



How to Master Your Marquis

Juliana Gray

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Three intrepid princesses find themselves targets in a deadly plot against the crown—until their uncle devises a brilliant plan to keep them safe...

Of all her sisters, Princess Stefanie is by far the least amenable to law and order, which is why she's appalled to find herself masquerading as an unbearably drab clerk for the most honorable barrister in England. But her dull disguise turns out to have its privileges: namely, the opportunity to consort unchaperoned with her employer's exceedingly handsome nephew, James Lambert, the Marquess of Hatherfield.

Hatherfield quickly realizes that his uncle's spirited new clerk is, in fact, a lovely young woman of daring habits. The outwardly impeccable marquis isn't about to reveal her deception. After all, he's hiding a dangerous secret of his own. But when one too many escapades with the madcap princess bring Hatherfield's troubled past to light, it is only Stefanie's sharp wits that stand between the marquis and utter disaster, and only Hatherfield's daring that can save the princess from the shadowy agents bent on finding her.

How to Master Your Marquis Details

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From Reader Review How to Master Your Marquis for online ebook

Noura says

The suspense almost killed me! The whole story unfolds with a courtroom drama with the hero of the story as the accused and our youngest spunkiest princess playing a very credible law clerk working on the hero's case. What a story! I couldn't put the book down. It costed me many sleepless hours when the next day is a working day but that is how the story pulls you in and chews you slowly. You know the hero is innocent, you are confident that he is going to come out of the whole trial unscathed but you still read on because even mid-way it doesn't look like he's going to get a "not-guilty" verdict.

Stefanie, the youngest princess from the country that's a mouthful to pronounce seems to be the flightiest, naughtiest and rebellious of the three. But surprise! She may seem that way but she's actually very very smart and resourceful - she is just a bit playful and a lot overshadowed by her elder sisters. So when you read the story you see how she blooms and grows up and become quite a young lady that becomes the life and love of our marquess. But there's more to the story as you read on.

I really liked the part where the story explores the topic of homosexuality - it was very subtle and smart and i was impressed with the way JG slips it into the story without overpowering the main plot. And also the topic of child abuse - that was a bit of a surprise but it blends well with the story that you will go "oh...that's why..." - these are elements that you don't normally find in a HR so i find it very refreshing and gives a nice flavor to the whole story else it comes across as a normal HR switched identity romp.

I would recommend the series, they are different, they are very well written. JG has a flair of mixing up some modern concepts into an otherwise typical HR storyline...HOWEVER! I think the title of the series are just too generic. The title could have been something that has more mystery, some oomph...but "how to master your marquis"? That's just tired. That is like a hundred other HR title.

So please Ms JG, if and when you are writing more books in the future, please come up with more original titles because the current ones do not do justice to your wonderful stories.

Liz F says

Review copy courtesy of the publisher via NetGalley

How to Master Your Marquis is Book 2 of the A Princess in Hiding series by Juliana Gray. I really wanted to like this book. I enjoyed the first book in the series and had high hopes for this one. I don't know if the premise of princesses in hiding is only good for one book or if this book just wasn't as good as the first one. I'm going to take a closer look at the characters and see if I can figure out why I didn't enjoy this book very much.

Princess Stefanie was a pretty fun character. She's exactly the kind of heroine that I usually like: she's always had a bit of a problem following the rules and staying out of trouble! But now she's in hiding and her

disguise is that of a young man, clerking in a lawyer's office. To me, that sounds like a horribly boring job but Stefanie loves it! I guess I really don't blame her since her options were extremely limited back then! LOL! Stefanie was a lot of fun, mostly because she was full of pluck. She was very easy to like. I really enjoyed the scenes where she starts acting like a princess but at the last second, she realizes that she's supposed to be a normal, young, British man. So she starts to get all haughty and tell someone off and at the last second she backs down and plays her role. It was hilarious. But it was really difficult to tell who knew that this young man was really a woman and who was fooled by the disguise. It was very frustrating.

James, the Marquess of Hatherfield, was a lot of fun. He saw through Stefanie's disguise almost right away. It was pretty funny to watch him sort of play-along. I say "sort-of" because he was playing along in a tongue-in-cheek way, playing along... sarcastically? Either way, James seemed to be having a blast playing along and teasing Stefanie at the same time. He would bait her and then watch her squirm. Okay, so maybe he was a little bit of a sick-o! LOL! But James wasn't all silliness and fun. He had a serious, fascinating back story. I don't want to say too much about it because it was kind of a big deal when it was revealed. All I want to say is that it really affected how he handles himself in personal relationships and also how he handles his relationship with Stefanie.

Overall, this wasn't a bad story. I think anyone who has NOT read the first book in the series might really enjoy this book. But having read the first book, this one felt a little too similar for me. I also really, really disliked the flashbacks and flashforwards. I was thoroughly confused for at least half of the book. I couldn't tell what the the flashbacks had to do with the present for the longest time. It also felt like the middle of the book when on and on. It dragged and I had a hard time getting through it. It also wrapped up really quickly in the end, almost like the author had reached her word count and just needed to finish it up. I might recommend this to anyone new to this series but anyone who has read the first book in the series might find it a little repetitious or boring.

PepperP0t says

Actually 3.5stars

The second hidden princess, Stefanie Victoria Augusta, is given the persona of a dry and naive male law clerk to hide her from the dark and dastardly 'shadow agents' after her and her sisters. Their uncle, the renown and powerful, Duke of Olympia certainly has a variety of situations to shield his nieces. Stefanie's situation is with one of the premier barristers in the region.

Stefanie's unsettled with the dreary wardrobe and chafes at the idea of masquerading as a man. But on day one, Stefanie meets her benefactor's emotionally damaged nephew, James Lambert, Marquess of Hatherfield, who inexplicably immediately sees through Stefanie's disguise and volunteers to take the clerk under his wing.

Stefanie sees nothing but opportunity and freedom in the situation, freedom from chaperones when she's with James and the opportunity to carry out madcap schemes (to reflect the differences of the real Stefanie and the disguised Stefanie). That is until James is accused of murdering his wicked stepmother in an annoying interspersed future timeline and Stefanie has to help her boss save the day and come out of hiding.

Once again, I liked but did not love the outing there were too many dislikable and unsavory characters for my taste. The heroine was charming and mischievous and the story itself had a bit of charm but was a bother on several levels. Questions like how did James know so quickly? Why are the 'shadowy agents' still an issue

with Olympia's almost preternatural abilities and connections? What exactly are 'shadowy agents'?

Michelle says

4.75 stars

This book was so lovely, I'm dying a bit. Stefanie and Hatherfield, like Emilie and Ashland from the first book, love so fiercely that I just can't even handle it. So romantic, beautiful and heartwarming. A tinge of wickedness as well. ;) I absolutely loved this book like the first and I can't wait to finish this trilogy.

It did start slow for me like the first book but it does pick up fairly quickly. I was surprised how fast Hatherfield realized Stefanie was a woman. He took one look at and was like "oh, he is a she" and I was like "wow, someone is perceptive". So much faster than Ashland realized Emilie wasn't a man. I was impressed. It made the pace of the plot different because they became a couple earlier on than the first book and he knew who she was early too.

The story goes back and forth between how they first come into each other's lives in 1889 and the murder trial which takes place in 1890 (I won't say who died or who is involved in the trial because I don't want to spoil.) The plot was very interesting because it went back and forth. Everything was very smooth in transitions and the reader can see how everything connects past to present or present to future depending on how you see it.

Overall, I love the story and characters so much. The love in this book was so amazing and heartfelt. I am off to the last book.

Ursula says

An action-packed 3.5 stars.

This was a fun book with lots of action and adventure for the second of the three princesses in hiding. I liked her- she was gutsy, straightforward, intelligent and very comfortable with her sexuality, (which was great.) He had a few hang-ups, including a rather ghastly story from his adolescence, but was a protective hunk of gorgeousness - with a spectacular sex-drive, apparently :) - and they got their HEA without too much emotional trauma. It was more of the dastardly villain-type angst.

This author writes well and I have enjoyed all her books. The characterisation is interesting and the plots are always quite intricate and detailed.

Whether she can turn the evil bastard from an earlier book into the hero for the last book of this series will be the litmus test for me!

Lauren says

Several issues with this one (possible spoilers):

1. Wright starts out as a smarmy sort who's trying to more or less coerce James into marrying his sister, but

James trusts him so much that he wants the guy to marry/protect Stefanie and take care of their child if he hangs? Did I miss something? When the hell did *that* shift occur?

2. The total nonissue it seems (socially and societally) to be that a number of people have drawn the conclusion that James and "Stephen" are sleeping together.

3. Really, nobody seems to suspect that Stephen isn't actually a dude? The hero figures it out in about 30 seconds. Surely he's not the only perceptive person in London.

3. The courtroom scene where everything falls into ridiculous insanity. Suspension of disbelief only goes so far, and for me, it went way beyond anything I could manage at that point.

Other than that, though, it's well-written, with likeable characters.

Monty Cupcake ? Queen of Bloodshed ? says

Didn't like this one as well. I think it was the whole Lady Charlotte part of the plot that annoyed me and brought down the rating.

Stefanie was the bit of comedy in this book with her cheeky retorts. I enjoyed that about her and her musings on Hatherfield's beauty. The negative would be her impetuosity and immaturity. It's not too bad, but she definitely came off as the youngest sister.

Hatherfield is a very staid and charming figure, but with a tortured past, of course. Maybe because the previous hero was missing a hand, an eye, and part of his jaw, Hatherfield's problem seemed much less horrible. I think it was the writing, because in no way was it not horrible, but the writing had it a problem that was fixed immediately. At least it seemed that way, making the past issue seem inconsequential.

The whole Lady Charlotte part of the book was annoying as all love triangles are. And I didn't find that it was explained very well how everything came about. Nor was Mr. Wright's involvement fully unveiled.

In all, I enjoyed reading this one, but I'd have to say it was just ok.

Ally says

So maybe it was the fact that I listened to rather than read this book, but gah.

I get that the drama, the plot, the story line, all of it worked. And this book truly did these fascinating moments that sucked me in, dammit, if I have to hear someone yelling "Hatherfield" one more damned time, I am gonna poke my ear drums out with a chopstick. Seriously, said name, the hero by the by, had to have been said something like 58 times or more.

Likes: the book flashes back and forward in the story. I really loved how this amped up the courtroom drama - said hero who's name shall not be uttered again is on trial for killing his step-mother. The story line surrounding his relationship with his family, was fantastic.

Likes: the romance between the hero and heroine. I loved it. Note to other readers...this gets a little steamy. Just thought you should know that.

Dislikes: how many fricking bits of drama and dramatic players can we throw in to one story? Over it. Over the top. Over all of it. Gah.

Dislikes: Ridiculous secret keeping that made no sense. Hidden princesses of some fairyland sounding Germanic province or something. Gah.

Dislikes: how quickly enemies become trusted friends.

Dislikes: who the hell are the anarchists and why is a woman named Dingleberry or something like that heading up the resistance?

So there you go. Moving on.

Caz says

I reviewed the first title in Ms Gray's *A Princess in Hiding* trilogy – *How to Tame Your Duke* – narrated by Veida Dehmlow, and enjoyed it in spite of a few reservations about both story and performance. This second book in the set boasts a different narrator, and having enjoyed Ms Wild's performance in Julie Garwood's *Castles*, I was keen to listen to her again.

The premise of the series is that three princesses from a minor (and fictional) German principality have to go into hiding following the assassination of their father. Their uncle – the powerful and machiavellian Duke of Olympia – has arranged for each of the girls to be smuggled to different parts of Britain, disguised as young men and given employment in lowly occupations, incognito, in order to ensure their safety. To say I'm not a fan of the whole cross-dressing thing is an understatement, but it's a tribute to Ms Gray's storytelling ability that she was able to make me like this book despite my dislike of that particular trope.

Princess Stefanie, the youngest of the three sisters, is the joker in the pack. She's unconventional, spirited and full of fun, so placing her in the stuffy chambers of one of London's foremost legal minds may not be the best fit for her, but Olympia has his reasons. At her first meeting with her new employer, Sir John Worthington, she also meets his friend, James Lambert, the Marquis of Hatherfield, who happens to be the most gorgeous man on the planet. As a result, she finds the prospect of spending time under Sir John's roof a much more attractive one.

Much of the story is told in flashback, a device I rather enjoy. When done well – as here – it really helps to build tension, and I like getting glimpses of the characters “in the present” and then finding out how they got there.

Following the first meeting between the principals in the prologue, we jump forward a few months to the Old Bailey, where Hatherfield is on trial for the murder of his stepmother. It's clear that he and Stefanie are already in a relationship, but as Stefanie is still in disguise and working for the counsel for the defence, whatever is between them must remain a secret, so as not to reveal Stefanie's true identity.

You can read the rest of this review at [AudioGals](#), where I've given a B for content and B+ for narration.

Debbie Lester says

Author Juliana Gray brings readers the second book in her Princess in Hiding series, *How to Master Your Marquis*. Gray employs humor and madcap antics to get the readers attention and never lets it go from the first page to the last. This Victorian historical is somewhat different from Regency novels and readers will appreciate the advent of technology and how it changed the ton and the times. Gray's attention to detail is impeccable and her character development impressive. A great second book in this engaging series.

What I liked:

Often times when I think of historical romance, I automatically go to the Regency period in my mind. Lately there have been an increasing number of romances being set in the Victorian era, which I find really interesting. Seeing all of the differences between how things changed is remarkable. The role of women, as well as, technology is evolving and I think Gray really took that into consideration in this novel. The Regency period may be the more popular, but certainly not the only good setting for historical romance. Gray does the Victorian era justice.

I also really enjoyed how the story line in this one splits between two timelines. When we meet the heroine, Stefanie she and the Marquis Hatherfield are already in a relationship, but he is on trial for murder which complicates things dramatically. The timeline then switches to how he and Stefanie met and the antics they go through together that lead up to the trial. So readers are following both the progression of the relationship and that of the trial for the bigger part of the book. When the timelines converge near the end, the action really picks up and readers will be on the edge of their seats.

Princess Stefanie isn't your typical heroine or your typical princess. I loved the way that Gray wrote this character. She is headstrong and manages to get herself into all kinds of predicaments that provide a lot of comedic relief in the story. Stefanie has gone from being a spoiled princess who wants nothing more than to flaunt the rules, to a working class girl and the change in her is remarkable. She still has her own rule book, but her character development is interesting and full of surprises.

James is also a very captivating character. He is a true hero and Gray is clever in showing his vulnerability, as well as, his strength. There were some tender moments to be sure and the Marquis even had me in tears a time or two. It's amazing that even though in romance we often know the ending the journey is the most amazing part. Gray writes James like the knight in shining armour most women have in their dreams. He was a joy to read.

What I didn't like:

There was a lot of action in the beginning that I wasn't exactly sure where it was leading. The pace seemed a bit rushed and was grasping to gain the readers attention at times. But eventually it calms a little bit and readers actually get into the meat of the story and that makes all the difference. If you disregard some of the hoopla at the beginning is still a great read.

Bottom Line:

This was a very well written Victorian historical. I love the time period, the comedic moments provided by

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(view spoiler)

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Caz says

This is the second book in Ms Gray’s *Princess in Hiding* series which features three royal sisters from a small Germanic principality who have been smuggled to England to evade threats to their lives. I have to say that “girls in breeches” is probably my least favourite trope of all, but having enjoyed the audiobook version of the first book (How To Tame Your Duke) and managed to largely get past my dislike of the premise, I thought I’d give the second novel a try.

I’m glad I did, because I think it’s a stronger book than the first one. It’s tightly written and plotted with the story being told in a mixture of current day and flashback scenes, which is a device I rather enjoy. I like getting snippets of the characters’ futures and wondering how they got there while also knowing that I’m not going to have to wait too long to find out!

The heroine of this book is the youngest of the sisters, Princess Stefanie. She’s headstrong and mischievous, clearly one for breaking the rules, playing practical jokes, and generally causing mayhem. So dressing her up as a man (complete with itchy, false moustache) and then making her act the part of a dry-as-dust law clerk is probably not the best fit for her. But someone is out to kill her and her sisters and she has no alternative but to follow the instructions given to her by her uncle, the powerful and enigmatic Duke of Olympia.

When, in her first meeting with her new employer, Stefanie gets a good look at his young friend, the stupendously gorgeous James Lambert, Marquis of Hatherfield... well, she decides that maybe living in disguise won’t be such a hardship after all.

I still find it difficult to get past the idea that a curvaceous woman could pass as a man and go undetected for a long period of time. What makes the concept a little more tolerable in this book is that Hatherfield sees

through Stefanie's disguise straight away and appoints himself in the role of protector until he can find out what on earth such a young woman is doing masquerading as a man. The problem, of course, is that I then started to wonder why Hatherfield could work it out and nobody else could.

But okay, I decided to let that one go and continued reading.

But he wouldn't be a true romantic hero without a dark secret in his past, and Hatherfield's is a nasty one. He may now be a model of sexual restraint, but it wasn't always that way, and he's not proud of the fact that he shagged practically anything in a skirt in his younger days. Even though those days are over, he still regards himself as tainted because of the events which led to such promiscuity (I was immediately reminded of the hero of Alyssa Everett's *Lord of Secrets*, whose past experiences engendered a similar reaction). I do think that Hatherfield was able to overcome both his issues and his scruples rather quickly, and that once he'd done so, he seemed to have made a complete recovery. This is a problem often encountered when a character in a novel is given a past which involves some kind of trauma and that trauma is used to inform their actions and as a method of creating tension and angst in the story. Because the author can't spend chapters detailing months of therapy (and in historical romance, can't even do that because it didn't exist as such), there's always the danger that the addicted/abused hero or heroine will appear to be magically – and quickly – cured by *lurve*.

Stefanie is an engaging heroine and a good match for Hatherfield. She has rather a rude awakening as to how the other half lives on her first morning among the gainfully employed, and finds it difficult to curb her natural vivacity and impish tongue. But she's courageous, insightful and unfailingly honest, and her sense of fun really shines through, especially in the good-natured to-and-fro between her and the marquis –

"You know, there's this delightful invention called a staircase. Paired with a door, it's a really remarkable way of gaining entrance to someone's room."

Or in the refreshingly pert way she addresses the guests at a dinner party:

"My fault, I'm afraid. I kept him up far too late last night. I won't say what we were up to – "a devilish wink as she stepped past several pairs of astonished eyes on her way to the drinks tray – "as the subject is not at all suitable for ladies."

She poured her sherry to the brim and clinked her glass against Hatherfield's with a happy, crystalline chink.

"Your health, sir."

"By God," said the Duke of Southam, stunned. "Who the devil's that?"

There's a fair amount of comedy in the book, which nicely balances the sombre aspect of the murder trial; the love scenes are romantic and sensual and there's plenty of action along the way, too, as the would-be assassins turn up and are thwarted by Hatherfield, aided later by Ashland (hero of the first book) and Dingleby, the princess' inscrutable former governess. There are also a couple of beautifully written real lump-in-throat moments towards the end when Hatherfield is forced to contemplate the worst.

The structure of the novel worked very well, serving to ramp up the tension from the get-go. Even though I knew all would end well (this is a romance, after all), there were still plenty of questions to be answered as to how it would be achieved and the direction the story would take.

I still think it's implausible to believe that Stefanie was able to fool everyone apart from her marquis into believing she was a man – nobody else seemed to have the slightest suspicion. Yet Ms Gray has managed to

avoid the deception becoming too obtrusive in the book by not referring to it too often. There's a little running joke about Stefanie's fake moustache and occasional mentions of masculine clothing, but much of the time, I was able to forget that I was reading about a woman masquerading as a man. I think that was in part because I was immediately gripped by the story and partly due to the fact that the novel was really about Hatherfield, with Stefanie's story being more of a secondary plotline which had some impact on the main plot of the trial and events leading up to it.

It's a tribute to Ms Gray's skill as a writer that I enjoyed a story that features my least favourite trope in historical romance. **How to Master Your Marquis** is well-written and strongly characterised, and I especially enjoyed the way the novel was structured. I will certainly be reading the third book in the series to discover how everything turns out.

My Book Addiction and More MBA says

A captivating tale from start to finish! Ms. Gray has written a story that is sure to keep you on the edge of your seat! With excellent character development, captivating storyline, and steaming hot romance, this book is simply a must buy!

When Princess Stefanie is sent to be a boring clerk, she is less than pleased about her situation, until she sees James, the Marquess of Hatherfield. Seeing him every day may be the only redeeming factor about her situation, not to mention all the unchaperoned time allowed due to her masquerading. But she is not alone in her affections towards Hatherfield. Lady Charlotte also has her sights set on James and isn't afraid to show it. When Hatherfield lets Stefanie know that he's aware of her true identity, Stefanie's desire to be intimate with him roars to full force. Knowing he must remain near her in order to provide her protection from the anarchist out to kill her, he must also keep his distance. But that proves to be very difficult since the attraction between them is undeniable. Hatherfield knows he must remain vigilant against her wiles, for he is not worthy of a princess such as she. Can Stefanie convince him otherwise and get him to accept his fate or is he determined to keep them apart? And will the secrets he keeps be big enough to come between them?

A thrilling read! This one is a must read for anyone who loves a little drama mixed in with their historical romance! At first, I was not the biggest fan of the way the story flipped between two periods of time, but as the story unfolded, I certainly began to see why it was necessary, and it made for a truly magnificent read. I loved the way the two times eventually came together yet still kept you guessing about the outcome, right up to the end! This plot certainly was not one that could be categorized as predictable! Stefanie's character was quite hilarious and I loved the fake mustache! James' character was the perfect hero; right down to the secret he believes will destroy him. A secret that haunts him, though it was not his fault. And talk about suspense...knowing that Hatherfield is on trial for the whole book but only getting bits and pieces throughout was a genius way to make me keep turning page after page to find the resolution! Well done, Ms. Gray! I will be patiently waiting for the next book in this series.

Rating: 4.5

Heat Rating: Hot

Reviewed by AprilP

Courtesy of My Book Addiction and More

Samia Ruponti says

[the hero deduces the heroin is a woman in mere 30 seconds, but no one else notices it, even when she was 5 months pregnant. really? Not no mention that absolute lack of social repercussions of the marquis being seen cavorting with "Mister Thomas". There are few other points as well. (hide spoiler)]
