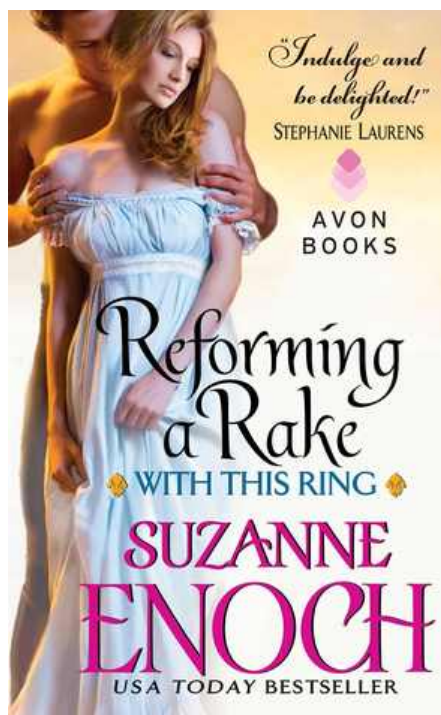




Reforming a Rake

Suzanne Enoch

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Reforming a Rake Suzanne Enoch

From bestselling author Suzanne Enoch—a governess is tempted by the forbidden passion of a seductive earl in this blistering romance in the With This Ring series

A governess must never be alone with a man (her reputation mustn't have even a hint of scandal). She never questions her employer's commands (even when he's tempting her to forsake respectability for desire?). She must never, ever fall in love with someone above her station (especially a rake—no matter how devastating his kisses may be) . . .

If it weren't for that unfortunate incident at her last position, Alexandra Gallant wouldn't now be forced into the employ of Lucien Balfour. The sinfully attractive earl hired her to teach his young cousin, but his seductive whispers and toe-curling kisses suggest he has something far less respectable in mind . . . And that will never happen. For although Lucien seems determined to teach her about pleasure, she has a few lessons to teach him about love!

Reforming a Rake Details

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From Reader Review Reforming a Rake for online ebook

kris says

Alexandra Gallent is NOTORIOUS so she gets hired by the EQUALLY SCANDALOUS Lucien Balfour, Earl of Kilcairn Abbey, to "improve" his cousin. In the tradition of romances everywhere, they bone and get punished by losing their goddamned minds.

1. EXAMPLE A: Alexandra goes from being a take-charge no-nonsense governess to a weepy, sappy mess of a woman with no spine and less intelligence.
2. EXAMPLE B: Lucien, wanting to keep Alexandra around, decides KIDNAPPING HER AND HOLDING HER AS A (CONSENTING) SEX HOSTAGE IN HIS (SECONDARY) WINE CELLAR IS A GOOD IDEA!! (She does consent to the sex, but not to the kidnapping. Just to be clear.)
3. Just the entire end of the book is such a mess: Alexandra has unresolved family issues; Lucien redeems himself and then has to prove it again and again and again because Alexandra won't accept it; Lucien is basically a hostile asshole towards his family until he realizes that his cousin isn't half bad but his bile towards his aunt is legitimized by her suddenly going evil; the plotting and planning Lucien goes through to "save" Alexandra: I COULD GO ON.
4. That said, I really enjoyed the set up and general slide into love from the first 50% of the book or so. Alexandra and Lucien's angles seemed to fit together in a very intriguing way, and I was very interested in seeing how they would figure out a HEA together in a semi-natural way.

Except I did not get that. At all.

fleurette says

I've read some bad reviews on this book saying that Alexandra does some really stupid things. Fortunately, it isn't that bad and I rather enjoyed this story.

The main characters, Alexandra and Lucien, are quite likeable. However Alexandra is too independent for her own good, but it's reasonable regarding the fact that she had to care for herself for too long. Still, she makes a very nice couple with Lucien, a rake she reforms. It's sweet that he is so crazy in love with her.

In fact it is one of the sweetest story I have read in the last few months and I liked that a lot. Still, the dialogues are witty and I really enjoyed the interaction between Lucien and Lex.

It is a nice read, not the one you will remember but, thanks to the characters, pretty enjoyable.

Ivy H says

A truly breathtaking novel. I loved the hero. He was so funny and so cynical. His self deprecating sense of

humour provided so much amusement for me. He was a rake and yet he was so romantic towards the heroine after he started to fall in love with her. I enjoyed the way he made fun of his tacky, greedy aunt Fiona. He called her the devil and referred to his cousin Rose as the spawn of the devil. Fiona and Rose had the most tacky, horrendous fashion sense and he hired the heroine Alexandra to be Rose's governess. Without Alexandra's help, there was no way Rose would be able to get herself a husband. The girl didn't even have proper table manners and was as dumb as a doorknob. But while Rose was just dumb, Fiona was bitchy and in the end, her evil ways became even more transparent.

Lucien was always protective of Alexandra. I loved the way he hated seeing her hurt or upset by anyone. When a mean debutante starts saying horrible things about Alexandra, Lucien tells her:

" I suggest you marry quickly, my dear, before your looks alter to match your character. I doubt even the ugliest lord in England would care to be leg shackled to a saggy breasted witch with foul breath and warts."

The debutante pretends to faint after being insulted and Lucien leaves her to fall on the floor. It was the best scene !

That was just one of the many funny things that Lucien says throughout the novel. He does have a somewhat negative view of marriage and of wives and unfortunately, he lets Alexandra know this. This worked against him when he fell in love with her and proposed marriage. I hated that she turned him down a couple times and made his life so hard just because she didn't believe he was sincere. However he made such a grand gesture in the end that she ended up proposing to him, grovelling and apologizing for acting like a shrew. It was wonderful ! And the heroine had the cutest little dog called Shakespeare (she called him Shakes for short.) whom the hero adored as well. I can't believe I never read this enchanting novel before.

WhiskeyintheJar/Kyraryker says

2.5 stars

She blinked and swiped her disheveled hair out of her face---and saw her abductor.

"Lucien!" she shrieked. "What in God's name are you---"

"I'm kidnapping you," he said calmly.

"And your little dog, too."

For 40% of this story the hero was unnecessarily rude, the saying "honesty without tact, is cruelty" needs to be written on a chalkboard 100 times by him. There was also an icky feeling to how he pursued and came at the heroine, you know, his employed, at his mercy, governess. He mellows toward the end and gets pretty gallant about working for the heroine but by then, I wanted to deuces him.

For 70% of this story the heroine was strong and leveled headed but when the hero turns the corner and it looks like he really does have feelings for her, she devolves into an angst for angst sake character denying they could ever be together. Seriously, I don't use the term muttonhead lightly, but Muttonhead. It was even more disappointed and annoying because of how good she was earlier.

Now, I don't consider myself a full on perv but for how scandalously rakish our hero was supposed to be and lingering sexual chemistry (was more tell than show), the first sex scene especially, was over before a lip could finish being bitten. Not the payoff I was looking for (and maybe the heroine, either? I kid, I kid) Anyway, villains being villains, and hero and heroine having late personality transplants made this more regency window dressing to me. However, the bump up to 3 stars is because Enoch has a style, tone, and emotional (not as many scenes here as in her other books) way with words that charms me.

Sombra says

4 estrellas.

Una historia sencilla con unos diálogos chispeantes e irónicos, sobre todo por parte del protagonista, y una ambientación bastante acertada, que han hecho que disfrutase leyéndole y no pudiera parar.

Lucien es el típico libertino que cualquier novela de este género se precie; es despreocupado, egoísta con una reputación desde luego nada despreciable y con un humor ácido que hace que muchos tengan miedo de él. Debido a la muerte de sus parientes, es obligado a hacerse cargo de una tía y una prima que no aprecia. A su llegada y viendo que para poder casar a ésta última va a necesitar mucha ayuda, decide contratar a una institutriz competente que le ayude en esa misión; y esa institutriz no será otra que Alexandra, nuestra protagonista.

Desde el primer momento en que la ve, Lucien se encapricha de ella y no descansará hasta poder hacerla suya y enseñarle todas aquellas cosas que una institutriz de damas de la sociedad poco sabe; la pasión.

Alexandra es una joven que, debido a un malentendido perpretado por un hombre de buena posición ve su reputación completamente acabada y, por lo tanto, el único medio que tiene para poder subsistir es trabajar en lo que sabe. Cuando conoce a Lucien, todo lo que ella creía cambiará completamente y encontrará que trabajar para el que se supone el peor libertino de todo Londres, tiene una doble cara.

Ambos como pareja protagonista han hecho las delicias de mi lectura. Desde el primer momento sus diálogos son chispeantes, sarcásticos y a la vez muy sinceros. Lucien no soporta a sus parientes no hace nada por ocultarlo, así que sus pullas hacia su prima y su tía eran las que más disfrutaba. Alexandra tiene doble trabajo; por un lado enseñar a su pupila todo lo referente a la buena etiqueta y a la vez esquivar los avances de Lucien, que desde el primer momento la deja bien claro que es lo que quiere de ella.

Pero no es oro todo lo que reluce, y pronto Lucien se verá cada vez más y más enamorado sin darse cuenta y cometiendo un sin fin de acciones (a cada cual más adorable) para poder llegar al corazón de ella y poder conseguir su confianza. Y ahí es cuando Alexandra me ha empezado a tocar la fibra debido a su cabezonería.

Los secundarios también han sido parte importante de la historia, destacando a la tía Fiona, el personaje más desagradable que he tenido el gusto de conocer, Rose, e incluso los criados, cuyos diálogos y acciones también me han arrancado alguna que otra sonrisa.

Otra cosa que me ha gustado de esta novela es lo bien que la autora ha sabido reflejar cómo la sociedad de aquella época se comportaba ante situaciones tan injustas como la violación o el libertinaje y esa doble cara que muchos de esa "alta sociedad" tenían a la hora de juzgar.

Definitivamente es un muy bien comienzo de serie y estoy deseando leer los siguientes.

Zoe says

I think I was being naive when I rated this book 3 stars before. Downgrading it now that I have "matured". lol Really stupid heroine, relationship built on sex, horny hero. Meh

Vintage says

Suzanne Enoch always delivers with saucy heroines and alpha heroes who get entangled in love when they really don't want to be.

After the dud hero and awesome heroine in *The Bad Penny* we have a game changer: the elusive and seldom seen charming hero who falls in over his head. Okay, so he wants to and tries to seduce our virginal governess heroine, but, hey, she can hold her own. She's already killed off one unwanted suitor by shoving him down the stairs. It was defense!

PLOT:

Lucien hire Alexandra to groom his nightmare ward so he can marry her off as quickly as possible. Sparks fly the moment the two main characters meet although Alex keeps him at arms length longer than most. Lucien is that fictional fave: an unrepentant rake. Lucien reforms, but is still a bad boy at heart. He wants his heroine no matter what and does whatever he can including kidnapping her to get her. The heroine lost some points in her complete refusal to play ball though even after a declaration of love.

Alex is surprisingly successful in her debutante redo, and has to handle the fallout from rumors that she is literally a man-killer. Toss in some bad relative manipulation and a terrier named Shakespeare and you have a solid read.

Here is Shakespeare...

P.S. Despite the bookcover I don't think the hero looks like Patrick Swayze.

P. says

Hard to like this one. The heroine, who insists [and insists] she's 'independent', is really a doe-eyed victim of circumstance, sponging off a friend's parents because she can't find work, and tiresomely unable to form a coherent thought or think anything through. The hero is an unabashed rake who morphs into a pattern card of respectability! An unlikely couple, that only becomes more unlikely as the book – too long by half – progresses to a ridiculous, bizarre finish, with all the attendant lack of understanding expected from this teary heroine, and worse, the sad attempts to mollify her, by the now reformed rake, whom at this point, you'd rather never had reformed. Not to mention the endless regency wrongs which jar.

Daniella says

Oh dear Lord the stupidity in this novel is astounding. I can't even believe that Suzanne Enoch penned this monstrosity. This is definitely one of *the* most frustrating books I have ever had the misfortune to read and I can't believe that a favourite author of mine wrote it.

What's wrong about it, you ask? Ha. What's right about it would be a better question. The heroine, Alexandra, was supposed to be this prim and proper and **intelligent** governess when in reality she's so fucking stupid it boggles the mind how she managed to breathe without assistance. Seriously. Whenever Lucien came on to her, she'd go all "Oh, I am never going to be your mistress. Shame on you." And then she'd proceed on accepting his kisses and would kiss him in return.

SERIOUSLY, BITCH? CAN YOU GROW A FUCKING SPINE, YOU INVERTEBRATE?

Her wishy-washy attitude drove me to fits! Dear God I wanted to bash her brains out with all her weakass protests. UGH. MAKE UP YOUR MIND AND START OWNING UP TO YOUR ACTIONS
MOTHERFUCKER

Everything would've been less painful if Lucien was just likeable. No dice. **He was an arrogant son-of-a-bitch who spends his time insulting his cousin who didn't deserve his cruelty.**

There was no character development at all. And by the 75% marker, I stopped caring about them altogether. I hate stupid heroines and bullshit heroes. That's why this **sorry excuse for a romance novel** annoyed the bejesus out of me. What a waste of Suzanne Enoch's talent. **This was so bad I wouldn't even recommend it to my enemy.**

Addicted2Luv says

First the positive comments. I liked the hero in that he had humor and sex appeal. The secondary storyline and the characters (cousin and aunt) was plausible and humorous. There was a cute little dog in the book, and being a dog lover, I liked that.

Now the negative. I didn't like the quickie sex. I rather enjoy two or three pages of a sex scene, and this book just didn't steam. I was saying to myself, "Is that all?" Also, the heroine was stubborn to the point of really irritating me.

Maybe it was my mood because I was distracted, but I kept wishing the book would end and almost stopped reading it a time or two.

I don't know if I will pursue reading Enoch right now.

Eastofoz says

4.5 stars and only because it could've used a bit more length/development in the steam department otherwise it's another 5 star read from Enoch.

It starts out with the hero who has been saddled with a whiney cousin and domineering pain in the butt aunt who he wants to have nothing to do with so he hires a governess/companion for the ladies to get them out of his hair. Turns out he's quite attracted to the governess and he tells her at the job interview in some very clear terms! And so, our story begins ;)

There is some first class verbal sparring especially from Lucien the grouchy hero to just about everyone who crosses his path. He's the quintessential cynic! You'll find yourself laughing or suddenly gasping an "OMG I can't believe he just said that!" at some of his more lethal barbs that are either directed right at someone or said under his breath –brilliant dialog throughout the whole book.

Alexandra, the heroine, is a very independent woman and for some readers her independence may go too far or border the annoying but I thought the author handled it well especially since she had the same stubborn streak as Lucien so the two had to do a give and take of sorts that ends up twisting your heart a bit at the end which, for me anyway, shows some very good writing. Lucien really ends up baring his soul to her in the end and you really feel for the poor guy.

The steam scenes are a bit too short but the sexual tension is first rate. There are a few "I gotta have you now" scenes that even though short were quite "vivid"!

Enoch's titles sound somewhat silly or typical romance fodder but they are spot on when it comes to the essence of the story.

This is one of those "I-am-going-to-have-you-whether-you-want-me-or-not-lady" reads, and Lucien will stop at nothing to get the lady in question ;)

Fira Rosli says

The only thing (or person if you want me to be more precise) that I absolutely adored in this book is Lucien. He was conceited, arrogant, rakish, charming, bloody handsome (and hot). But what attracted me the most was his dry wit. GOD HOW I LOVE HIS HUMOR (and him). The comments he made, OH HIS WITTING REMARKS, of his Aunt Fiona and Cousin Rose were LAUGH-OUT-LOUD-ROLLING-ON-FLOOR-AND-LAUGHING-HARDER. Alright, so I may have exaggerated it a wee bit much but I couldn't help it. As for the heroine, Alexandra, I was sorely disappointed. She was such a let-down. I was pretty much alright with her until she made me want to hurl something at her for disbelieving and rejecting Lucien's proposal (and love). I HATED HER LAST MINUTE CONFESSION OF LOVE. "Oh I love you, I'll marry you because our children will be the heir to the Earldom." So maybe that wasn't how Suzanne Enoch wrote it exactly, but it made me realized how stupid the heroine really was. No, I don't hate the heroine-hate is such a strong word- but she made me want to punch, slap, kick, hit and do unmentionable body harm to her to make her realized that after ALL THE TROUBLE LUCIEN WENT THROUGH TO PLEASED HER, she still couldn't realized that he had changed for the better and that his love for her is true.

Now, to more pleasant stuff, I liked Suzanne Enoch's heroes. Most of them usually comprises of appealing physical attributes and one that I love the most, sarcastic, dry, humorous wit. And the way she wrote the dialogue of the heroes suited them to the very best. Not all authors can pull that and I was surprised Suzanne Enoch expertise in that area.

Although this book disappointed me, I would like to encourage readers to read one of her book, 'Always a Scoundrel' which, I thought, is one of the most fabulously, humorously, well written Historical Romance I've ever read.

Overall, would I recommend this book? Not sure, to be honest. Although, if I ever recommend this book, it will only be because of Lucien. Nothing else.

Becca says

The Suzanne Enoch "With This Ring" series is not quite as popular as some of her others, but I love Enoch novels so I wanted to give it a try. The first installment, *Reforming a Rake*, is only recommended if you're willing to put up with some silly drama in order to still get scraps of funny dialogue. I'm running out of Enoch novels so I was willing and because of my mindset going in, I didn't mind when the plot veered into the absurd and my first impression of the hero was that he was a perv.

Anyway, the hero, Lucien, is a marquess looking for a governess to give his cousin some polish so he can get her married ASAP and thus out of his house and his life. He is dry and cutting and seems to be fueled entirely by lust. When he meets the heroine, Alexandra, he ignores all of the drama in her past and hires her on the spot simply because he finds her "delicious." He propositions her from the first interview and continues to be quite persistent. I found this a bit creepy, especially because she was supposed to be an employee. However, Enoch has a breezy writing style so I continued to fly through pages and see the real Lucien behind all the inappropriate remarks and cutting wit. He was actually a pretty nice guy, but he forgot how to be one because he'd spent so much of his life isolating himself from others.

Alexandra, with her forthright nature, beauty, and decorum, crept under Lucien's skin and made him grow addicted to her. As their relationship developed, I grew to like Lucien more and Alexandra less. At first, she came across as a strong woman who had forged her own path in a world that was often grossly unfair to women unprotected by family or fortune. However, once she was presented with a perfect solution to all her problems as well as Lucien's, her brain cells started to die off in droves and she swung from being a pragmatic, graceful heroine to an idiotic shrew who didn't know her own mind. I felt like most of the drama was put in here to fill pages and it frustrated me because the heroine's behavior made absolutely no sense. Lucien, for his part, actually redeemed himself in this book. As a counter to the heroine's off-the-wall behavior, he decided if he couldn't beat 'em, he'd join 'em, and he came up with a hare brained scheme that was so ridiculous it somehow...worked. His antics and funny observations were the only reason I finished this book. It is funny how a character that made such a poor first impression became my favorite of the book, but that's Enoch for you. She really does create fun heroes.

Oh, and one more thing-- the sex scenes were an enormous disappointment. There was such a build-up of tension and Enoch painted Lucien as some sex god so I was less than impressed when the scene came and went on a page. I'm not one who *needs* a sex scene, but if it's a huge theme of the book, then the sex scene better be a good one or the book just doesn't quite work. That was the case here. I had one of those "That's it?" moments. To borrow from my GR friend Ally (who always has such humorous but spot-on observations), it was one of those "stick it in and be blissful" situations that just felt MEH. You have been warned.

So, in a nutshell, this book was silly. It wasn't realistic and the heroine's brain turned to mush about 65% of the way through. But it's Enoch and I still laughed and I still read it quickly. It wasn't memorable by any stretch, but I still liked it. I don't quite know how she does it, but there you go. 3ish stars for Lucien.

Suad Shamma says

So given the fact that I had just read Julia Quinn's *The Secrets of Sir Richard Kenworthy* and enjoyed it, I thought I'd give another historical romance that's been sitting on my shelves for years (literally, YEARS) a

chance. I was obviously in the mood, so I needed to ride this wave until it's over - who knows the next time I'll be in this kind of mood again.

It was uncomfortable reading this book given the very old-fashioned, provocative cover. My husband wouldn't stop making fun of me, calling it pornography. At which point I usually smack him or throw something at him.

That being said, it was an OK read. Not great, not good. It's written a long time ago, it's very apparent from the cover and the style of writing how old this book really is. Must be one of Suzanne Enoch's first books. So the style is a bit off, the humor is not there, the romance is a little more aggressive than I prefer. The male protagonist, Lucien Balfour, hires this shamed governess, Alexandra, simply to bed her. She accepts the position because it pays really well, and because she can't seem to find any other house who would hire her - given her past and her reputation. All things you'll get to eventually in the book. I won't get into them myself, as they aren't that important.

Suffice it to say, Alexandra is hired to tame his cousin Rose, who cannot be seen in public at the moment given her lack of social etiquette. Rose's mother, who is also Lucien's aunt, has other plans in mind - which I admit, surprised me a little as she does not come off as that sinister until the very end.

Surprise, surprise, after a whole lot of drama, we find out that Alexandra is actually a Lady and is niece to some Duke who disowned her mother for marrying beneath their status. So of course, in the end, everything works out for the couple. Oh, did I mention that Lucien is reformed and ends up falling head over heels for the governess he tries so hard to seduce? Yep. He does.

I know I'm being overly sarcastic here, I don't mean to. I am giving this 3 stars because it did entertain while I was in the mood. However, I hated how stubbornly annoying and frustrating Alexandra got in the end. With all the sacrifices Lucien made on her behalf, she was being a little obstinate and a little too proud in my opinion. He had to resort to kidnapping her for God's sake, which made things a little ridiculous, but again given the premise of the story, not terrible.

All in all, it was OK. I am glad I finally got to read this and take it off my to-read list.

Linds says

Boo. What a paint by numbers Regency.

Nothing stood out in this book. Standard plot, and a two dimensional hero and heroine that I faintly disliked.

Alexandra is a ruined governess that finds work with the hero Lucien, a peer. Her job is to marry off a poor relation cousin that has just come to live with him. I had a couple problems.

1.) Lucien started in with the sexual innuendo within minutes of meeting Alexandra. As her employer, when she's desperate for a job, this just seems he's abusing power. The tone was meant to be cocky and charming though, which I don't think Lucien is. He definitely has a mean streak, that's supposed to be accepted as cockiness and entitlement. The point is, I never especially liked him.

2.) Alexandra is one of those heroines that once she admits to herself that she's in love, and the hero admits that he's in love and wants to marry her, she can't just go with it. She needs to come up with a bunch of flimsy reasons that they can't be together, half of which don't even make sense. It annoyed me.

3. I was hoping that there would at least be a good climax, which is what kept me reading but it basically boils down to a relative threatening to spread rumors about the heroine, not especially page turning stuff.

All that said, I can see that Suzanne Enoch can write - the prose itself is fine. It's my own fault for not taking the recommendations given to me and reading this one because it was a quarter at a garage sale. I can see why.
