



Ruthless

Anne Stuart

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Few outsiders will ever witness the dark misdeeds of the Heavenly Host. And among this secret society, where exiled Georgian aristocrats gather to indulge their carnal desires, fewer still can match the insatiable appetite of their chief provocateur, the mysterious Viscount Rohan.

Pursuit of physical pleasure is both his preferred pastime and his most pressing urge, until he encounters the fascination of a woman who won't be swayed. And while his dark seduction appalls the pure and impoverished Elinor Harriman, she finds herself intrigued...and secretly drawn to the man behind the desire.

Ruthless Details

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From Reader Review Ruthless for online ebook

Shawna says

4 stars – Georgian/Historical Romance

Without a doubt, the best thing about **Ruthless** is dark, captivating, “he’s so bad that you can’t help but love him” Viscount Rohan, who’s the absolute, ultimate depraved rakehell anti-hero. The heroine made me want to slap her for about the first 150 pages, but once her past was revealed, I understood her better, felt sympathy for all that she’d endured, and admired her strength. It was headed for a 4 ½ star rating, but the abrupt ending and lack of a definite, satisfying resolution between the H/h made me knock it down to 4 stars. Still, devilishly beguiling, fiendishly naughty degenerate Viscount Rohan is more than reason enough to read this!

Nenia ? Queen of Literary Trash, Protector of Out-of-Print Gems, Khaleesi of Bodice Rippers, Mother of Smut, the Unrepentant, Breaker of Convention ? Campbell says

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Hey guys, remember that time I forced you all to read DUKE OF SIN by Elizabeth Hoyt & we all had a grand ol' time? Well, RUTHLESS is *just as good*, and it was published before, which should probably account for something. Also, the hero is the ruler of his own den of iniquity where people have orgies and Satanic rituals and is called, appropriately enough, King of Hell.

Elinor Harriman is plunged headfirst into the first circle of hell when her syphilis-affected mother gets it into her head to gamble away the last of their money. She encounters Viscount Rohan, the King of Hell, who is amused by her no-nonsense demeanor. Rohan is bored, and has been bored for some time (it's no fun when you always get what you want). Elinor is precisely what he needs to cure his ennui, and he'll do anything to have her -

Including threatening her younger, incredibly beautiful sister.

Like DUKE OF SIN, RUTHLESS has many aspects of the bodice rippers that helped make the historical romance genre what it is today. Rohan is a jaded antihero who does some very bad things. (I'm sure Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is rolling her eyes at me, going, "Nenia, did you even *read* my book?" Which, yes, I did, but come on - how can you resist evil when it's tall, and sinfully charming, and decked out in velvet and lace? That's Jereth territory there, and y'all know how that goes.)

OBLIGATORY VISUAL INTERLUDE:

The story line is also quite dark, as Elinor has gone through some terrible things that haunt her even to this day, her mother's unscrupulous behavior aside. The love between her and her sister, Lydia, is palpable and extremely well done. There's a secondary romance between Lydia and one of the men in Rohan's employ, and it is utterly charming (although not quite interesting enough to carry a plot line of its own, so I was glad it was relegated to the background). In case all the UST and drama weren't enough to spur you along, there's also a murder subplot, and it's not halfhearted in the least.

Also, Elinor is just so goshdarned awesome. Her banter with the hero is hilarious and had me chuckling. It's hard not to fall for a plucky, no-nonsense heroine who is weary and clever.

He wanted entertainment, and respite from boredom? She would provide it. So thoroughly that he'd be afraid to go to sleep at night, for fear she'd stab him (279).

And let's not forget the sneery, imperious charm that is Viscount Rohan:

"I'm not in the mood to be seconding duels or even stopping them. If they want to kill each other then let them go ahead. I have servants to clean up the blood" (24).

The only thing about this story that really annoyed me was that the hero and heroine were kept apart for long periods of time in the middle of the book, just when things were getting interesting - much too long, if you asked me. It felt like this was less for plot purposes and more for filler, although that didn't stop me from swooping through all 400 pages of this book in about three hours.

IT WAS GOOD! I LIKED IT! I WANT TO READ MOAR!

If you're a fan of gamma-heroes, you'll like this book. Anne Stuart is famous for hers.

4.5 stars!

Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says

Do What Thou Wilt, But Don't Fall in Love!

I don't even know what to say! I loved this book so much. I savored it, stretching it out, not wanting it to end. I was completely immersed in this book. I was no longer in Texas, modern day. I was in France in the 1700s.

I don't know how Ms. Anne Stuart does it. She can take the most objectionable type of hero, and make me fall in love with him. Let me say, I am a devout Christian. I can't even imagine even pretending to worship the devil, or to hold orgies in which one does things that are unspeakable, just because you can. That should have turned me off of Lord Rohan. But, with Ms. Stuart's incredible writing skill, it wasn't even an issue for me. I am very glad that she didn't dwell on those aspects, although they were there in the background. This is a book about a rakehell who was the leader of festivities along the lines of the real Hellfire Club, so that aspect had to be present. But, I didn't have to see him doing any of that. I was fine that I didn't. Now, he definitely did some fornication (even after he met Elinor). I was okay with that, because that was who he was, before he fell in love. Once, he had Elinor in his heart, that was over for him, even if he didn't want to admit it to himself for her. And I was gratified that he didn't allow anything to go on there that wasn't between consensual adults.

No question about it, Elinor and Rohan are one of my favorite couples now. Anne Stuart-wise, and period. There was something so delectable about their interactions, the by-play between them. Even though Francis was sixteen years older than Elinor (old enough to be her father, and he was quite active at that age, in his own words), Elinor was able to hold her own with him. Elinor had some serious pluck. I love a heroine who is strong, and no question about Elinor's strength. She is no Xena, and she didn't have to be, in order to captivate Rohan, and to make me love her. She is true to herself, forthright, and brave (in ways I can't even fathom). Francis was a very bad boy, but he had a core of him that was good and decent. He did things for Elinor that he really had no reason to do. He showed her love even before he knew what the word meant. How could I not love him for that? The sexual tension in this story was off the charts, and the love scenes aren't even until near the end. That's talent to me. I felt the sizzle through every conversation, the exchange of glances, the way Rohan pursued and Elinor fled. It was magic on the page.

Yes, I know. It's clear that I love Anne Stuart so much, that some may doubt my objectivity. But, I will say it if I don't think a book by a favorite author is my favorite. But, with Ruthless, there is no question that this one is a stellar read. I wish that Ms. Stuart released books every year. When she doesn't have books out, I mourn the dearth, and I pine for her books. I have especially longed for her historicals, because she writes them so well, with the dark aspects, the multi-faceted characters, the writing subtlety that conveys so much, the intensity that I crave in a romance story. I am happy to say that this book truly makes me happy. I am still replaying the scenes in my head. The skillfully nuanced courtship of Rohan and Elinor, and the powerful love story here. The sad, heartbreaking things in their pasts. I got choked up a few times. I was touched on such a deep level, I feel it right now as I write this review. I think that readers who enjoy meaty, intense, darker historicals with strong, vibrant characters will be very happy with Ruthless. I foresee myself rereading

this book soon and often. Bravo, Ms. Stuart.

Erika says

This is the book that made me fall in love with HR. After reading more books of the genre and finding more favorites of mine, I'd decided to re-read it. I loved it even more.

“Do you get pleasure from inflicting pain, my lord?” Her voice was calm and practical, denying the hurt.

There was a moment's silence. “Occasionally,” he said after a long moment. “There are times when hurting and being hurt are the only way to feel anything at all.”

The fearless Elinor Harriman, in searching for her mother, comes to a château where the participants of Heavenly Host are having such a vicious party.

Hmmm... a little bit more...

Well, I think you got the point.

When the host, Viscount Rohan, meets her, he knows Elinor doesn't belong in his sinful place. He helps the woman to find her mother. He holds Elinor, keeps her eyes closed all the way so she can't see anything that might shock her. That was just one of many surprises this book had.

After their first encounter, Francis is never truly away from Elinor. The woman intrigued him with her unique but not-so-pretty face, but most of all, he is fascinated by her strong dislike of him and his depraved lifestyle. Elinor believes the only reason Francis puts attention to her is to have Lydia, her strikingly beautiful younger sister whom she has been protecting since forever. Elinor had succeed to keep Lydia safe from their own heartless mother, and so she wouldn't let the king of hell gets in his way.

A gorgeous rake meets a plain spinster, he's drawn to her because she's somehow different, she has family to protect, he doesn't realize she's changing him, one thing leads to another and they lived happily ever after. Nothing new under the sun, right? So when I read romance with one of the most favorites theme, I don't expect diversities from the story. I can, however, expect it from the characterization.

Some of the most popular HR featuring rake heroes didn't work with me because I simply didn't buy the rakishness. I'm not exactly fond of rake stories, but as well as many romance readers, I adore a good story about a redeemed rake. The problem is, I can't believe the rake hero is redeemed if I never believe in the first place that he was once a rake. We may have various perceptions about the figure of a rake in historical romances. I apply the classic rule: Show, not tell. Francis Rohan had set my golden standard of rake heroes.

“That's right,” he said, his voice soft and approving. “Now give me your arm and we'll give you a taste of damnation.”

“Do you really find blasphemy that entertaining?” she said, trying not to start when he took

her hand and placed it on his arm.
“Always.”

Whether you'd like the book or not depends on how you get Rohan. He was different to me in so many ways. He looks different, not because of his physical beauty. The story's set in the georgian period of time, one of the most shining eras of fashion. And Francis is highly fashionable. Shirts with lacy cuffs, embroidered coats with gold and silver buttons, silk stockings, bejeweled high heeled shoes, diamond rings and earrings...

And he prefers not to let his long black hair covered with wig. *O yeah...*

As extraordinary as it was, his looks wasn't the only one that emphasized his character. It was his thoughts, acts, and words. Rohan was finally getting to a point of boredom when he met Elinor. What made it more compelling was that he doesn't give up his identity as a rake the moment he lays his eyes on her. He doesn't change in a blink. It needs time. And Elinor doesn't succumb to his beauty, his charm, and his seduction instantly. Thank goodness for a heroine who doesn't allow herself to be intimidated and who knows how to give a fight! She could be so stubborn, but she had all the right reasons. They were a perfect match.

Everything between them was full of angst and sensuality. Sometimes, it was incredibly touching. There aren't sweet and romantic words. Francis spoke as a matter a fact, nothing but the truth. But everything he did for Elinor made me wished I was her. One more thing I liked about the book was that I didn't have to wait for the plot to be stunned with surprises. (view spoiler)

Ruthless was dark and fascinating. There are murders and dirty games behind the romance. I also enjoyed the secondary characters. Lidya, who was not as naive as her sister thought she was. Charles Reading, who was as best as a friend could be. Even the Harrimans's mother got my full attention because she had my highest level of anger.

Although everything about it worked perfectly with me, I wouldn't recommend it to everyone. There are some things to consider, like whether you're comfortable or not with the age difference because Francis is sixteen years older than Elinor, and he's still behaving like a rake after he met her. As for the romance, (view spoiler) I felt it was indeed a love scene, not a lust scene.

I hadn't satisfied with the ending, before the author release the epilogue. The first steps... very lovely. So much happiness there. So, really, I have nothing to complain of. It's my first love of HR, it'll always be my favorite, and Francis Alistair St. Claire Dominic Charles Edward Rohan is my true love.

Eastofoz says

What a phenomenally disappointing and supremely crappy romance novel :-/ I have to wonder, if it wasn't Anne Stuart writing would it really be getting all the accolades it's been getting? I'm a big Anne Stuart fan as well as a lover of the dark and brooding alpha hero but this story is just plain bad. It has that '80s romance "dark" style to it that's overly dramatic, over the top and overly long. Some serious editing could have helped to tighten up the story to avoid the feeling of repetition and plot stagnation.

The novel takes place primarily in Paris. Stuart does an excellent job of showing the seedy dirty side of the city where the hopelessly poor live, as well as the opulent decadent parties hosted by the rich. It's the story of the hero and heroine that just doesn't work. He does nothing but f*ck around and she's poor with a b*tch of a mother. They meet by accident while she's trying to save her mother from gambling away the little money they have left. She intrigues him in a cat and mouse kind of way, and so the story goes.

The hero, Viscount Francis Rohan is a horrible creepy man that has zero redeemable qualities to him. He comes across as a lascivious old pervert who's only 39 but is shown as someone more like 89 who would probably walk around with his wiener in his hand shouting "come here my pretty" while drooling. He constantly refers to the heroine as "my child" and "my precious" making him appear not in the least bit sexy but more like a pedophile. He's just plain gross. He's known to one and all as the King of Hell because he's the head of this club for aristocrats who like to indulge in the forbidden side of sex. You reach a point in the book where all that "we're so bad look at us" starts to get silly and annoying. They call their club the Heavenly Host which never worked for me and I thought it sounded dumb from the get-go but I tried (really hard) to like the book nonetheless. Some of the things they do there start off as an illicit look at underbelly of the rich and powerful but then it just got old and felt icky not sexy.

I found Francis' character to be similar to the disgusting hero in Stuart's older romance To Love a Dark Lord. These guys aren't nice –at all--ever. They're morons. They're as unlovable as they are unlikeable. He's a total prick to the heroine from day one and says so many disgusting things to her and about her that it's very hard to find anything remotely decent or genuine about this guy. He ignores her, treats her like week old trash, bullies her, he's condescending, rude, and thinks he's just the cock of the walk when if anything he needs a hard smack upside the head. Why would she see anything in him? Francis makes Bastien from her RS book Black Ice look like a saint. He's rotten to the core.

The heroine Elinor is just 'there'. She tries to escape her poverty and protect her family but she never wins and if the heroine is always thrown to the ground and stomped all over well there's not much to like about her unless you enjoy the non-stop victim/pity party. She dislikes Rohan for nearly ¾ of the book and then suddenly does an about face and she's all set to bang the guy (!) Why?! What's he done to make her want him? He was such a pig to her just before they did the deed. He rams himself into her knowing she had the farthest thing imaginable from a good first time, she gets nothing out of it but she loves him? Why? She's a masochist at heart?!? The sex scenes are sleazy and she's gross with her "I want to keep his seed and my blood inside me" –yuck! Then after they sleep together he starts having regrets because ***gasp *shock* gasp*** he realizes he may be falling in love with her and that won't do because he's the bad and nasty King of Hell. It's ridiculously contrived :-/

There is an okay sub story with Elinor's sister Lydia and the horribly disfigured Charles Reading but there isn't much of it. The girls' mother who was in the last stages of syphilis was well-done. She was a despicable woman and Stuart did a fabulous job showing the horrors she inflicted on Elinor.

Anne Stuart can write some of the best black hearted heroes around with a winning love story attached but this guy and this story are just way too out there. The book is 409 pages of Ooooo he's so bad, look how bad he is, he has no heart, he's evil, everyone's afraid of him, his quiet words are like steel and all around shake and tremble in his presence blah blah blah. Enough already :-/ Yes usually these guys are bad to the bone but they have something redeeming about them that makes you like them in the end and you can forgive them because they're as good as gold with the heroine, but that's not the case here. Rohan is an a**hole in the beginning and he's an a**hole right up to the end. Elinor is an idiot for wanting to have anything to do with him because he treats her like filthy gum at the bottom of your shoe all the time. There is no sexual tension or war of words between these two because he just keeps dishing it and she seems to take it or she yells back

at him but he's so smug that it doesn't wash well. The rushed "I love you so much" ending isn't believable and just made me roll my eyes and say with a heavy shot of incredulity, *whatever*".

Karen says

5 STARS

"Fais ce que tu voudras."

Oh how I loved this one! The characters were fabulous. I am head over heels for the Comte de Giverney the Viscount of Rohan. What a deliciously wicked man. LOVED the guy. And I was just as pleased with the heroine of the story. The verbal banter between them was addicting. The romance was long and drawn out, but the anticipation made it that much better.

The storyline was a bit predictable but I didn't mind it one bit. The interactions between the characters made up for it in my mind. I have already downloaded book two. Can't wait to see what's next.

♥Sharon♥ says

I so enjoyed this book. ♥

Viscount Rohan was quite the devil! He was ruthless to the core. As you read you so want to hate him but you just cannot. Rohan controlled everything in his life. He wanted for nothing. Until that faithful day Elinor Harriman burst into his life. I adore her and her handling of Rohan was perfection. Their banter was endless and watching the Viscount lose his control was wonderful.

I think many will say that this story line was a bit predictable but you know what, it didn't matter at all. I quickly became enchanted with both Rohan and Elinor as well as two side characters Charles and Lydia. I was drawn into the story from the get go and loved it to the very last page.

A must read if you are a fan of this author.

Sombra says

Una ambientación y unos protagonistas muy buenos, pero con muchos altibajos a lo largo de la historia.

Rohan es un libertino con todas las letras. No es el típico que vemos en este tipo de historias, donde tras conocer a la protagonista su actitud cambia totalmente y empieza a dedicarse en cuerpo y alma a velar por ella.

Apodado el Rey del Infierno, es un hombre con un pasado doloroso que ha hecho que lo único que le importe ahora sea el placer. Es por eso que cada cierto tiempo es el anfitrión de una serie de orgías y fiestas disolutas en su mansión durante un tiempo indeterminado. Es en una de esas fiestas que conoce a Elinor, la protagonista, quien va en busca de su madre enferma.

Rohan se siente aburrido y hastiado de hacer y ver siempre lo mismo y cuando conoce a Elinor, ve la oportunidad perfecta de pasar un buen momento, pues es la única mujer que le planta cara.

Elinor es una joven que antaño tuvo todo lo que podía desear, pero debido a que su madre era una mujer de cascos ligeros, abandonó a su padre junto con sus dos hijas y ahora viven en uno de los barrios más peligrosos de París. Elinor junto con dos fieles empleados es la que se encarga de la manutención de su hermana y su madre, ésta última enferma con la denominada "enfermedad española".

Con un pasado también bastante doloroso, parece un alma afín a Rohan, por el que enseguida tiene sentimientos contradictorios.

La primera parte de la novela es muy buena y engancha con facilidad. La segunda parte es más monótona y con unos comportamientos del protagonista que hacían que le odiara con bastante facilidad (y me centré más en la historia paralela de la hermana de Elinor y el mejor amigo de Rohan, que me parecía más interesante, aunque luego también perdió un poco de chispa) y ya hacia el final la historia vuelve a cobrar fuerza y reconozco que no podía despegar los ojos del libro para saber qué ocurría a continuación.

Si tengo que poner un "pero" gordo, es que debido al carácter de libertino redomado del protagonista no me creí mucho ese cambio de actitud tan repentino, al igual que el de ella, que tras la experiencia que tuvo y tras más de medio libro mandando a paseo al protagonista, se echó a sus brazos con una velocidad pasmosa, por lo demás y valorando en conjunto, es una historia que engancha y que te hace pasar un buen rato.

Elizabeth says

Oh. My. God. This is an extraordinary tour-de-force of a historical romance with a sex-on-a-stick rake hero and an outspoken, plain heroine who goes toe-to-toe with him. Stuart just became an auto-buy for me!

Rane says

I'm a huge fan of romance from the light and fluffy to the dramatic, but there's something about dark romances that seem to draw me in like dark chocolate with it's sensual darkness and a tad bitter at times of each taste.

Ruthless was very much like my favorite kind of dark romance and chocolate, with heavy dark undertones, a very sensual writing and sad and bitter pasts of both Rohan and Elinor. Both scarred souls whom both had to sacrifice their own happiness in order to keep going on with their lives. At times it was kinda startling how much alike they were, but both fought to the bitter end almost about the feelings they evoked in one another.

On one hand we have Elinor whose mother going from one man to another while slowly spiraling out of control and taking her daughters along with her, Elinor has had to pretty much give up everything and in the process losing even her faith by the choices she's been forced to make. Elinor was a strong lead and could hold her own, but at times she was just too much of a martyr that I felt she became blinded and just seeing it in black and white instead of seeing the big picture.

The other side of the coin we have Rohan who was such a sensual beast that everything that rolled off his tongue was pure sin. He was smart, clever and at odds with Elinor whom he wanted to pick apart in order to figure out and put her back together as his own lover. Rohan bloody past forced him into Paris to stay and to become the so-called King of Hell of the Heavenly Host, a club where anything and everything of sin goes on. The toll and boredom on Rohan is great. He loves sex, but he's become so jaded, that it takes an innocence to open his eyes and his heart.

The scars that Rohan and Elinor carry are great, and it takes some forcible push and tug in order for them both the get on the right path. Their banter and fights are always even, and the time they finally do make love it's always a relief from the teasing nature Rohan puts Elinor and the reader through but the change from hate to love was very sudden that it was somewhat jarring, it wasn't gradual something that I would have preferred, it doesn't hinder the story, as it feels sort of out of place for the reader, whose read from 100+ pages of Rohan and Elinor butting heads to then suddenly close to the I Love You. Not to mention the Big Mis.

In the end this didn't stop the almost frantic pace I was reading this book well into the night, I loved ever bit of this book, with the main romance also front and center and the secondary romance keeping pace but thankfully saying secondary. Which pretty much summed up everything about this book. Many of the actions and villain all revolved around the main H/H instead of taking away from- only weaved the story closer into its dark web.

Overall: This is my first Anne Stuart book, wonder why I haven't picked up more of her books, because if all her books are much like Ruthless- am checking out her backlist very soon! A amazing start to the House of Rohan trilogy....

Alp says

4.25/5

Anne Stuart's historical romance novels are darker than my normal read in the same genre. Most of her works I've read have dark, tormented, and dangerous heroes whom we love to hate. And Viscount Rohan was no exception. A real anti-hero he was!

Ruthless was the first book in The House of Rohan series and it was a dark historical romance story with an unmistakable gothic feel to it. The first half was great. I enjoyed it immensely and I found it difficult to stop reading.

But the second half, on the other hand, wasn't as mind-blowing as I was expecting. Midway through this last half, I started to have mixed feelings about it. I found both main characters fascinating and frustrating in equal measure. The push and pull that went on and on drove me crazy. I really got annoyed with how Rohan kept pushing Elinor away. I have to say that it was too much for my liking. Even so, Rohan managed to make me swoon over him with the way he pretended not to care about her. How he acted as if he didn't give a damn somehow hit the spot for me. It was kinda cute to see him fight tooth and nail against his own

feelings for her. My dear bad boy sure got hard times, huh?

I enjoyed the romance between Rohan and Elinor despite the push and pull. I wouldn't say there was an earth-shattering romance here, but somehow, it was good enough to satisfy my 'sweet tooth'. The suspense part was off-the-charts intense. Everyone looked suspicious, and with the story's dark and eerie atmosphere, it was hard to shake the creeping sense of unease while I was reading this. I liked that though. It just worked for me.

All in all, I liked this book despite its flaws. If you're looking for a dark gothic feel historical romance with a dangerous anti-hero, then this one is for you.

Catherine says

This is more like a 3.5 star grade.

For as long as this book was, I really expected the author to spend more time developing the characters. I never felt that we delved very far beneath the surface. I think this book would have been much better with a little depth.

There were some moments in this book where I was very uncomfortable with Rohan's actions. But his character wouldn't have been genuine without them. He was not a very nice man, and he had done many hedonistic things in the pursuit of pleasure. He has no problem with pushing Elinor past her comfort zone and manipulating her into doing what he wants. At times he comes off as more villain than hero, but I kind of liked that. I just wish we would have spent a bit more time on the psychology behind it.

I felt that the transition from Elinor fearing and hating Rohan to loving him came a little too abruptly. I know that she had been hiding her feelings from herself, but I wish it would have felt more gradual and less focused around them finally having sex.

I felt so bad for Elinor for most of the story. At times her deliberate blindness to Rohan's intentions got a little bit irritating, but for the most part I didn't mind. I hated her mother and was so upset when I found out Elinor's past sexual experience. I was so mad and so upset! But I believe it explained very well why she never believed her looks were acceptable and why it was so hard for her to believe Rohan was actually stalking her, not her sister. She had been brainwashed into thinking she had no value.

SPOILER

I loved the scene where Elinor told Rohan about her past. He played the role of unaffected and quickly excused himself, but all that changed when he was out of her sight. I was so happy with his response, but so sorry that it was so hard for him. Then when he sees Elinor trying to escape - very affecting. He feared that he had been played and that he had done something he hated for nothing. He was so angry, but I loved when he finally tuned into Elinor's mood and was so sorry for the way he was behaving. *sigh* Very moving.

I also loved the way he ran, not walked, from the room after they made love. The big, bad hedonist was afraid of his feelings.

END SPOILERS

I liked getting to see the secondary romance with Elinor's sister, Lydia. Every thing Elinor did was for the good of Lydia, and it was nice to get to see Lydia struggle with doing something repugnant to her just to make things easier for her sister.

I think there will be a few things in this story that will make people hate it right out of the gate. One of them is that fact that the heroine is 23 and the hero is 39. Also, the hero emphasized this by calling her "child" whenever he wanted to mock her or seem superior. Now, those things didn't bother me at all, and I felt the "child" was less of a numerical thing and more of a mindset thing, but I know no matter what, some people will hate it. Also, the hero sleeps with other people while obsessed with the heroine. They are not together, and she is still spurning him, but I know some people will have a problem with it. Elinor knows he is with other people too because he never tries to hide it.

While this wasn't a perfect book and it lacked some of the things I was looking for, I still found it compelling and very readable. I plan to pick up the other two in the trilogy when they come out.

Tuba Özkat says

* Y?l'n ilk kitab?n? ger?ekten severek okudum. Elimden b?rakam?yorsam, ba?ka bir i? yaparken bile "ke?ke ?imdi okuyabilseydim" diyorsam benim i?in iyi kitapt?r. Herkes i?in k?tü de olsa, puan? dü?ük de olsa... B?rakam?yorsan iyidir :D

* Kitap historical türünde fakat bu türdeki kitaplar?n klasik olay örgüsünden, klasik karakterlerinden de bir o kadar farklı?. Belki ?u hep okudu?umuz ?ngiltere ve ?skoçya'da ge?en bir historical olsayd?, bu konu az?c?k s?r?tm?? sanki yaa, derdim ama Fransa'da ge?iyor :D O yüzden kabullenmek daha kolay.

* Karakterleri çok sevdim. Kad?n karakterin bir 'karaktere' sahip olmas?n?, erkek karakterin sahip oldu?u özelliklerden bir anda vazgeçilmemesi ho?uma gitti. Adam pu?tun teki ve k?z? görünce bir anda mucizevi bir ?ekilde düzelmiyor. Çünkü gerçek hayatta da insanlar mucizevi bir ?ekilde bir anda olduklar? ki?iyi de?i?tiremezler.

* Erkek karakterimiz yozla?m?? biri. 17 ya??ndayken ?ngiltere'den sürülmü?, çok zengin, çok zevk sefa dü?künü, sapk?nl?klarla dolu partiler düzenliyor. Tek bir ki?iye ba?lanmaya inanm?yor. Hatta dini inançlarla bile alay eder seviyede. Bu karakterle ilgili yazar?n yapt??? ?eyi çok be?endim. Cort diye de?i?medi kesinlikle, hatta de?i?imini gözümüze falan da sokmad?. Hatta biz sat?r aralar?ndan öyle izlenimler ald???m?zda bile "yoo yok öyle bir ?ey, ben tek kad?na sad?k olacak adam falan de?ilim" diye dü?ünüyordu. DE???MED???N? SANAN AMA ASLINDA DE????M?N? B?Z?M GÖRDÜ?ÜMÜZ KARAKTERLER CANDIR <3

* Kad?n karakterimizin k?z karde?iyle, çal??anlar?yla olan ili?kisini çok sevdim. Adama kar?? da asla embesil gibi davranmad?. Bir öpücükle her ?eyi unutan, her halta "dizlerinin ba?? çözülen" bir k?z de?ildi ve bu muhte?emdi :D Gerçekçi dü?ünceleri vard?, o yüzden okuyucu i?in okumas? keyifliydi.

* Paris modas? = ??RENÇ. Yazar, adam?n giydi?i ipek çorab?, elmas süslü ceketini, yok efendime söyleyeyim boncuk i?lemeli topuklu ayakkab?lar?n? anlat?rken kulaklar?m? t?kay?p hay??rrr hayal etmeyece?im bunlar??? diyerek, adam? f?st?k gibi tak?m elbiselerin i?inde hayal ettim. Pi?man de?ilim.

* Sonu çok aceleye gelmi?ti, san?r?m en az?ndan bir bölüm daha olabilirdi ve baz? k?s?mlar böylece havada

kalmazd?. Bunun için 4 yıldız verebilirdim ama çok keyifli bir okuma sürecinin sadece son 15 dakikas? için bir yıldız kesmek istemedim.

Stacey is Sassy says

A great performance.

A rating of 4 stars can be reached in a variety of ways. In this case, the narrator does a fantastic job that I couldn't fault. Her voice was easy to listen to and understand. I could always tell when the characters changed and it was easy to follow. Unfortunately, the storyline was one that I struggled with. It's hard to truly believe in an HEA when the hero professes a desire to use, abuse and discard the heroine for most of the story. I always held hope, but I was sadly disappointed. He "used" other women because of his sexual frustration with the heroine...which sealed his doom.

Ruthless was a little risqué with our hero the ruler of debauchery. It does deal with some stomach-turning abuse, though. Not at the hands of the hero but something that happened to the heroine when she was younger. The fact that the abuse happened because of the heroine's mother, made it even more abhorrent to me. It was explained well and I didn't feel a need to discontinue.

Overall, it was an adventure that I mostly enjoyed. I did have times where I was a little frustrated, but in the end, I was satisfied. 5 stars for the narrator and 3 stars for the storyline, balanced out to a 4-star rating.

Another, interesting addition to the Romance Package.

Beanbag Love says

This was my first Anne Stuart. I really like her writing and I'm definitely going to read the rest of this series.

If there were the half star option (why is there never a half star option?) I'd give this 4.5. The "hero" is compelling and I can see why the heroine falls for him, but I can't see why she would ever trust him. He's just so good at playing the dissipated rake, I don't see how any woman committed to him wouldn't be looking over her shoulder for the surprise heartbreaking gossip she'll inevitably hear. What we know of him tells us this won't happen (or if it does it will be spiteful and dishonest), but I have a hard time believing the heroine would know and trust this. Which makes the abrupt ending and lack of epilogue dissatisfying.

Naturally I'm hoping this couple will appear again so I can see them living their successful HEA, but I'm still too haunted by doubts to give this the full five stars it might have had if we'd had just that little bit more.

From what I can glean from others Stuart reviews, she seems to write rather disturbing circumstances for her leads. This definitely had a cringe-worthy back story for one of them, so be prepared for that.

As I said, I will definitely be reading the following books in this series. I'll probably go for some of Stuart's backlist as well. I'm glad I gave her a try.

