



Surrender: A Possession Novel

By Elana Johnson



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All of that changes when Raine falls for Gunner. Raine's got every reason in the world to stay away from Gunn, but she just can't. Especially when she discovers his connection to Vi's boyfriend, Zenn.

Raine has never known anyone as heavily brainwashed as Vi. Raine's father expects her to spy on Vi and report back to him. But Raine is beginning to wonder what Vi knows that her father is so anxious to keep hidden, and what might happen if she helps Vi remember it. She's even starting to suspect Vi's secrets might involve Freedom's newest prisoner, the rebel Jag Barque...



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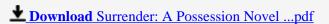
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Surrender: A Possession Novel By Elana Johnson Bibliography

Sales Rank: #640407 in eBooks
Published on: 2012-06-05
Released on: 2012-06-05
Format: Kindle eBook



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Editorial Review

Review

Possession.

Johnson, Elana (Author)

Jun 2011. 416 p. Simon & Schuster/Simon Pulse, hardcover, \$16.99. (9781442421257).

"[A]n intriguing dystopia...[a] good choice for fans of Pam Bachorz, and Matched by Ally Condie."

--BOOKLIST, June 1, 2011

"This dystopian novel...might appeal to readers of Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies* and Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games*." --SLJ

About the Author

Elana Johnson writes young adult fiction. Her work includes the young adult dystopian romance series *Possession*, *Surrender*, *Abandon*, and *Regret*, published by Simon Pulse (Simon & Schuster). Her popular ebook, *From the Query to the Call*, is also available, as well as a young adult dystoipan short story in the *Possession* world, *Resist*.

School teacher by day, Query Ninja by night, you can find her online at her personal blog (elanajohnson.com) or Twitter (@ElanaJ). She also co-founded the Query Tracker blog, WriteOnCon, and contributes to the League of Extraordinary Writers, a blog written by young adult science fiction and fantasy authors.

She loves writing dystopian romance so much, she published her *Elemental Series*. A novella, *Elemental Rush*, began a new paranormal teen romance series. *Elemental Hunger*, a full-length novel, is the second part of the story. The series concludes with *Elemental Release*, the final novella. These fantasy romances are only available on Kindle Ebooks.

Her young adult contemporary romances include *Elevated* and *Something About Love*, both coming of age love romances only available on Kindle Ebooks.

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Gunner

1.

Someone is always watching. Always listening. Freedom doesn't exist in the city of Freedom, what with the glinting silver surfaces recording thoughts everywhere and the surrounding walls keeping everyone and everything in—or out.

On the east, the ocean hugs Freedom, but no one knows how to swim. That's against protocol, and all Citizens follow protocol.

Identity also doesn't flourish in Freedom. Which was why, on this crap Monday, I escaped the confines of the Education Rise amidst a stream of other students, hopefully unnoticed by Raine *she'd be easier to ignore if she wasn't so gorgeous* Hightower.

Up next: snacking and flying.

Or so I thought.

Raine materialized out of nowhere, her stark-as-snow hair falling over one shoulder. She adjusted her hat as I cast my eyes around to see if anyone was watching us. We seemed to be as alone as two people could be in a city where Thinkers monitored everything, from what job I'd do for the rest of my life to who I'd marry.

I wished They'd chosen Raine for me.

"Hey, flyboy," she said. Her voice made my insides flip. She stepped off her hoverboard and fell into stride beside me.

I fought the urge to look behind me, see if any of my buddies saw me talking with this amazing girl. I managed to stall the smile before it gave my feelings away.

"Hey." I pocketed my hands against the February afternoon chill. I could've mouthed Raine's next words.

"We really need you, Gunner."

I didn't respond. Not a sigh, not a shrug, nothing. Now, if she'd say "*I* really need you," I'd probably reconsider everything. But she never did.

I'd heard her recruitment speech before. Raine belonged to a group called the Insiders, and apparently they were working to enact some "governmental change."

I was pretty sure that meant she snuck out after hours to drink contraband coffee with either her match/best friend Cannon Lichen or her tech guru Trek Whiting.

She wouldn't tell me anything about the Insiders until I joined, and I wasn't joining until she told me something.

The conversation felt stale, but this was the first time she'd approached me in person. The other petitions had happened over my cache. I'll admit, I liked this way better.

I snuck a glance at Raine and admired her sea-foam-green eyes. Immediately afterward I heard her voice over my cache. *Are you even listening to me?*

Every Citizen in Freedom is implanted with a cache when they're born. In childhood, they were more of a nuisance, as they took special concentration to use. I couldn't hear every thought someone had—I'm not a Thinker or a mind ranger. Those people can hear thoughts and read minds—and so much more.

No, a cache was a mental communication implant. After I learned to focus my thoughts, thanks to the introductory course we all took as first-year primary students, caching was dead useful.

I could talk to my buddies on the hoverboard track without yelling. I could send a friend a message without my mom knowing. Over time—and a few more caching lessons—sending and receiving messages became as easy as thinking.

My friends and I exchanged conversations mentally while together. After we went home, messages were easily transcribed just by thinking and could then be sent as electro-communications. E-comms could be kept in the cache's memory and accessed later.

The Thinkers could monitor a cache stream, but They maintained a very exclusive Watched list. And trust me, you knew if you were on it. Saved e-comms, however, could cause problems if they fell into the wrong hands.

I'd deleted all of Raine's, some of the most recent ones without even reading them.

Of course I'm listening, I chatted back to Raine, trying not to let her proximity derail my annoyance at her for asking—again. This issue was nonnegotiable. It's just that I can't join.

Raine fidgeted with the fingers on her gloves, her agitation thinly disguised under a layer of frustration. I could feel it coming from her, though she didn't know that, and I didn't want her to find out.

Not everyone appreciated an empath.

"Your mom," she said out loud.

"My mom," I repeated. I couldn't leave her. She and I, we'd always been there for each other. I didn't want to get her in trouble. She had a good job in the Transportation Rise. Sure, she worked until five, but no one needed to be home to monitor my afternoon snacking and flying sessions.

Besides, Director Hightower—that's right, Raine's father—did all the monitoring in Freedom.

Raine paused, one foot on the grass of the green area across from Rise One and one foot still on the sidewalk next to me. I looked at her properly, almost flinching with the beauty I found in her face.

"So," I said, working hard to keep my voice from breaking.

"So, I'm worried about you, Gunn," she said. A secret flashed in her eyes; her words held more than concern. I realized how little I really knew about this girl, despite my crush on her.

I frowned. "Worried?"

"My dad ..."

Now, her dad I knew all about. Technically he was a Regional Director, presiding over many cities in the nearby area. Not that I'd been to any of them. I didn't know how close they were or what they were called. I just knew that Van Hightower owned a lot more than Freedom.

Rise One loomed before me, making late-afternoon shadows drip across the green area. "I didn't know you lived in Rise One," I said. "I thought you had a student flat."

Raine's mouth tightened at my blatant change in topic. "There's a student section on the second and third floors."

"You have a flatmate?" I asked.

"Yes. You want her picture?" Raine adopted her power stance: left hip out, arms crossed, eyes challenging me to say something.

I held up my hands in surrender. "No, no picture."

Pictures could also be sent over the cache, attached to an e-comm. Everyone in Freedom was fitted with corneal implants, which allowed us to view things on an individual basis on our vision-screens. It wasn't really a screen, more of a movie or picture displayed before our own eyes. Of course, you could forward images through the cache, or you could load them onto microchips and pass them around physically.

See, every Citizen of Freedom also had a wrist-port. This was a simple, inch-wide band of black around the left wrist. On the top, just below the back of your hand, was a slot for microchips, and then you could watch memories on your vision-screen.

We'd eliminated almost all handheld devices in Freedom. It's something Assistant Director Myers was forever bragging about. "We're down to just the electro-board!" he boasted from the roof of the Technology Rise—his beloved home just beyond the taller central Rises.

The e-board was cool; I'd give AD Myers that. It was this tiny little thing, about four inches long and two inches wide. A screen could be brought up to hover above the device if you wanted to show your buddies a particularly entertaining memory. Other than that, we used the e-boards in school to store class notes. Simply compose a message in your cache and send it to your e-board. Notes: taken.

Educators could send items to their class lists, providing students with an endless supply of study materials. Free-time hours: gone.

"Anyway, she's not a student," Raine was saying. She took a few steps backward, committing fully to crossing the green area to Rise One. "Well, I should go." She didn't seem too enthused about leaving, but that could've been wishful thinking on my part.

"Wait," I called. "What's your flatmate's name?"

She waved her hand dismissively. "Just some chick named Vi."

I watched Raine walk away, wondering why Vi, a non-student, was living on a student floor, with a student. I needed to learn more about the real Raine Hightower, stat.

* * *

I glided through the remaining Rises, covering mile after mile easily on my hoverboard. Each Rise—and there were twelve situated in the center of Freedom—took up an entire square mile and created silver canyons, even with all the green areas. On the outskirts of those Rises, more buildings reached for the sky.

My mom worked in the Transportation Rise, and there were others: technology, energy, water purification,

protocol enforcement, medicine, and evolutionary development, just to name a few. Each Rise had a Thinker who ran the affairs in that particular area, but only one of them was Assistant to Director Hightower: Thane Myers.

As I drifted through the Rise-canyons toward the Blocks, I forced the Directors from my mind, focusing instead on something more important: my snack selection. On Mondays, my two options included crackers and cheese or raisins. I chose the crackers every Monday.

By the time I made it to Block Three, I'd moved on from snacks and spent a more than healthy amount of time fantasizing about Raine. I swept my palm across the panel on my front door and pushed into the living room, where my mom knelt in front of our safe, a slip of microchips in her hand.

Everything froze, as if the Director had pressed the pause button on my life. Mom stalled with her hand halfway inside the safe. Her face held shock and fear and guilt, all of which I actually felt as my own emotions.

I stared, my mouth still watering over the promise of crackers and cheese.

Just as fast as we'd paused, life rushed forward again. The safe slammed shut, and Mom stood in front of it. Like that would erase the secret she'd just put inside. Like I wouldn't be able to see the hulking black box behind her. It's always been there, and I'd always been involved in the decisions about what we hid inside. Until now.

"Gunner, you're home early."

"Not really." I dropped my backpack and hoverboard and headed into the kitchen for that snack. The safe screamed at me to *look at it!* but I kept my eyes on the floor. "Why are you home?" I called to Mom.

I pulled a bottle of water out of the fridge and ordered up the crackers from the food-dispenser. Mom didn't answer and she stayed in the living room, her frustration about my slobbish behavior a thin veil of normalcy over my heavy curtain of anxiety.

"No reason," she said when she came into the kitchen. "You're going flying?"

"Yeah, be back for dinner." I ate on the way to the hoverboard track, but the crackers held no taste. The icy air I sliced through at the track felt just as restrictive as the rest of the city. As the rest of my life.

All I could think about was that blasted sleeve of microchips, what they were, why my mom had hidden them without telling me.

I flew my regulated hours, returned home at the appointed time. Just like always.

Bedtime couldn't come fast enough. At exactly ten o'clock, I plugged my cache into the mandatory transmissions, closed my eyes.

Like I slept.

After an hour that felt like forever, I unclipped my transmissions and crept downstairs to the safe. I had four minutes to plug back in, but it shouldn't be a problem. Like I said, my mom and I didn't used to keep secrets,

so I knew the combination to the safe.

Three minutes later the sleeve of microchips lay under my pillow and the transmissions reblared in my head.

I needed time to think. So I lay awake, trying to imagine what I might see.

I couldn't.

I popped the first chip into my wrist-port. My vision-screen filled with my mom's remembrances. My past birthdays and, as I got older, my performances at the hoverboard flight trials. The second to last one held my victory last year. Mom was hiding her fondest memories of me, almost like she couldn't hold them in her head anymore. Why would she secure these without telling me?

I slid the last chip into the port and nearly choked. Director Hightower sat at his desk; the surface glittered with clouded glass.

He leaned forward to speak, and while he looked kind and fatherly, his voice came out full of steel and sternness.

"Hello, Ms. Jameson. Our records indicate that the child we entrusted you with, Gunner, has considerable talent. The Association needs to begin his training as soon as possible. He will be summoned next Saturday, at six thirty a.m., for a personal appointment with me. His afternoon classes will be moved to Rise One to aid in this new academic direction."

Director Hightower paused as he sipped clear liquid from a tall glass. I couldn't work up enough saliva to swallow. He'd called me "the child we entrusted you with." What the hell did that mean?

When he looked into the camera again, I felt like his eyes burned through the lens, the microchip, my vision-screen, and right into my soul. Like he could see and hear and feel everything and I was utterly exposed.

"You will not be able to see him again, Ms. Jameson. But know that he will be of great service to the Association of Directors, not only here in Freedom, but throughout the entire union."

I dug my fingers into the pillow in an attempt to escape from his penetrating eyes. Numbness spread from my fingers into my arms, but the Director wasn't finished yet.

"You've done a superior job with his upbringing." He bowed his head for a moment, then raised his chin again. "You will be notified of his new address no later than Sunday evening. Until Saturday at six thirty. Good day."

The image went black, but I still felt the Director's eyes lingering on me.

My hands shook, and my head buzzed. The Director's words raced through my mind. You will not be able to see him again.

The last person who'd left her was my father. I didn't want to put her through that again. I knew what had happened, even though we'd only spoken about my dad once.

She'd forgotten him.

Once I moved out, would she forget about me too?

* * *

"Tell me everything," I whispered to Raine Hightower the next day before genetics class began. Briefly, I thought about my mom. We'd always protected each other, and I was more determined than ever to keep her safe, even after my forced relocation on Saturday.

Raine pushed her ice-colored hair over her shoulder, focused her eyes on me. I didn't know what she saw there, but her expression softened. "What did you find out?"

I shook my head in a universal gesture of *it doesn't matter*. Like I wanted Raine to know I'd fallen apart over a memory.

"You're on the list, aren't you?" She leaned closer. So close, I smelled something warm and sweet coming off her skin.

I cleared my throat and moved away. "Just tell me what to do." Maybe if I joined the Insiders, I'd be able to breathe without this band of tension constricting my chest.

"The Director has his new recruits coming in on Saturday morning," Raine whispered. "Friday night, one a.m. I'll forward you the coordinates later."

Then she turned away.

* * *

On Friday night I unplugged from the mandatory nightly transmissions so I could sneak downstairs. In four minutes an alarm loud enough to wake the dead would fill the Block. I couldn't have that, and since I wasn't planning on coming back, I clipped my transmission feed into the e-board I'd configured to simulate my sleep patterns.

Then I slipped down the stairs, knelt in front of the safe. I took a deep breath, not sure I could handle the contents of this thing again—not after that creepfest recording of the Director.

An invisible weight lifted as I replaced the sleeve of chips I'd "borrowed" and pressed my thumb against the scanner to close the door.

That's when I saw the single chip at the back of the safe. Jabbing my hand into the gap to stop the door from latching, I could only stare. That chip hadn't been there on Monday night. My mom had told me about the approaching appointment with Director Hightower on Wednesday afternoon. She'd been leaning against the safe during the conversation, and no tears were shed, though I'd felt her profound sadness.

Quickly, I eased the chip from the slot, slipped it into my jacket pocket. When the safe closed, the beep echoed so loud I squeezed my eyes shut. But no one stirred upstairs. My mom's transmissions would block the sound; she never slept without plugging in.

It'd be so easy to simply go back to bed, plug in, show up for my appointment tomorrow morning at six thirty.

But I couldn't go back. What I'd learned had changed me, and the old me was gone for good. I felt like I should mourn him, and in a way I did. Sure, he'd known his world wasn't perfect, but he'd been happy. Or at least willing to go with the flow.

With my backpack shouldered and that one new chip resting in my pocket, I had a feeling any semblance of contentment lay solidly in my past. I stepped toward the front door. My mother had locked it down last night at ten, just like she always did. Beams of light swept from one side of the entryway to the other. Nothing I couldn't handle.

Step-step-shuffle. Pause. Step-back-pause-leap. I stood at the door, wishing I could say good-bye to Mom the right way. I'd tried last night, but it pretty much went like this: "Night, Mom."

"Good night, Gunn."

And then I'd stood in her doorway while she'd linked into her transmissions and closed her eyes. I didn't get to hug her or tell her I loved her or anything. I buried the troubling good-bye; I couldn't go back and change it.

With one click and one scanner sweep, the front door hissed open. I'd barely melted into the shadows when someone spoke over the cache and straight into my head. *Nice to see you*.

Trek Whiting = Raine's tech genius. Every muscle in my body tensed. I was really doing this. Whatever *this* was. But I'd finally made my own choice. And it felt wild, dangerous. Perfect.

First rule out here, Trek said over my cache, which echoed inside my mind because he'd used my personal cache code. I'd given it to Raine after school, secretly hoping she'd be the one to contact me. My dreams crashed and burned, even though Trek's reverberating voice over the cache meant the code had worked. He'd insisted that a coded cache wouldn't be as detectable, and I had no experience to argue.

No names. Do you know your location?

Yes, I chatted over the cache to him, completely ticked at his condescending tone. Are we secure?

Yeah, but there are always seeker-spiders lurking somewhere.

And he spoke the truth, even if he wasn't my favorite person on earth. I shivered at the thought of meeting a seeker-spider in the dead of night. Truth be told, I didn't want to get in the way of a seeker at any time. Programmed by the higher-ups in the Tech Rise, seeker-spiders had a fourfold mission: find, detain, record, report.

If I was found, well, I didn't want to think about the "detain" part. I'd seen a few too many projections detailing exactly what the fist-sized spiders could do to a human body.

As if the seeker-spiders weren't bad enough, I could meet Enforcement Officers or trip some silent alarm or throw too many thoughts into the air. Any of those could bust me before I'd even begun. I couldn't afford that. Director Hightower wanted me—but he wanted me clean.

His daughter wanted me too.

I wish she wanted me in more ways than one, I thought. But Raine just wanted me to join the Insiders. Earlier today she'd sent her instructions. She'd take me to the Insiders and make sure I got hooked up in an Insidermonitored flat.

And I'd get a few hours to enjoy my life before it belonged to someone else. I seriously hoped Raine had something amazing planned for the night.

Just then I picked up on her emotions. Wisps of feeling flitted across my awareness, telling me of her confidence and calmness. I shivered, but it had nothing to do with the freezing temps.

I allowed Raine to fully form in my imagination. She rarely smiled, but when she did, my heart pulsed in my throat. She could wait, though. I had one more thing to do before I joined her rebels.

I extracted the chip I hadn't watched. With the tiniest of clicks, I slid it into the port on my wrist. My mom's face filled my vision-screen, brightening it with her pale skin, dark blue eyes, and strawberry-blonde hair. Something like a sob gathered in my throat.

I should've said good-bye the right way, whatever way that was.

She looked at the camera for a few seconds without speaking. She swallowed. Then she said, "Gunner, I've loaded a letter onto this chip. It's from your father. He instructed me to give it to you when you were ready."

While she paused, my mind raced. Letter? My father = a man I'd never met. A man who'd been dead since before my birth.

Mom jerked her head toward a sound only she could hear. She leaned forward; her voice hushed. "Compare it with the journal. I love you, son."

Then the memory went black. A second later a scan of the letter filled my v-screen. The writing looked faded, but I could still read all the words, decipher all the numbers. It made no sense, but since it'd come from my father, I longed to feel it in my hands.

I watched my mom's recording again. And again. Every time, part of my being leeched out when she said "son." At some point during the viewing, I'd slid to the ground. Cement-cold crept into my legs, my lungs.

What journal? I wondered. The only answer came from the glow of crimson seeker-spider eyes. An intense fear pounded in my veins. I leapt to my feet and turned quickly down an alley, only to see additional pinpricks of red. More recordings being made.

In six short hours the Director would own me.

I wanted to own my last six hours, dammit.

I knelt, reached down to my ankle, lifted the cuff of my jeans. Four sets of lasery eyes moved closer. I kept my chin pressed to my chest so they couldn't capture my face and beam it back to whoever would dispatch the Enforcement Officers. The wide-brimmed hat helped conceal my identity. For once I was glad protocol dictated hat-wearing at all times.

I extracted a small canister—a scrambler—from my shoe and set it on the asphalt. Just a little closer ...

I felt the eyes behind me, above, below, on all sides. Claustrophobia pressed in unexpectedly. After all, I felt like this everywhere. In school. At home. On the hoverboard track.

So many cameras watching. Always watching.

The scrambler vibrated under my fingers. I traced over the two looping figure eights on the top to control the shaking in my hands, waiting one—more—second.

When the metallic legs of a spider touched my elbow, I smashed the scrambler with my fist.

An electromagnetic pulse sent the seeker-spiders flying backward, their eyes winking into oblivion as they—and everything they'd managed to record—shorted out.

Then I ran.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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What do you ponder on book? It is just for students since they're still students or the idea for all people in the world, what the best subject for that? Just you can be answered for that question above. Every person has distinct personality and hobby for each other. Don't to be compelled someone or something that they don't desire do that. You must know how great as well as important the book Surrender: A Possession Novel. All type of book would you see on many sources. You can look for the internet solutions or other social media.

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Carol Ramirez:

In this period globalization it is important to someone to find information. The information will make professionals understand the condition of the world. The fitness of the world makes the information quicker to share. You can find a lot of references to get information example: internet, newspapers, book, and soon. You can see that now, a lot of publisher in which print many kinds of book. The particular book that recommended for your requirements is Surrender: A Possession Novel this guide consist a lot of the information with the condition of this world now. This particular book was represented how does the world has grown up. The terminology styles that writer use for explain it is easy to understand. Typically the writer made some research when he makes this book. Honestly, that is why this book acceptable all of you.

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