

= Vision in White =

Vision In White is the first book of the Bride Quartet series of romance novels , written by Nora Roberts . It spent two weeks atop the New York Times Bestseller List and reached number 3 on the USA Today bestseller list , marking the first time one of Roberts ' books had become a bestseller in trade paperback format . A downloadable casual @-@ play computer game based on the book was introduced by I @-@ Play in 2010 .

In her thirty @-@ year career , Roberts had published almost 200 novels . Vision in White was one of ten Roberts novels published in 2009 , including five new releases and five reprints . When it was released on April 28 , 2009 , its cover premiered the use of a special logo to differentiate her new releases from reprints of her past works .

The novel marked Roberts ' return to contemporary romance . The new series revolved around a wedding planning enterprise run by four childhood friends . This first story featured the developing relationship between wedding photographer Mackensie " Mac " Elliot and English professor Carter Maguire . Like several other Roberts novels , Vision In White explored how a protagonist balanced a successful career with a dysfunctional family environment . Although the hero is a fairly typical representation of the romance novel archetype of the professor , the novel is slightly unusual for a romance in that the hero must convince the heroine to take a chance on love .

= = Background = =

Nora Roberts is a prolific author of romance and futuristic suspense novels . From 1979 through 2008 , almost 200 of her novels were published . On average , she completed a book every 45 days . She does not outline the novels in advance or create character biographies , preferring to develop the plot as she goes .

According to Publishers Weekly , three of the top @-@ ten bestselling mass market paperbacks of 2008 were Roberts novels . Her new releases focused primarily on paranormal and fantasy romance . In 2009 , Roberts returned to the traditional contemporary romance subgenre with Vision in White . The novel was the first in her Bride Quartet , which also included Bed of Roses , Savor the Moment , and Happy Ever After . Each novel in the series focuses on the love story of a different founder of Vows , a fictional wedding planning business .

Vision in White was released by Berkley Books on April 28 , 2009 . The novel was one of ten Roberts books released that year . Five of the releases were paperback reprints of books previously issued . Three were new hardcovers , including two published under the pseudonym J. D. Robb . Vision in White and its sequel , Bed of Roses , were released in trade paperback . To help readers differentiate the new releases from the reprints , the covers of the two trade paperbacks included a medallion with the initials NR .

= = Plot summary = =

The novel follows the relationship of photographer Mackensie " Mac " Elliot and English teacher Carter Maguire . Mac and her childhood friends Parker , Emma , and Laurel are the founders of Vows , a fictional wedding planning company in Connecticut . While accompanying his sister to a planning session at Vows , Carter renews his acquaintance with Mac , and confesses that he had been infatuated with her since high school . She is intrigued by his honesty and earnestness and decides to embark on a casual fling with him .

After seeing her parents ' numerous failed marriages , Mac does not trust the idea of commitment . Her determination to avoid emotional intimacy is reinforced as she struggles against her mother 's continued tactics of emotional manipulation .

Their relationship progresses slowly through the book . Each protagonist receives much advice from a large circle of friends and family . With the support of her friends and Carter , Mac develops the courage to stand up to her mother . By the end of the novel , she realizes that she does not have to relive her parents ' mistakes , and chooses to embrace her love for Carter .

= = Analysis = =

The four novels of the Bride Quartet share a strong emphasis on sisterhood . The heroines of the books bonded as children and have become sisters by choice . Throughout the series , they provide mutual support and acceptance of each other 's quirks . Focused on their careers , the heroines have little time for outside relationships , and they rely heavily on each other for comfort , help , and distractions . A similar theme is seen in several of Roberts ' other works ; her In Death series , written as J. D. Robb , has a heroine who has created a family from female friends and colleagues .

According to critic Betsy Prioleau , *Vision In White* 's hero is a typical representation of one of the eight archetypes of a romance hero : the professor . Several scenes in the novel show him teaching students or in parent @-@ teacher conferences . Like most intellectual romance heroes , Carter is a " sober good guy " , and the heroine is attracted to him primarily for his mind . In an unusual twist for a romance novel , however , the hero is the character who is ready for a commitment but must help the heroine overcome her fears . After seeing her mother divorce four husbands and discard countless boyfriends , Mac prefers to avoid emotional intimacy rather than risk the relationship splintering . Carter provides reassurance that their relationship is built on a solid foundation .

Critic Mary Ellen Snodgrass calls *Vision In White* a story of the New Woman , with a strong heroine who is extremely proud of her significant career accomplishments . Roberts uses the heroine 's choices of how to pose or spotlight her photography clients as pointed ways of celebrating both monogamy and " unconventional views of femininity " . In one scene , Mac convinces a heavily pregnant woman to pose nude , despite her feelings of awkwardness ; through the resulting photos , the client comes to believe that she is actually beautiful . In another poke at traditional stereotypes , Mac photographs a bride and groom posing together on a horse , evoking the metaphor of a knight coming to rescue the princess ? but the couple are equals .

Roberts contrasts Mac 's competence in business matters with her difficulties in dealing with an extremely dysfunctional family , a theme Roberts had previously used in the Chesapeake Bay Series (*Rising Tides* , *Sea Swept* , and *Inner Harbor*) and the Calhoun Series . In *Visions in White* , the family difficulties are caused by the heroine 's mother , who is essentially a cross between the mothers in *Carolina Moon* and *Tribute* . Roberts shows that , as a result of her family 's dysfunction , Mac has chosen to distance herself from deeper emotions . The camera allows Mac to interact with other people 's happiness and lives without having to fully participate ; as the book progresses , she gradually develops the courage to come out of her shell and fully participate in life .

The use of the wedding industry is , per Snodgrass , " a wry reprise of Roberts ' career in fictional matchmaking " . The novel celebrates the joy of a traditional wedding ceremony , including the playful ceremonies arranged by children playing dress @-@ up . Roberts ' treatment of these themes " validates the dress @-@ up game of playing bride as both fantasy and a stabilizing preface on women 's devotion to mate and family " . Roberts included significant detail on the wedding planning industry , which Snodgrass posits is meant to highlight and celebrate the success the female characters had at niche marketing .

= = Reception = =

Jill M. Smith in *Romantic Times* gave the novel four out of five stars , labeling it a " wonderful and cozy read " . A *Publishers Weekly* review highlighted the " gentle humor and likable cast " and predicted that readers would be eager to follow the characters through the rest of the series . In *Booklist* , John Charles called the novel " thoroughly charming " and lauded the deep characterization and " sharp , clever writing " that combined to celebrate " friendship and love " .

In a survey of readers , Snodgrass found mixed opinions . Many were delighted to see Roberts return to traditional contemporary romances , minus the elements of fantasy and magic that had woven through her more recent novels . Some praised the tight bonds of sisterhood that Roberts created for the four founders of Vows , but other readers complained that the character voices were too similar . A vocal minority pointed out similarities between this novel and Roberts ' Calhoun series

By February 2010 , Vision In White and Bed of Roses had sold a combined 1 million print copies . Over 100 @, @ 000 copies of Vision in White were sold in Canada alone between May and October 2009 . The novel spent 32 weeks on the USA Today bestseller list , peaking at number 3 . It was number 1 on the New York Times Bestseller List for trade paperback fiction for two weeks . It was the first of Roberts ' novels to be a bestseller in trade paperback format .

= = Computer game = =

Within months of the novel 's release , computer gaming company I @-@ Play began developing a downloadable casual @-@ play game based on the story . Roberts ' input was limited to approval of the graphics and the game 's interpretation of the story line . The game followed the general plot of the novel , from the perspective of the heroine . More than 40 different locations from the book were featured , including Mac 's office and Carter 's kitchen . There were hidden @-@ object tasks and several mini @-@ games featuring wedding @-@ related activities , such as cake decorating and floral arranging . Roberts was pleased with the final product , remarking that " to have a story translated into a game like this , it 's tremendous fun for me . It 's my initial vision , but I enjoy seeing how , when you translate it into that other medium , how somebody else 's vision manages to affect it but keep the core of the story . " The game was released in February 2010 . According to Roberts ' website , game sales did not match the developer 's expectations , and plans for sequels to the game were cancelled .