



Less Than a Lady

Eva Devon

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To win a lord, you can't be a lady...

Darcy Blake, Earl of Chase, is a soldier, rogue, and a loyal King's man. Commanded to spy on the luscious actress Amelia Fox, Darcy must pretend to be her student for a court theatrical. He is certain he can school her in the art of seduction while discovering if she is a traitor. But to his shock, he finds Mrs. Fox teaching him an entirely different kind of lesson.

As London's most popular actress, Amelia is famous at court, and she doesn't have a husband to tell her what do. Unfortunately, the king has ordered her to train the rakehell, Lord Chase to act for the court. Before long, the Earl is driving her wild with desire and awakening her heart to love. As an actress, society dictates she can never be more than Lord Chase's mistress, and Amelia has vowed never to be less than a lady.

When Darcy learns the witty actress is indeed linked to a traitor, he'll have to decide if love or loyalty will rule the day.

Less Than a Lady Details

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Author : Eva Devon

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From Reader Review *Less Than a Lady* for online ebook

Gigi Staub says

Nothing feels right. Not since my best friend died and I fucked up the one promise he asked me to make. The past follows me everywhere, tangling me up like weeds, reminding me that my life is empty. So fucking empty.

Then she walks into the bar, all bright beauty and sweet lips made for kissing.

Em Stewart is a complication...one I need to avoid. She's got heavy secrets of her own, ones she hides from her friends—and lies about to herself.

No matter how hard I try, I can't resist her, and our unexpected road trip sure as hell isn't helping my cause. But I'll be damned if I screw up my first chance at something real...

Review:

This book intrigued me with its description, not knowing it was a NA book, I picked it up for review. I am not really into NA, all the angst and drama. Was a young adult once lived it, not really into reading it. This book does have its fair share of drama, angst and social issues, but it is well-done and could easily be a romance for any age group with a few small changes. To me that makes it good because sometimes you forget what age they are. Back to the angst and social issues, it does seem to be over done. There is the backlash to drinking and driving, physical and emotional abuse by a significant other, the drama and excitement of new love; lots going on in this book and for the characters to deal with. Thought the love story part between Em and Ronan was good and liked how it played out.

If you enjoy NA books than this short read should appeal to you, I enjoyed it for a change of genre.

3.5Stars

Received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Liana Smith Bautista | Will Read for Feels says

*** I received this book for free from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review, which was originally published on book blog Will Read for Feels.

History has seldom, if ever, been kind to women, and this is part of the reason I enjoy historical romances so much; it's like taking back and reconquering periods during which we were oppressed. It's also heavy on the fantasy and fairy tale elements, given that the sort of romance between classes we often see in historical fiction is highly unlikely to have happened in fact (at least insofar as matrimonial prospects are concerned).

Happily, this is exactly the kind of romance that blossoms between the main characters of Eva Devon's *Less Than a Lady*, actress extraordinaire and Puritan's daughter Amelia Fox and Darcy Blake, Earl of Chase and

friend to the king.

As you can tell from the synopsis quoted above, this is not purely a romance. There is quite a bit of intrigue in the story as well, although perhaps not so much mystery as political wheeling and dealing. So if you are the type of person who likes more than just a love story in romance novels, you won't be disappointed. But if you do like the love story to remain front and center when you're reading a novel, don't worry. Devon maintains a good balance of both intrigue and romantic elements, so that it's as if the suspense and politics only serve to intensify the urgency of the romance, while the love story adds drama and a personal, emotional element to the machinations of those who serve king and country.

The one thing that felt a little flat, at least for me, was the way Darcy's grand sacrifice at the end was overturned. I mean, I understand why this was done, and part of my heart was even wishing it would happen for them, but at the same time, I thought that letting that gesture stand would have made for a stronger story and, in many ways, a more believable happily ever after. I felt that revoking it kind of had the effect of depriving the hero and heroine of that iconic ride into the sunset, with the assumption that they would face the challenges of an unknown future together, secure in their love if not much else. Still, if the move was one that absolutely had to be made (which I hope is because the characters will feature in more books in a series?), I have to applaud Devon in the way she did it, which was with both humor and affection. I just wish it didn't have to be done that way.

Still, this was a very minor point and quite subjective; I'm sure many other readers will prefer it the way it is. What really won me over as far as this novel goes was the way Devon fleshed out the characters. Both Darcy and Amelia are multilayered characters who must juggle complicated relationships with the colorful, and in some cases unhappy people in their lives.

This is particularly true of Amelia, who grew up tyrannized by a horribly puritanical—and dangerously devout and bigoted—father; worse, her brother has always keenly felt that same father's disappointment with him. In fact, it's this brother's attempt at garnering some sort of posthumous parental approval that helps create the main conflict of the novel and lands Darcy and Amelia in politically hot water. And it doesn't just put a strain on their relationship, either. It imperils their very lives.

But I just loved the strength and grace with which Amelia dealt with every obstacle thrown in her direction, and I also enjoyed how Darcy really stepped up and became the sort of man who deserved to be at the side of a woman like her. About halfway through the novel, you already get forebodings of what Darcy will have to do not just to prove his love, but to secure their future, and so it means more when he takes that leap. Meanwhile, Amelia doesn't just show grace under fire, but she also shows mercy and understanding in the face of hate and bigotry.

The overall effect is that *Less Than a Lady* isn't just a love story about two strong, dynamic individuals who choose to be together come what may, although that's certainly a big part of it. It's also a love story about forgiveness, empathy, and compassion. And it's a solid read in my book, so I'm looking forward to reading more from this author.

Angela Withrow TheArdentReader says

Lord Chase, Darcy Blake, has messed with the wrong woman! The king is not happy about it so he must come up with a just punishment. Why not use this punishment to investigate treasonous activity as well?

Two birds and one stone and all that. So the King decides Darcy needs to learn to act, like a lady! He has chosen the perfect instructor, Amelia Fox, who is also suspected of treason. Lord Chase must learn to act like a lady and find out if Miss Fox is indeed a traitor to the crown.

This should prove to be interesting at least. Until he meets the lady. Beautiful and reserved and not at all the normal actress. Most of that set are "available" but not this one!

Not for any amount of money, jewels or houses.

This challenge should prove very interesting!

Many men have tried and none have succeeded. Amelia is determined not to fall victim to any of these men.

Amelia's brother contacts her now and again but recently it's been strange and she isn't sure what he is up to. But she is worried for him.

Darcy is having a hard time trying to figure out if Amelia is working for the other side or a pawn. He hopes the latter. He wants to believe her innocent because he can't accept that she is not. He tries his best to not be attracted to her.

this is a great romp! I loved the wit and cheek of the characters. The writing was very spirited and brought me into the scenes with the players. The corset scene was hilarious!

The book started out well, then slowed a bit while we were introduced to the characters then it ran at break neck speed and I couldn't put it down!

The author writes to the heart if you know what I mean. She is very good at pulling the strings that make us feel for the characters and their situation.

The scene setting was really well done.

I will definitely look for more by this author!

I received a courtesy copy of this book

Raissa Pinto says

Histórico muito bom!!

Marsha Spohn says

Originally reviewed at Keeper Bookshelf

Amelia has been given the daunting task, and admittedly somewhat amusing task of teaching the Earl of Chase how to be a woman. Apparently the King is expecting Darcy to take part in a production for his own amusement – and that will require Darcy to know how to put on a corset (everyone knows he is quite talented at taking one off of a woman). Normally this role reversal would not amuse Darcy in the least – but he is on a mission for his King and he is hoping very much that the King is wrong about Amelia's traitorous activities.

Less Than A Lady is set in the time period of King Charles. And although not unheard of, it is a unique time with far different events, rules and expectations. But then love is timeless.

I enjoyed Darcy and Amelia's romance. During this time period the real danger of traitors to the Crown was very vivid and real. Unfortunately just as many innocent people were caught up in the protection of the monarchy as were actual traitors. Amelia's younger brother is foolish but no traitor, unfortunately his actions

could land them both in a lot of trouble. Darcy had a mission, the last thing he expected was for Amelia to capture his heart – or the lengths he would go to in order to protect her. Amelia enjoyed her freedom but never intended to give up her virtue in vain. There is one man she would give everything to – as long as he loved her and believed in her. Circumstances weren't always truth and she needed to know where Darcy's heart truly belonged. With his King... or with her.

*I received an e-ARC of *Less Than A Lady* from the publisher and NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. That does not change what I think of this novel.*

Chu says

Rating: **3.75 Stars**

The Earl of Chase, Darcy Blake has been a loyal soldier and King's man, not to mention a lady's man as well. When the king suspects the beautiful actress, Amelia and her brother of treason, he instructs Darcy to spy on them: by having Amelia teaching him how to be a woman. This makes everything much easier on his part to spy on Mrs. Fox (or so he thinks). When they finally met – there were sparks all over the place. But he needed to remember the reason why he's with Amelia in the first place, but now, he just needs to prove that Amelia was innocent. But when information came out that Amelia's brother is somehow involved in the treacherous activities, our earl is torn between fulfilling his duties and protecting the woman he grew to love.

Less Than A Lady has a promising start. I find it quite a bit amusing for our earl who's a rogue, learning to be a woman with Amelia as his tutor. Every lesson they have was a whole lot of fun. Despite the fact that Amelia blindly places her faith in Darcy, our earl, however, was torn. He likes the actress, heavily tempted to kiss her whenever they're together, and yet the evidence of treason are pointing to her and her brother. Which makes everything (most especially his job), a little but complicated. I like how it all started, but somewhere in the middle, I felt that there was something lacking. It was like the characters lacked complexity, and they didn't really develop as the story progressed. Nevertheless, the fun part of the novel somehow makes up for it. I was just glad in picked up in the last part of the novel, where the surprising and exciting twists sprouted and made this one a nice read.

Review originally posted on my blog

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books are love says

Received in exchange for a honest review

Love Darcy. He cracks me up with his dressing as a lady bit. He is also loyal, honest and what he does for Amelia at the end will have you swoon. I wasn't sure I would like his character at first due to him being at the king's bidding but in the end I absolutely adored him.

The book has many facets. We have the unintended romance between Darcy and Amelia. Neither wanted it but they fell for each other. Darcy was at war with himself because he was meeting Amelia under false pretenses. He makes some promises to her but he is duped in the end as well. I felt for Darcy because of the fact that even he was being watched and looked at and he was a loyal subject to the king. We have Amelia's brother and the danger he puts everyone in and how that is handled. We have Amelia and her trust issues only to feel she was wronged and the lengths Darcy goes to to get her back. We have the story of Darcy and his sacrifice for king and country but also for the one he loves.

Each character adds depth to the story. Some are entertaining and some bring about change. The king I felt was fickle and if he could do what he did to Darcy what makes anyone truly safe. Darcy fell in love and he sacrificed for that love. This is what Amelia got to see in the end that love is supportive, wonderful and beautiful. Those that love will support you and sacrifice for you so that you may be happy. Darcy did this in the end.

The story itself is about Darcy and Amelia. Darcy is working with Amelia on his acting so that he can ascertain if she is loyal to the king. Along the way he and Amelia fall for each other and he tries to help her. Only to have them both be duped and Amelia feel he is untrustworthy and that he used her. Darcy does some sacrificing for his love for Amelia so that she can be happy. We do get a HEA and I hope that those that duped asked for forgiveness.

this is a entertaining and fun romance that will have you smiling and wanting a wonderful ending for the independent and stubborn Amelia and the easy going loyal Darcy. A well written book that has two unlikely characters fall in love and see what they will do for that love. A book about sacrifice, honor and love.

Amy Alvis says

Darcy Blake, Earl of Chase, has been tasked with uncovering a traitor. Nothing would be unusual about this except the king has determined that he must dress up as a woman! Darcy must take acting lessons from Amelia Fox, one of the most popular actresses of the time and learn how to act like a woman on stage. He needs to get close to her to see if her and her brother are indeed traitors to the crown. What he doesn't count on is being so attracted to the woman in the middle of his assignment.

Amelia has made a point not to get involved with anyone during her years on the stage, but her attraction to Darcy just can't be denied. But what happens when she finds out the real reason he has been getting acting lessons? Was it all real or is Darcy a better actor than even Amelia believed?

I enjoyed this story. It is not often that you end up with a love story with two people of such different class that works. Even though Amelia was an actress, she did cam from a decent family so I think that made it that much more believable.

We also get the addition of the mystery of who was or wasn't a traitor. I always enjoy a romance that has an added mystery in the storyline. I'm hoping that Devon makes this a series as there were a few characters in which I would like to learn more about!

Thanks go out to Entangled Publishing via NetGalley for a copy of the book in exchange of an honest review.

AnnMarie says

Less Than a Lady by Eva Devon is a book set in the times of King Charles II. He has recently been returned to the throne in England, but there are still many of Cromwell's supporters eager to usurp him off that throne at the first possible opportunity. Charles II and his supporters must take every care that that does not happen.

Darcy Blake is the Earl of Chase, and one of the King's Men. He's a bit of a rogue too, and finds himself in front of the King both to be given a new mission, plus a punishment of sorts for having 'relations' with a married woman that he should have stayed well away from. Darcy is the embodiment of all that is a man, his masculinity oozes from him. When he finds out what his mission is he definitely is not amused.

Amelia Fox is one of London's finest actresses, and she adores her profession. She isn't too keen on the reputation actresses have of all being loose women, for she definitely Isn't one, but she's not about to give up doing what she loves purely because of people's misconceptions of her. Unfortunately despite being a supporter of King Charles, Amelia's brother, and now deceased father were very much on Cromwell's side. Her father even wrote pamphlets and organised meetings about ousting the King. Since his death, Amelia changed her last name, and is very much relieved to not be privy to any of the wrong- doing that her father was caught up in.

Information has reached King Charles that Amelia and her brother could be committing treason against him, so to kill two birds with one stone, the King decides that Darcy must have private lessons from Amelia. He is to learn how to act and dress as a woman so he can perform in a private play for the King's entertainment. While in Amelia's company he is to quietly watch her and learn what he can about what she and her brother are involved in. Of course if he has proof that they are conspiring against the King he must turn them over as traitors and they will be hung or beheaded. Darcy is more than happy to do the job for the King, but he's horrified that he has to dress as a woman. A man as masculine as Darcy shouldn't be wearing corsets and skirts even in a play! The ultimate punishment for him from his King.

The problems arise for him when after spending time with Amelia, he finds himself infatuated with her. Perhaps even more than infatuation. He is torn between his feelings for her and his gut feeling that she can't be even thinking treasonous thoughts, and all the proof that he is finding which point to both her and her brother being highly involved with the enemy! If she truly is conspiring against the King, he knows he has to turn her in, but can he do that when he might be in love with her.

This book from the very first look at the cover, to reading the blurb about it, to reading the book itself was pure pleasure. There was the seriousness of treason, the lightheartedness of Darcy dressing as a woman, including a fun scene where he had to suffer wearing a corset, the passion and the love developing between him and Amelia, and of course the heartbreaking moments that I won't go into, spoilers and all that. All in all, the story is one of the best that I have read recently, it made me run the gamut of emotions and I definitely didn't want it to end. I thoroughly enjoyed it and fully recommend it.

I was given a complimentary copy of this book in exchange for my honest review.

Elaine says

Rating 3.5/5

Set just after the return of the monarchy to England, with King Charles II returning to power but wary of the still active anti-monarchist Cromwellian supporters. This is definitely a different time period for a romance to be set in! With a highwayman, soldiers, treason, double crossing lords, an actress and spies as well as romance, this is an intriguing read. There are plenty of twists and turns along the journey to a HEA ending. Many details of life, attitudes and events from the era are included as part of the story. The story has a slow start but is worth persevering with as soon it gets much better, with a much increased pace and action.

This is a very different historical romance, exploring attitudes and beliefs during the early reign of King Charles II in England in an entertaining manner.

Thanks to the author, publisher and NetGalley, too, for letting me read an ARC of this book in exchange for this, an honest review.

For more of my reviews, please visit <https://splashesintobooks.wordpress.com>

Alyse says

I found this book to be somewhat predictable. It wasn't a bad book by any means, but it didn't blow my socks off either. The writing was fine. I guess my "problem" was with these characters. I didn't think there was any real depth or development with either...

Just kinda left me meh hh =/

Linda says

Amelia, "Mrs Fox" isn't of course married. A popular actress of renown beauty she is wildly feted & hotly pursued by a mass of male admirers hoping to be her protector but unbeknownst to all including our intrepid hero, she is totally chaste & has every intention of keeping her honor intact. When the King requests for her to train the Earl of Chase (Darcy) to act a woman's role in a court play, she finds herself for the first time having a hard time resisting the handsome Earl.

Darcy is a loyal King's man whose family has always done their duty to the crown. When he is ordered to investigate if Amelia & her younger brother are involved in treasonous activities, he did not expect to find himself wildly conflicted in protecting Amelia when all evidence points to her guilt.

The relationship between Darcy & Amelia starts off, as expected, with a strong attraction on both ends. Darcy doing his best to seduce her (& being totally seduced by her) while Amelia has her hands full trying to keep him at arms length. The acting lessons provide witty banter & amusing scenes (Darcy donning a corset for the 1st time!).

Quite a charming story which gets better towards the end. The last third of the book is the best part showing a better depth of the characters and overall storyline compared to the earlier parts which is in a lighter vein.

Copy gifted in exchange for a honest review.

Linda Rea says

This takes place in the old days with kings and lords and such, this is where we find Amelia the actress. Actresses were frowned upon in those days, they were considered loose women, but Amelia was determined to prove them wrong. She was tough and never seen in the company of men alone except at the theatre with her friend Ned a fellow actor. Along comes Darcy, called Lord Chase he is made to take lessons from Amelia to learn to act like a lady to please the king for a performance. Lord Chase is also supposed to spy on Amelia because she is suspected of knowing that her brother is committing treason. The more and more time that Amelia and Chase spend together the less he suspects Amelia and the more he goes to love her. There is a few people watching Amelia and her brother including Lord Warrington and Chase's friend Lord Winter. Lord Warrington roughly escorts Amelia to secluded part of the area where a ball is being held and threatens her brothers life if she doesn't take some papers to him. Amelia doesn't want him in trouble so she takes to papers to him just to find out he is writing treasonous articles that could get him beheaded by the king. Chase confronts them and Amelia trusts Chase enough to tell him what she knows. There are a lot of twists and turns in this book which makes this story interesting.
Reviewed on behalf of Once upon an Alpha

Jasmyn says

Less Than a Lady was absolutely wonderful! We start out with an Earl trying on a dress by order of the king. Definitely an interesting way to get a book started. Darcy is wearing a dress so that he can go undercover to find traitors in the world of London theater. His mark is actress Amelia - famous in the theater and one of the most beautiful ladies in London.

Amelia also has quite a bit of attitude. I really loved this woman and her devotion to her own standards and way of life. She isn't about to fall for some Earl's suave ways and attempts to seduce her. She'll give as good as she gets and put him in his place. And that works for quite awhile, too.

Meanwhile, Darcy is falling head over heels in love with the woman he may have to arrest for treason. But there's so much more to her story that he realizes at first. There were a lot of fun twists to her history and reasons for doing things that kept throwing me (and Darcy) for a loop - but in a very good way. A good dose of mystery and suspense here to really round out the story.

In the end things get even more interesting. I had to laugh at a few of the scenes - they were just so clever and watching Darcy's friends react to the situation was amusing. One of the best endings I've seen in a book in a long time. It all worked out beautifully, but still a little unexpectedly.

This book was received in exchange for an honest review

Armenia says

Intrigue

Amelia Fox is a beautiful actress, well respected and renowned for her talent on stage. What I most admired about her is that she is intelligent, honorable, and loyal.

The king suspects Amelia involved in treason or affiliated with persons responsible for treasonous acts upon the crown and enlists Darcy Blake, Earl of Chase, to spy on her. Darcy has to pretend to be Amelia's student, to be schooled on how to act as a woman for the next theatrical play for the king's court. All the while, his mission is to spy on Amelia and find any connection of treason. As Darcy is a rogue and a man's man, he is nothing close to looking like a woman. The lessons of him fitting a corset was quite amusing, and couldn't help but have a laugh-out-loud moment. Amelia and Darcy can't deny the attraction between them, and she's finding it hard to resist his attempts of seduction. At a ball, Amelia is blackmailed into intrigue. To protect her brother from harm she agrees, unaware of how involved her brother is in his treasonous activities. All point to her guilt which conflicts Darcy, but he finds she's innocent, her hand forced in protecting her brother.

Less Than A Lady involves lots of intrigue and twists. I enjoyed that Darcy and Amelia learned to love each other and their characters were much more interesting towards the end. Their lovemaking is a sweet seduction but very brief. Though the beginning of the story lagged a bit, I was glad I stuck through the story to find a more engaging finish. Ms Devon's writing is fluid which made this story enjoyable.

Copy provided by Net Galley in exchange for an honest review.

My rating: 3.5
