



The Duke Buys a Bride

Sophie Jordan

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A bride wasn't in his plans . . .

The last thing Marcus, the Duke of Autenberry, expects to see after sleeping off a night's drunken shenanigans is a woman being auctioned in the village square. Before he can think about the ramifications, he buys her, thinking he's winning the girl her freedom. Instead, he discovers he's bought a wife.

A duke wasn't in hers . . .

Alyse Bell is almost rid of the shackles that bound her in a name-only marriage, but the day her friend promised to purchase her in a wife auction, he vanishes, leaving her to face a mob of unsavory bachelors intent on owning her body and soul. But the appearance of a wicked, wealthy stranger changes her path forever.

The road to ruin . . .

Marcus doesn't know what to do with the impertinent chit who clearly isn't duchess material! Insisting their marriage isn't legitimate, they leave for his estate in Scotland, hoping to devise a plan to get rid of each other. However, on a journey fraught with misadventure, their attraction grows and Marcus realizes he'll do anything to keep this fiery woman for his own.

The Duke Buys a Bride Details

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From Reader Review The Duke Buys a Bride for online ebook

Esther says

ARC provided by Edelweiss and Publisher in exchange for an honest review. All thoughts and opinions are my own.

Rating for now is 2.5.

I found the characters to be okay, but not much depth. Story's pacing and development was average, at best.

Review to come closer to publication.

Seffra says

3 stars

I really enjoyed the story and where the characters ended up. Our heroine was so awesome. She was dealt awful cards and I loved her fighting back. I did enjoy reading her character.

Okay, while this book had a really good storyline and characters, I felt that it lacked emotion. I couldn't connect to the characters and I felt so distant from the story. I really enjoyed the events of the story but I couldn't see myself in it. I couldn't find one part of it that allowed me to connect.

Lana ❄️Dirty Girl Romance❄️ says

3 STARS

You're a witch," he muttered. "From the moment I saw you, I've been doing things entirely out of my character."

After the way things left off with Marcus in The Scandal of It All, I was more than a little eager to get my hands on his book to see just how this man will redeem himself. While a lot of his behavior shows him to be almost a spoiled and entitled brat at times, still waters run deep, and you just know there's something underneath the appearance that he initially gives off.

After finding out his stepmother is in love with one of his best friends, he leaves everything behind and leaves his home. Waking up after a blackout bender in a town he doesn't remember arriving in isn't exactly in his plans. But then again, neither is rescuing a woman from being sold like cattle for marriage in the town square. He can't resist purchasing her when he sees the look of abject horror on her face. But he never intends to truly hold up his end of the deal and be anyone's husband; merely purchase her freedom.

Alyse Bell has been stuck in a name-only "marriage" for years after the passing of her father when she was way too young. As his last deed before his passing, he arranged her contract with the man she's been living with in name only. She's essentially been his care-taker and nanny. The deal has always been that he will

then sell at a wife auction to be purchased by her best friend. Only her friend is nowhere to be found when she needs him the most, leaving her to the mercy of the fates.

Marcus and Alyse are certainly an odd pair. Marcus refuses to acknowledge any chemistry between them. He runs hot and cold at the best of times, though his direct setting seems to be on cold. He passes off their "contract" as her being his housekeeper and nothing more, while fighting their connection at every turn. Admittedly, as much as I was looking forward to this book, it felt a little lackluster for me. Yes, the chemistry was there, but I also found the pacing to work against it. I enjoyed Alyse's spark and backbone, but Marcus left me feeling underwhelmed. I wanted to love him, but sadly I just didn't. His turnaround was too little too late for me, and while still satisfying, I couldn't help feeling like I needed more from this story to bring it to a 4 star read.

I still enjoyed it, but I didn't love it either. It was that middle of the road sort of feeling that had me feeling both satisfied...and not. I liked that we got a bit of closure with Marcus and his stepmother at the end, though I would have loved more of that as well.

ARC courtesy of publisher in exchange for an honest review

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Stacee says

There's something about this series that keeps me reading.

I liked Alyse and Marcus well enough. She's smart and underestimated. He's stoic and has no idea he's actually a marshmallow inside. There are a few other characters, but no one really stands out. Of course it was cute seeing Poppy and Struan.

Plot wise it was okay. There's a lot of traveling and those scenes were not used for them to have any sort of conversation. The push and pull and lack of communication was at an all time high and that's what bums me out. There is so much potential between Alyse and Marcus, but it's wasted.

Overall, I liked it, but was also disappointed. I really liked the characters and wish they could have been given a better chance than the repetitiveness this story had.

****Huge thanks to Avon Books for providing the arc free of charge****

Starr Rivers says

Now I'm reminded why I Don't usually buy Sophie Jordan's Books. This one was meh. The premise was interesting enough to try out and the sample started out with promise. Duke wakes up face down in horse shit. Girl getting sold on auction block... what's not to like?

And then it went downhill from there. There no real exploration of why the Duke is running away, no real depth and insight into his past. The girl is also meh. Aside from the duke being "beautiful" and the girl having

generous bosom, not sure what else recommends the two of them and why they end up falling in love. Tho I get the lust part easily enough. BTW, no sex happens until 83% in!!!! That's right ladies and gentlemen! 83%!!!!

What else? Humor? Nope. Suspense? Nope. Character development I already covered. Nope. Hot sex? Not really. All in all, meh.

This will be the last time I buy her books. Wasn't a satisfying use of my reading \$.

Hollis says

The entire mess made him uncomfortable. He did not like to think of himself as a procurer of humans. Even if pity and altruism had motivated him.

THE DUKE BUYS A BRIDE was my least favourite of *The Rogue Files* so far. What starts out as an interesting concept -- a wife auction and the passing Duke who buys the girl to save her from embarrassment or worse -- kinda.. floundered. This might have also been made worse by some strangely modern phrasing infused throughout the dialogue but there just wasn't a whole lot of flow to this one.

Gentlemen did not fall in love with girls they bought on an auction block. Not in any fairy tale she ever read.

There is a long roadtrip-style journey complete with faking their relationship as true husband and wife in order to stay in overcrowded inns, or respectable boardinghouses, but the dialogue between them is never used in order for this unlikely pair to get to know each other. Mostly we see their relationship unfold through proximity, attraction, and exposition. It's really only when we finally **do** get to our final destination (almost) that things get fun. There's an run-in with a tried and true Scotsman and his clan, who happen to be the Duke's neighbours, that was seriously entertaining but all too brief.

"I always sleep naked."

"Not with me you don't."

"As this was the first time we slept together, I did not realize we had established protocol."

As far as the positives go, we get a chapter or two to reunite with book one's couple and resolve some of that leftover angst and drama, and Marcus actually manages to spend most of his time contemplating more than just the appeal of his fake-wife and housekeeper-to-be-except-of-course-she'll-end-up-as-his-wife; the oblivious and spoiled Duke has a lot of come to Jesus moments surrounding his privilege and wealth when faced with Alyse's serious lack thereof. So we do have some character growth, however the problem is.. nothing happens. With Marcus exiling himself to the far reaches of Scotland, none of his epiphanies are used in a society setting and therefore seem kind of pointless because, again, this is just one big inn-hopping adventure.. with delayed sexytimes gratification. And, speaking of which, I found the sex scenes really strange. I don't know how to describe why. Just that they were.

Again and again he had proved himself honourable. And she was sick of it. She wanted him to be a little bad. With her.

The ending, of course, opens up the possibility for further installments surrounding the characters and personalities in this extended family and I might pick up the next. Particularly if a certain sister is going to be thrown in the path of a certain Scottish Laird. That would be fun. Overall, however, I wasn't entertained enough by this one to recommend it.

** I received an ARC from Edelweiss and the publisher (thank you!) in exchange for an honest review. **

Gaele says

A clever premise to rectify (and perhaps provide opportunity) for Alyse, a young woman who has been living, in name only, as a wife to a man, receiving protection and shelter. But, he's now found a woman he loves and wishes to marry, yet he can't leave Alyse without protection, or simply divorce her. Enter the 'wife auction', a formerly real thing in which men could "trade in" the old, seeing them settled and relocated, before making a new start. A bit extreme, but it's been arranged that Alyse's friend will be the bid winner, and Alyse gets her wish – freedom and self-direction. But the friend doesn't show up, the crowd is full of unsavory men, and nothing is quite working out to plan. Including one very grumpy, hungover duke - who finds the men disgusting and too like his late father, unworthy of respect and the young woman now up for bid. His chivalry takes hold and he purchases her, instantly making it clear that he wants nothing from her – but he's willing to see her delivered into her new life. Only problem – she has few actual options, no money and only dreams.

Marcus, Duke of Autenberry left London to escape gossip and issues with both his stepmother and best friend's wife. The typical broody, angsty male, he's drowning his emotions in drink. That is, until Alyse. From the moment of his impulsive purchase, to recognizing that he now has a wife to care for, even if he's got no intention of actually being a husband, he offers her a job and a place to live in his northern estate. What follows is a road-trip story- with the two learning one another as Marcus continued to try and deny his feelings and work through his many issues without giving Alyse a chance. She's bold and embracing both this new adventure and the sense of freedom she's finding in the travel and opportunities Marcus isn't like others she's met – he's protective and gallant, if grumpy and removed, all a huge difference from her worries as her plan fell apart.

I so wanted this to be a story to not forget: I've had a bit of an up and down experience with this series, and this book was no exception. Alyse was, by far, the better developed and presented character, and her personality and quiet confidence as she worked out what could happen next was engaging. Marcus was far too closed off and determined to keep all his cards close to his chest- he's finding Alyse attractive, but is determined to not follow in the footsteps of others who used power, position and title to bend others to his will. But his wife's openness and solidly apparent compassion and sense of fun keep him coming back for more: more of her time, more of her presence. And just when their strained relationship reaches the breaking point, and decisions must be made: he makes just the right moves to make her his. And the quick resolution after a plot that felt stalled and a character, in Marcus, that completely shut everyone down only to slowly come to his senses just didn't really keep me caring about him or the conclusion. A nice moment to check in with a couple from earlier in the series, and some intrigue with the wife auction just weren't enough to overcome the dragging plot or the odd inclusions of date confusion and modern speech didn't fit or truly date the story. Not my favorite by this author, but a pure guilty pleasure that is a solid beach read.

I received an eArc copy of the title from the publisher via Edelweiss for purpose of honest review. I was not compensated for this review: all conclusions are my own responsibility.

Review first appeared at I am, Indeed

Ivy H says

That's what the heroine's thinking at the start of this novel when she discovers that all her dreams and hopes have been destroyed. Alyse, the 22 yr old heroine, is a peasant girl whose dying father had pledged her in a type of *handfasting* Scottish marriage to a 50 something yr old widower with 7 kids. This was a marriage in name only and it took place when the heroine's dad died when she was only 15 yrs old. Her dad had been the village's schoolmaster so she's educated/literate. Her husband, Mr. Beard, had only married her to save her and because he wanted someone to take care of his household and his 7 kids ! The downtrodden heroine was literally worked like a slave from the time she was 15 to the start of the novel, when she's 22. Mr. Beard never had sex with her and she always slept in the same bedroom as his kids. At the start of the story, she's optimistic because her childhood friend Yardley has returned from the navy and is supposed to purchase her in a wife auction that's being held in the town. This tradition confused me but I was intrigued so it kept me reading the story.

Anyway, Mr. Beard is also anxious to end his *handfast* marriage to Alyse because his kids are now able to care for themselves and he's romantically interested in a widow called Mrs. McPherson. This old bat is threatened by the heroine's presence in the Beard home and is determined to see that the wife auction goes off successfully. The big problem that happens for Alyse is that Yardley, who had promised to purchase her as his wife in the auction, has gotten bridegroom anxiety issues and scampered off like a coward to London. The heroine is petrified because it means that a stranger will be able to purchase her in the auction and her biggest fear becomes a reality when the gross, toothless village tanner happens to place the highest bid ! Out of nowhere though, a new voice with a distinct English accent, bids 50 pounds for her and she's able to breathe a sigh of relief. That voice belonged to the H, Marcus. He's the Duke of Autenberry. Marcus didn't buy her for any sexual purpose and he certainly didn't want a wife. He felt sorry for her when he saw how scared she was and how nauseated she appeared when the village tanner seemed on the verge of winning the auction.

But that's about the only good thing Marcus did for the heroine for the first half of the story. After he bought her, his became boorish and bossy. Alyse wasn't even attracted to him at first because he had this full beard and there was the odour of horse shit all over him ! Lol. She thought he was this big, uncommunicative log of a man and he dismissed her as a mere serving class wench. He had his own familial issues from which he was trying to escape; he'd left London in an angry huff because he'd found his stepmother banging his best friend ! All he wanted to do for the time being was to journey onwards to his Scottish estate called Kilmarkie, that's located in the highlands. Alyse has no money so he offers to give her a job as the housekeeper at Kilmarkie. The novel started off on a high note but soon started to become a bit tedious in the middle. That's because the majority of the story dealt with the MC's journey towards Kilmarkie. He's on his stallion Bucephalus and she's on a ill mannered mule called Lil Bit. Marcus got me angry during this part of the story because he saw that Alyse had threadbare clothing yet he made no effort to purchase new items for her whenever they journeyed into a new village. And, the proud heroine preferred to suffer in the cold weather instead of asking him for anything.

I had to push myself to keep reading this middle part of the story because they seem to be going through the same cycle over and over again:

1. They travel from one inn to another while she talks and he grunts out monosyllabic replies.
2. They stay at rural inns and boarding houses where they end up arguing, because he keeps wanting to have sex with her while warning her that he'll never let her trap him into a real marital union.

3. She keeps lusting after him since he's shaved off the beard and is looking really hot. But she has low self esteem and thinks that she's only fit to be a servant, so she's despondent about their relationship.

Throughout the first 75% of the story, he doesn't even tell her that he's a duke. He revealed it only after they encounter the young highland laird of the McLarin clan. This guy saw them arguing in his woods and kidnapped the heroine in order to "save" her from the H. The McLarin laird was kinda hot ! I think he's gonna be the hero in the 4th novel in the novel. Marcus got really jealous and possessive after the McLarin laird kidnapped Alyse; that's what spurred him on to declare publicly that she's his wife and that he's the duke of Autenberry. I felt the story took too long to get to this point. I wished that the author had made the earlier parts a bit more exciting or sexy; I needed something to break the tedium of reading about the MC's chronological journey from one boarding inn to another. But, luckily, the last quarter of the novel was a vast improvement ! The MC's finally consummated their relationship and Marcus realized that he loved her. Before he could tell her, she decided to pack up her tiny valise (filled with her threadbare dresses) and hotfoot it out of Kilmarkie House.

Marcus rushed after her and finds her at an inn with Yardley. That asshole had finally come to search for her. The H saw them talking and there was a huge misunderstanding since he thought she was in love with the idiot. Marcus loved her so much that he allowed her to go with the man he thought she had chosen, but he did have a goodbye gift for the upstart Yardley:

"Only there is one other thing I must do before I let you both go," Marcus added.

"Oh?" She watched him, baffled at what he could possibly have left to do after that very dramatic destruction of her bill of sale.

"Yes." He turned to face Yardley and with no worry, punched him squarely in the face. Her childhood friend went down hard. His hand immediately covered his spurting nose. Blood seeped out between his fingers.

"Wot was that fer?" his nasally voice cried out. Alyse gawked. Marcus stabbed a finger in her direction.

"For abandoning her. Do you know what could have happened to her had I not been there? The abuse and misery . . ." Marcus's face twisted with rage. "You're lucky I don't haul you outside and give you the true thrashing you deserve. If you ever hurt or disappoint her again, I'll come for you. And the next time, there will only be pieces of you left. Understand me, lad? Make her happy or I will end you." Her stomach fluttered with a thousand butterflies at his words. Marcus turned back to face her. "If you ever need . . ." His voice faded as his eyes bored into her.

Sophie Jordan. The Duke Buys A Bride (Rogue Files 3) by Sophie Jordan (Kindle Locations 4025-4037). HarperCollins. Kindle Edition.

Marcus was so stupid he didn't even recognize how much she loved him. He would've let her go with that stupid Yardley without confessing his true feelings for her. She hadn't wanted to go with Yardley; she just felt that she would be an embarrassing burden of a wife for a duke of the realm. These 2 MC's were lucky that the McLarin laird saw what was happening and told the H to go after his wife. That's when Marcus finally revealed the love that he had for her:

He dropped down on one knee and took her chilled hand in his.

"Alyse . . . Don't leave me. Please be my wife. Because you want to be my wife. Because I want you to be

my wife. Because I want us together and this life.” The cheering stopped. All sound disappeared.

“Because I love you. And I want to spend the rest of my life loving you. I may have bought you on that auction block that day, but it is you who owns me, body and soul.” She sucked in a ragged breath as though she had been struck. She didn’t say anything for several moments. Finally her flushed face crumpled, and a sob broke loose.

“But you’re a duke. I can’t be a duchess. I’m not a duchess—”

“You’re you. Be you. That’s all I want. I don’t want a duchess. I want a woman to love. I want you to love. We already have a home here. You love it. I know you do. I saw it in your eyes. I love it, too. We can make a good home here, a happy home here.”

“Yes.” She nodded, tears streaming down her face. A laugh bubbled from her lips. “Yes yes yes yes.”

Sophie Jordan. The Duke Buys A Bride (Rogue Files 3) by Sophie Jordan (Kindle Locations 4080-4089). HarperCollins. Kindle Edition.

This was a nice story and I hope there's an upcoming novel with the hunky McLarin laird as the hero. I'm also curious about the first novel in this series because those MC's were given a cameo appearance in this story. That novel is While the Duke Was Sleeping. Struan and Poppy were such a wonderful couple that I'm definitely gonna put their novel on my reading list. However, I'm definitely not gonna be reading the second novel since that one deals with Marcus' stepmother and his best friend. I guess that particular story will be a treat for readers who like reading about older women and younger men. That type of couple dynamic doesn't really appeal to me.

There's no OW or OM involved in this story and no cheating. The heroine's friend Yardley had only kissed her a couple of times before she met the H.

This is the H, Marcus:

This is the heroine, Alyse:

Leigh-Ayn says

Really enjoyed this book as the Marcus and Alyse journeyed through Scotland. I will admit that I wondered how Marcus would go as he was such a toffee nose hahaha but he has honour and cares just doesn't show the caring often. Alyse was lovely. She just wanted to go to London to find a library. She was dealt a rotten deal in life and my heart broke for her but she was strong and fierce. I can't wait to read Clara's book next!

kris says

Marcus Weatheron, Duke of Autenberry, buys Alyse Bell at a bride auction and offers her a position as his housekeeper. They travel north together, grind up on each other, and fall into LURVE.

1. HA HA HA THIS WAS SO UNDERBAKED.
2. Marcus has half a bushel of angst that ends up getting dropped by the final chapters without any actual development and it's just silly and obviously a placeholder because a straight-forward hero...doesn't work? I guess? So add in daddy-issues and half-brother issues and some kind of looming bullshit about his step-mother macking on his bff and I guess you got ???
3. Alyse was so teeth-clenchingly ... simple? that I honestly don't know what to say about her. She was married at 15, but still a virgin. Watched her father die and served as a live-in housekeeper/nanny to her husband, but still totally warm and welcoming and thoughtful and kind. It's just boring heroine shorthand.
4. The plot has them sharing a bed their first three nights together in which Marcus sleeps naked IN SPITE of Alyse's obvious discomfort. Then, of course, they are able to find ALL THE BEDS THEY COULD EVER WANT so it's not an issue. But this level of plotty shenanigans to force intimacy like this is BULLSHIT and LAZY and DULL. Give me ACTUAL development for the love of life.
5. ENDING WAS ALSO GARBAGE.
6. Sophie Jordan seems to be an author (for me) that has all the icing: decent covers, interesting blurbs, titles that aren't too ridiculous (OK sometimes they are VERY RIDICULOUS but what even is this genre so) but the content is just...underripe. It's not baked. It's not satisfying. And it doesn't want to probe the depths of the cliches it uses in any interesting ways—a HUGE draw of this genre, I think. Why else would we, the hungry romance consumer, read nine and a half million MoC books if not to see what else can be eked out of a formula we can solve in our sleep? Why else would there be forty seven trillion beauty and the beast retellings if not to examine how we force connections with our opposites?

I know, absolutely, that I will be sucked in by a future Jordan blurb and give it a shot because *maybe this time* it'll land, but I also think future kris will be just as disappointed, in both Jordan and in herself.

Suze Lavender says

Marcus, the Duke of Autenberry, needs a break from his friends and family and has left London to travel to his property in Scotland. It's a long way and one of his stops is in Collie-Ben, a village he'd rather forget as quickly as he can. Marcus wakes up in the gaol, smelling horribly, with a sore head and a lot less money. When he's about to leave the village he sees a crowd on the market square. People have gathered en masse for an auction. When Marcus finds out what or rather who is being auctioned he's appalled. He wants to rescue an innocent woman from a dreadful fate, becoming an abusive man's slave, and buys her. He's a Duke, so the woman can't be his wife, but what should he do with her instead?

Alyse was supposed to get married to her childhood sweetheart, but he never came to the auction. Now Marcus has taken her away from Collie-Ben instead. She doesn't know who he is, but when she finds out more about his background she understands that marriage isn't in the cards for them. How can she find freedom? Marcus acts distant and cold, but is he really this unfriendly or is it just a facade? Can he handle his fierce new bride and what will happen once they reach their destination, will they part ways or will they

stay together?

The Duke Buys a Bride is a captivating romantic story. I was impressed by Alyse's strength. She doesn't back down from a challenge and her fierceness is amazing. She stands her ground, even though she has no money and nowhere to go. I loved that she doesn't show any weakness and admired her vibrant spirit. She's a perfect match for Marcus. He could use someone in his life who sets him straight and makes him see reason. He's a proud man with a good heart. He has many grievances and Alyse's pureness is the healing balm he needs. I loved their chemistry and their fabulous banter. It's clear from the start there could be something very special between them and I flew through the pages of their fascinating story.

Sophie Jordan has a wonderful mesmerizing writing style and I loved the original idea behind The Duke Buys a Bride. I could easily picture Alyse and Marcus's journey through the cold Scotland and loved every single one of their adventures. Their trip is definitely eventful and entertaining. I like it when a story grabs me from beginning to end and The Duke Buys a Bride certainly falls into that category. It's a terrific thrilling story filled with surprising twists and turns and fantastic attraction. The main characters are quite a match and that makes the story incredibly interesting. I highly recommend this dynamic story with sparks that fly off the pages.

(Tori-Smexybooks) smexys_sidekick says

Favorite Quote: "I always sleep naked."

"Not with me you don't."

"As this was the first time we slept together, I did not realize we had established protocol."

Alyse Bell was sold into marriage when her father gave her to a friend in the hopes she would be protected after he passed away. Having reached her maturity, she is ready to start her future with her best friend who promised to come back and take her away. Only, he never arrives and her "husband" arranges for the auction to continue so he can marry another. As she stands on the auction block in the center of town, a rope around her neck like chattel and fuming in silence as she watches those she considers her friends and family bidding on her like a fatted calf, a handsome stranger rides into the square and places the winning bid.

Marcus Weatherton (The Scandal of it All) left London after discovering his stepmother was in love with his best friend and his fiancée dumped him for his illegitimate brother. Waking up in jail after an all-night bender, Marcus heads out of town only to happen upon an auction where a young woman is being sold to the highest bidder. Shocked and outraged by the scene, Marcus intervenes only to discover he didn't buy her freedom...he bought a wife.

Expecting gratitude, he instead gets attitude and decides to take her to his estate in Scotland and set her up as his housekeeper. But the road to redemption is long and a series of misadventures and close calls shows Marcus that life often gifts you with what you need when you least expect it.

Marcus, the fifth Duke of Autenberry, woke up with a startled jolt face-down in horse shit... So begins the third novel in Sophie Jordan's Rogue Files series-The Duke Buys a Bride. Delightfully witty and overflowing with snark, guilt, pride, and sexual tension, Jordan writes a compelling and bittersweet story that addresses the lack of female agency and one man's abrupt awakening to his own privilege. Laughter and a few heart-pitching moments firmly engages the reader as Jordan weaves an opposite attraction romance that delights and enchants from page one.

I love opposite attraction and marriages of convenience, especially when the couple are strong-willed,

decidedly independent, and well versed in the art of witty repertoire. Alyce knows her place in the world and has accepted it for the time being because she's always has a plan. When her plan falls through, she adjusts and adapts. Something women have been doing for ages. Married at a very young age, she was essentially a nanny to the older man's children and a caretaker for him. It was a tolerable situation because Alyse knew it wouldn't last forever. Having planned to marry her childhood sweetheart, she is once again denied her voice when he runs away, leaving her at the mercy of the town and her soon-to-be husband.

He was supposed to take her with him. He had promised they would begin a life together [...] He had agreed. But he left. He had abandoned her. Left her to be auctioned off, sold to any man with the whim to buy her.

Purchased by a stranger, Alyse is determined to use her latest situation to her advantage as they head towards his estate. She attempts to engage Marcus only to find a stubborn, grumpy, and rather stinky man whose speech and carriage tell her he's not from around there and of a much higher social setting.

"Where are you from?"

A beat of silence passed before he answered. "England."

"Obviously."

[...]

"I hear the highlands are lovely any time of year. I imagine covered in snow they are quite majestic."

At last, he asked in a wearied voice, "Do you plan to talk the entire journey?"

"Have you an aversion to conversation, sir? We will be in each others company for a long time and I thought it might help."

"Help? With what? I don't require pointless banter."

Pointless banter? She huffed out a foggy breath. The man did not win points for charm.

So begins their battle of wits.

Alyse and Marcus are an amusingly prickly couple, tossed together by circumstance. Alyse just wants the freedom long denied her and Marcus wants to be left alone to wallow in his misery. A reluctant hero, Marcus is caught between wanting to save the fair maiden but now that he has, he is unsure what to do with her. His own childhood and a series of blows he has suffered in London has left him weary and disillusioned. He denies the chemistry he feels between them, unable to accept this young woman may be his destiny. Alyse herself has no illusions about Marcus or even romance in general. She has been disappointed so many times. She knows she is not for him and is put out when he cleans up and she can see exactly who he is.

Dear God. This was the man who bought her. Her employer. He'd bathed, shaved, and was positively transformed. He was...beautiful. No, no, no, no. He could not be this. He could not look like this. She could not be stuck with...this.

A series of mishaps follow them on their way to his estate; from sickness to kidnapping, they push their way forward. Marcus fluctuates between bemoaning his situation to worrying about her every step of the way. He repeatedly finds himself in compromising situations with her only to back away and cry foul. He refuses to legitimize their marriage, though when she is abducted, he discovers he cannot live let her go. She has become more than a duty...a burden. She had become a person he cared about.

Their first night together he had simply climbed into bed with her, giving her little thought. Then she was nothing more than a woman he had bought at auction. Someone he had taken pity on and helped through a difficult time.

Now she was something more.

No longer a stranger.

An eclectic cast of secondary characters gives the book some depth and provides amusement. I enjoyed seeing Marcus' brother and his wife. Alyse's friend/stepdaughter Nellie was a fierce one and I loved her protective nature. Some minor issues left me a little berate though didn't spoil my overall enjoyment. I do wish the focus hadn't been totally on just this couple. I would have enjoyed seeing some resolution from what happened in London though Jordan hints at some reconciliation on that front while preparing the way for the next book concerning Marcus's sister.

The Duke Buys A Bride is another grand adventure from Sophie Jordan and an entertaining addition to this series.

Grade: B

Tracy DeNeal says

Marcus and Alyse

Worth the wait! I loved this slow burn marriage not marriage love story. The powerful arrogant Duke has finally met his match.

Sophie Jordan portrayed the arcane custom of wife selling in such vivid detail. The shame, the humiliation and utter powerlessness of a woman was so real.

This looonnnngggg road trip novel worked for me on all levels. I felt the couple's growing closeness over time. It felt real and authentic. Alyse Bell was sensible even though she was in possession of a romantic heart. She was the perfect foil for Marcus.

I hope Clara is set to find her HEA with the cheeky Scotsman on the neighboring estate. Now wouldn't that just be the thing?

Sissy's Romance Book Review says

The Duke Buys a Bride by Sophie Jordan is book Three in The Rogue Files. This is the story of Marcus, the Duke of Autenberry and Alyse Bell. I have read the previous books (and Loved them!) but feel this is easily a standalone book if you want to do so.

Alyse lost her parents when she was young and her father had made a agreement with his friend who had several children but no longer a wife to take in his daughter, Alyse. So to fill that promise she 'married' him and helped raised his kids. Now those kids are all grown up so their marriage is to come to a end..and to do so she was to be on a wife auction block which her childhood friend, Yardley was going to come and 'buy' her for a wife. But the day of the auction, she learns that Yardley as up and left town. Upset she tries to talk her 'husband' out of such a auction but he won't change his mind. Marcus is in that small town after a night of drinking that lead him to be arrested he is told to leave the town, but he happens upon the auction and 'buys' Alyse.

This starts their adventurous story that you won't be able to put down...loved it!

Yardley

Lover of Romance says

This review was originally posted on Addicted To Romance I received this book for free from Avon in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

May contain a few spoilers...be aware

The Duke Buys A Bride is the third book in the Rogue Files series by Sophie Jordan. This story was one I was highly anticipating, first off the cover is what really drew me to it and the title was so tempting I just knew I had to have this and I was so excited down to the toes....to be given the ARC of this one from Avon Books. This is a story that is based on some real facts. I love that Sophie Jordan was able to tie in Bride Buying into one of her novels. Bride buying....was a REAL thing folks. In the UK...England, Scotland and Wales, you could sell your wife if you didn't want to go through a divorce and anullment wasn't an option. And unfortunately this happened up till the early 1900's. The date was a shocker for me but really happened. And Sophie Jordan puts her own delightful twist and boy I had a fun time with this one.

Our tale begins with our hero, on the very first page, waking up to his face in muck...Literally. He is filthy and gross, and finds out that he was in jail this whole night because of some bar maid and he might have tore up the place a bit. Not the best place a Duke should be. Marcus, is the Duke of Autenberry and fleeing London and losing his best friend and feeling betrayed when his step mother and friend fall in love. So his plan is to go to his estate in Scotland and losing himself there where he seeks some solitude.

Alyse, lost her father and had to live up to the agreement her father made with the man that became her husband. She took care of his children and cleaned his home, and all these years she is still a virgin. But he wants to marry another woman, and they come up with an agreement. She will put herself up to be auction, because she has a friend who will take her as his wife and they will have adventures and reside in London. But once she arrives and is put on the auction block, her friend abandon's her and she is forced to be the wife of someone else.

Marcus while riding on his way out of town, stumbles into the bridal auction and is shocked and appaled at what he is seeing. A beautiful young woman, being treated like a piece of meat especially in the way fellow men are treating her, like a slave. So Marcus, being the honorable man he is, offers for her. Marcus, has no plans to take a wife or become besotted like his brother or best friend but this is a woman in need of help or her fate could be way worse. He offers her a deal, protection and safety and she will see to his household as his housekeeper. Both Marcus and Alyse are both practical persons, so it seems like a reasonable agreement.

I don't doubt love. I was so young when my mother died I can't even remember her. At fifteen my father died and I married a man old enough to be my grandfather. I had to work his farm, raise his children, cook and launder for him. That same man sold me at auction. So I've seen things too, you know. I've seen ugly things and I still believe in love. Your life must have been very hard indeed for you to be such a non believer.

Alyse, at first, is shocked that this dirty smelling man is to be her husband. Oh boy, she didn't realize what she was getting herself into. On their first night on their journey, they stop at an inn, and after Marcus takes a bath, she gets a real good clean look at him, and is humbled by how gorgeous he is and starts feeling some self doubts. But she made a deal and will stand by it. But while on their journey, both Marcus and Alyse realize how much they are attracted to each other. And during a heated argument, tempers flare, hands fly

and a angry yet passionate kiss is shared between them and the flames just rise between them along with the temptation.

Love makes fools of us all, big and little?

Marcus knows that he can't pursue this desire he feels for Alyse, but he wants her and he is slowly starting to fall hard for her. But Marcus is very cynical about life and is afraid to love and it isn't until Alyse becomes sick on their journey and he is forced to face up to his feelings for Alyse and wants her to be his wife for REAL. But he just might have to fight for her against crazy highlanders, his brother and even her previous suitor to prove to her his devotion and his heart....

This is a story that I was pretty excited for and it was so different than I was expecting. I have read auction stories before, however, I loved the tropes that come along with this story and it really fits just right with this pairing. We have a mix of "On The Road Adventure" and "Rags To Riches" which are both solid romance tropes to read. The majority of the book, there is quite a bit of traveling and adventure and even some kidnapping by some rogue highlanders (and boy I am really hoping the Laird is in the series because he was a HOOT!...such a scoundrel)

We also have the "Rags to Riches" trope. Our heroine, grew up poor and doesn't realize until the end that she is married to a Duke. She has no clue how to be a duchess and you see how she comes to terms with her new station. Alyse is such a sweet heroine but so STRONG and courageous. I loved her tenacity and determination. But she does have some flaws. The one aspect of her character I really didn't like was a scene where she slaps the hero. And yes he wasn't being super super nice, but they were in a argument and neither of them were pulling the verbal punches. And then she slaps him and boy that irked me. (I really hate heroine slapping the hero) I just didn't feel like it was justified at all. I am a bit forgiving since this is a historical romance, and the customs were a bit different back then. I was really intrigued when we meet Marcus half brother though, I still need to read the first book, but I loved him and Poppy. They were so darling, so I will be grabbing up book one NOW!! hehe

Gentlemen did not fall in love with girls they bought on an auction block. Not in any fairy tale she ever read.

The romance that builds between these two is soft and slow at times, they have some powerful chemistry, but they both deny what they feel for each other. Alyse is more ready to accept her feelings for Marcus, since she is open to love. However Marcus, is stubborn and cynical and brooding, so he takes WAY longer, but he proves himself in the end and boy the way the hero grovels, was so tender and sweet.

The Smexy times between these two was just so fantastic. I loved how much they connect in the bedroom and boy the hero really knows how to please his lady. He always puts her pleasure about his own and I really like that in a hero. And boy some of these scenes were much HOTTER than I was expecting but I gravitated towards it because it only added onto the intimacy that is slowly building between this pair.

He was there for her. He would always be there for her. He was the person she could trust even though he had claimed she should trust no one.

What really gives you the sastisfying feels, is the very end when these two face up to what their hearts and minds are in sync with and that sometimes you have to FIGHT for who you love no matter the cost to yourself and boy the ending in this book was so romantic and left me with huge amounts of happy feels and I closed this story with a happy sigh. A story that is filled with sensuality, adventure, being true to yourself

and learning what loving someone else truly means and the sacrifice it takesTRULY MESMERIZING!

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