Marilyn's family, and the characters close to Eli were just as well put together. And then, as I settled into the book, thinking "oh, I know where this is going," the plot intensified. Things happened that I just did NOT expect. And the characters STILL didn't panic and do dumb things that made no sense. I don't want to give anything away, so I've left the particulars rather vague in this review. Suffice to say, I laughed out loud during the first chapter. I sighed in happiness by the seventh and bit my lip in dismay by the twenty-third (I also might have cried a little, but I refuse to get into that).

The novel, "Knight in Black Leather," is now at the top of my list of books I adore and will read again over and over. Thank you Ms. Dayton for writing this book. Thank you. I loved it.

HJ says

reread 5/2014

This was a surprisingly good older woman (39), younger man (25) romance. Slower build up, not supremely angst, but also with a decent sub-plot. The only mild gripe I have is that there were a few times when a bit more detail would have been appreciated. Sex scenes aren't overly graphic, nor fade to black.

Recommended for those who may have liked Finding Home, or Fallen from Grace. The sexual background of the heroes are similar (on the streets, etc).

J says

I found this book through a discussion thread on "Finding Home", a book I totally loved. I didn't love this book as much, but I did enjoy reading it. The story is about a 39 year old widowed woman and a 25 year old street thug who initially save each other from some street violence, but he's hurt enough that he has a broken arm and leg and, of course, can't live on the street until he heals. And, of course, the kind hearted widow lady takes him into her home to help him heal.

Things develop slowly (a little too slowly for me in places) but a relationship develops. Her family is appalled by her living with this younger, common street thug but, to her credit, she sees the good in him and cares for him even while always feeling the insecurity that this younger man will eventually move on.

There is some action and suspense as part of the story and some plot points that come out of the blue (not in a completely good way). It breaks up the story for me, while I would have rather concentrated on just the relationship. But overall I read and finished the book in good order which for me means a lot. I enjoyed it (and the ending).

D says

Did you like Laura Resnick's Fallen from Grace, which became a surprise hit in 2004 despite having one of the ugliest covers I have ever seen. Go take a look, I'll wait. Is that a male pole dancer or a stalker?

Anyway, without being derivative, **Knight in Black Leather** gives me some of the same vibe. According to the author's web site this book could not find a home because no one knew what to do with it. Short sighted fools. There are probably legions of us out there waiting for books like this-- books with a different spin.

She is a 39 year old mother of a college student, four years a widow and trying to rebuild her life in Pittsburgh (really Pittsburgh?!). He is a 25 year old former street kid with a motorcycle, a pierced nipple, a black leather jacket and a propensity for trouble. He rescues her one night from a couple of thugs. She drives away, remembers she left her scarf (sentimental value) and turns back in time to rescue him from a beat down. She takes him to a hospital ER and then to her apartment where there is (conveniently) only a pull out couch for a bed.

Luckily, Gail Dayton makes this unlikely scenario interesting by his past and her family intruding on their present. And the author doesn't rush the romance although there is mental lusting on both sides.

Awilk -never sleeps- says

First thing: this is not a biker book. I know they are very popular, but this is not one. The hero Eli may have a Harley, but there is no gangs in this story. You should still read it though.

This is a story about how love can heal a person from past pain and hurts.

Marilyn is a 39 year old widow, who is tired of only a half life. Her daughter has left home to go to college, and Marilyn was ready to start trying to make a life for herself. She was a typical suburban housewife, but I really enjoyed the little bits of humour she showed.

I don't believe I'm your Mama either. I'd definitely remember spanking that backside.

I would love a chance to do more to Eli then just spank his backside.

Eli was a 25 year old, Harley riding ex street kid. His very hard and very sad life has left him being a very mature young man.

Only a man who was truly strong, who had no doubts whatsoever about his own strength, was capable of great kindness.

Eli could most definitely show great kindness. He was a compassionate, loving and sweet man.

Eli and Marilyn met under dangerous circumstances. With Eli hurt with multiple broken bones, Marilyn takes him home to care for him while he heals.

As they adjust to sharing a living space, the feelings they start to develop for each other slowly grow. They didn't just instantly fall in love, and reading about them become closer and closer was a joy.

The plot was much more than just a romance. There was a very serious back story and background story. I found myself so involved in this book, from the very first page, I didn't want to stop reading to sleep. Although I eventually had to, I woke up early so I could continue. At no time while I was reading this was I bored, or thought about skimming.

The secondary characters, especially Marilyn's family, were well fleshed out and added depth to the story. I didn't like them all, but they played pivotal roles in the storyline.

My only complaint, and it is a very small one, was how Marilyn and Eli both continued to push each other away throughout the book until the very end, and the lack of communication between them at times. Plus I wanted another thousand or so pages.

I recommend this book to everyone who likes romance. It was a highlight of the year read for me.

Baba says

[child abuse, child prostitution/pedophilia. (hide spoiler)]
