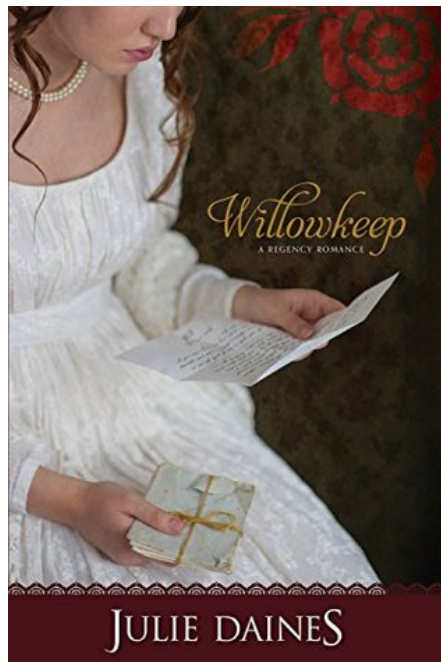




Willowkeep (Regency Romance)

Julie Daines

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Willowkeep (Regency Romance) Julie Daines

Charlotte Darby's ship is sinking. Penniless and alone, she is struggling to care for herself and her young sister in the harsh seaport town of Hull. But when a solicitor from London brings news that she is the heir to a vast estate in Kent, it seems her days of rough seas are over. Willowkeep is prosperous and grand, far too much for a shipping merchant's daughter to manage, and she quickly comes to rely on the help of Henry Morland, the estate's kind and handsome steward.

Henry has worked hard his entire life, but all the money he's saved won't be enough to get his father out of debtor's prison. And Henry's fondness for Charlotte and her sister is only another reminder of his low status and lack of money. Though he is willing to do whatever it takes to keep Charlotte happy and looked after as the county's wealthiest lady, she can never be his.

Courted by a charming man of the ton, threatened by those who want her money, and determined to keep her sister safe from the same fate that cost her the rest of her family, Charlotte must face some heartrending decisions. For no matter the size of the fortune, life—and love—are never smooth sailing.

Willowkeep (Regency Romance) Details

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From Reader Review Willowkeep (Regency Romance) for online ebook

Heidi Robbins (Heidi Reads...) says

I've been on a Regency kick lately and Willowkeep totally satisfied as another great reading experience. It really stood out with the main character Charlotte being raised in a fishing village as a commoner, and the author did an excellent job portraying the difference in her upbringing, especially through her speech and expressions. Another unique aspect of the story is her care for her younger sister who has developmental disabilities. Her loyalty and compassion shine through her protectiveness of Susie. Henry's easy acceptance of both girls, but especially Susie, make him a trusted friend of Charlotte's and a source of comfort and strength in her new home and world where society can be difficult and judgemental. Charlotte's thoughts about Anne Boleyn brought a historical perspective to the story which was fascinating, usually any references to the history of the time in similar books are limited to the Napoleonic War or the current royal family. For Charlotte to feel a connection to a historical figure from before her time was fascinating. I loved Charlotte's journey from a life of physical harshness and desperation to a more emotionally and mentally trying environment. Henry identifies her as anomalous, but in a more positive way than her aunt; he finds her to be exceptional while others see her as irregular. Even with his own set of personal problems, his dedication to Charlotte and Susie's well-being is endearing and I couldn't help but wish for a happy ending for them both. I highly recommend Willowkeep to fans of Julie Klassen and Sarah E. Ladd.

(Thank you to Covenant Communications for a copy of the book in exchange for my honest review)

Scribs says

Tired of the same, formulaic Regency books? Noble man meets helpless girl. Man saves girl/finds her irresistibly attractive/solves her problems/makes her a princess. This formula isn't bad, of course. It's just been done. Over and over. And over. The people start to look the same. The ballrooms/drawing rooms/estates look the same. Even as much as I love the era, with all its stuffy formality, beautiful clothes and polished manners, I feel like I re-read the same stories.

While this story contains elements of romance, at its heart, it is about the struggles of an orphaned young woman raising her mentally ill sister. In this time in history, most were abandoned to an asylum for care. Even Jane Austen's family did so (as mentioned in the author's notes), though they visited the boy on a regular basis. But the main character--Charlotte--loves her sister so much that she doesn't care for convenience or convention. She wants to keep her with her always, no matter the cost.

When Charlotte inherits one of the wealthiest estates in England, she finds herself part of a class she can't navigate, and with money she can't comprehend. And it doesn't matter to her that the steward for her estate, Henry, is now considered her social inferior--she likes him anyway. Henry, gently born and bred, understands the social dichotomy and fears his growing feelings for her. The huge debts left behind by his father that he cannot pay also prevent him from envisioning any kind of future for himself or a bride.

I loved the supporting cast of characters, including a stuffy doctor who really cares for his patients, a nurse who loves Charlotte's sister, and a charming man of the Ton with more depth than he lets on.

A beautifully written, touching, and unconventional Regency. Don't miss this one.

Content warning: None. Recommended for all.

Kathy says

Great book. Held my interest throughout.

4.5 stars

content: clean

Melanie says

I love Regency and a rags to riches story and this one had both! Charlotte is struggling financially when she learns that she is the heir to a large estate. She quickly learns that having wealth has its own set of problems but she is kind and determined to stay that way. She is fiercely protective of her younger sister, Susie, who is mentally disabled, and will do whatever she needs to in order to keep her out of an asylum. She meets Henry, the steward of her estate, and they form a deep friendship, especially when Susie takes to him right away.

Charlotte and Henry both have lost their mothers and have absent fathers--Charlotte's is presumed dead and Henry's is in debtor's prison. Their family backgrounds are full of sadness yet they aren't depressing characters but are rather full of hope for the future. It was interesting to see where those storylines led.

I loved how their relationship developed. Henry was easy to fall in love with since he was so selfless, patient and kind. There were characters who had other plans for Charlotte and, even though she was somewhat naive, she wasn't easily pushed around. She'd lived a tough life and could physically take care of herself. She just needed to be okay with falling in love!

This was an enjoyable book from beginning to end! There were some sad moments, but it also had mystery, romance and humor. I've enjoyed other books I've read by this author and was glad that this book delivered as well. I would recommend this to anyone that enjoys a good, clean regency romance!

I received a copy of this book from the publisher for an honest review. My opinion is 100% my own.

Mel's Shelves

Mara says

Julie Daines is a fairly new author to me, but I love the Regency period and this was on sale so buying it turned out to be a great decision on my part. I really liked this story. The main characters were good people trying to do the best with the hand they were dealt, although their troubles stemmed from decisions made by their fathers.

Charlotte Darby, only 19 yrs old and orphaned, lives in the port town of Hull. She struggles to provide for herself and her younger sister, Susan (Susie), who is developmentally disabled. She finds out that she's the heir to a large estate down in Kent and within a few days she's living at the estate called Willowkeep.

Henry Morland is the steward of Willowkeep. His father was the previous steward, but after he retired he took to gambling and is now in debtor's prison. Henry works hard to save as much as he can to pay off his father's debts before he dies in prison. He lives on the grounds of Willowkeep with his sister, Jane.

I loved the characters of Charlotte and Henry. She was so kindhearted to everyone, and he cared about her from the start and would do anything for her and Susie. I enjoyed the running joke about Jane's lack of cooking skills--Henry and Jane both got sick from her cooking. At first I wasn't sure about Hurst Harwick, since his mother was to inherit everything before his step-father changed his will he wouldn't have access to Willowkeep's money. He turned out to be a pretty decent fellow, unlike his scheming, and conniving mother, Nora. I was so happy when Charlotte stood up to her.

I would've liked to have had more of an ending for Jane and Hurst--did he ask her to marry him? I didn't agree with how Nora's treachery was handled. Charlotte and Henry didn't even threaten her with the possibility of going to the police--after all she bribed a maid to frame Henry with the theft of Charlotte's jewelry and at the least Henry's reputation could've been ruined. I don't think she should've overlooked that and allowed her to continue living with them without a major apology or some form of restitution. This is a squeaky clean romance.

Donna Hatch says

Emotional, poignant, and beautifully written, this story has likable characters, deals with real-life problems, and has just enough light moments to prevent it from getting too sad. It also had a perfectly satisfying happily ever after. It was also squeaky clean. I can't wait to read another book by this author.

Katie W says

This witty, Regency romance hit the spot! I love it when a story touches on something that is real, yet not often talked about. Often times, disabilities are hidden away during this era. Charlotte is struggling to make ends meet and to care for her younger, mentally disabled sister, but a surprising twist thrusts her into wealth. Susie, the sister, is such a darling, innocent, and sweet girl and my heart nearly burst with the love and caring that Charlotte showed towards her. Charlotte is a girl with the determination to get through the toughest of situations. I loved reading her missives written to Anne Boleyn--they brought a smile to my face.

Henry is a hard-working, and sometimes jealous, fellow, but he has the best interests at heart of those around him. It's delightful to watch the way he interacts and cares for both Susie and Charlotte. You can tell a man's character by the way he treats others.

I love droll interactions and humor and this book abounds in both. Of course, there are some serious moments, especially dealing with a threat, but the plot is very engaging and I loved it! I love that I can recommend it to readers who love a good, clean, romance with a dash of mystery and intrigue.

Content: some moments of peril; mild romance. Clean!

I received a copy in exchange for an honest review

Jennifer says

I wanted to like this book, I really did! The idea of it was a good one, it is a clean romance, and it had so much potential. But there were so many things wrong with it too! I will admit that the last little bit of the book almost made me give it 3 stars, but I couldn't because of how much I dreaded reading it up until that

point. The only reason I finished the book was because I spent money on it when I could have bought another book!

I think the author really missed out on a good plot builder. At the first the two main characters had three days together in a carriage all alone. Perfect time to get to know one another! What do we know of those three days? NOTHING!!! All that time to build a relationship and we don't know anything about them, and they don't know anything about each other. Heck! I can tell you more about someone I met in the grocery store line than what these two knew of each other, and they are suppose to have romantic feelings. I couldn't get past that!

Then the whole Anne Boleyn thing was strange too. How could a girl who had to survive on her own not think that someone might getting those letters that she was writing? That was out of character to me.

One redeeming quality of the book was that the evil guy isn't so evil.

I was glad to finish this book. I wish I could get my money back so I could buy the other one I was thinking about.

Taffy says

Opening line:

“Twelve thousand a year?”

Henry and Charlotte. What better named pair? I loved reading their story!

Charlotte Darby is destitute and caring for her handicapped sister when she becomes the heiress to Willowkeep. She's a kind, strong, funny lady with a fierce sense of protection and loyalty to those she loves, especially her sister who is frightened of almost everyone. I immediately started rooting for her. She's also lucky to have a wonderful steward who feels compelled to take of her and her sister.

Henry Morland is taken in by Charlotte's honesty and lack of airs. And somehow, Susan, the little sister, is comfortable and comforted with him. Henry is THE sweetest person with his own flaws that make him lovable. But he can never be with Charlotte because he is beneath her socially. And Charlotte has vowed never to marry.

An added bonus to the story is the letters Charlotte writes to Anne Bolen. Loved it and the cover that goes along with this part of the story. Keep reading past the last chapter for more love and affection.

The characters are well-written, the story flows and the pace is consistent. I couldn't put the book down. If you want a good regency romance with wit, bravery, love of family, and a possible ghost, this book is for you! It's worth your time!

L: No

S: No

V: some tense moments

Thanks to netgalley for the advance read in exchange for my honest review!

5 STARS!

Brooke -Brooke's Books says

Entire review Here = <http://brooke-brookesbooks.blogspot.c...>

This is the first book I've read by Julie Daines. I will definitely be checking out her other works.

I have read historical fiction where the wealthy gentleman sweeps the pretty girl off her feet. Her life is changed, her problems are solved. Think Cinderella. One of the things I love about this story is that it mixes all of those typical stories up.

Here we have a woman who has nothing. She is literally living day to day on what she can scrap together. She is lifted up from this situation not by the love of her life, but by inheriting a fortune from an unknown-to-her relative. This throws her into a new world, one that is difficult in its own way. Charlotte, our heroine, is smart and resourceful. But in this new situation she needs help. She finds that help in Henry.

From the moment Charlotte meets Henry she has a friend and confidant. Henry helps Charlotte through her transition and at the same time faces his own problems. He doesn't want to burden her when she is going through so much herself. I love that these two characters both have trials in their lives and find relief from those difficulties with each other.

An added layer to this story is Charlotte's sister. We learn through Charlotte's relationship with her sister some of the horrific history of this family. Charlotte's difficulties are not just learning how to live in a different economic circumstance.

Some of this story is told through Charlotte's letters to Anne Boleyn. It is interesting to read how Charlotte sees Anne and uses this relationship. I love when a book gets me interested in history. This one does just that.

This story is not a Cinderella story. The heroine is truly our heroine. In some ways, she is the one to "save the day". With both characters in need, they find peace with each other. They lift each other up to a better place.

Warnings: None

I would let my 15 year old read this book.

Julie says

Charlotte Darby will do anything to protect her mentally handicapped sister, but their money is running out and, in a day and age where options for women were severely limited, Charlotte doesn't have a lot of choices. Things are looking bleak until a man appears on her doorstep to say she's inherited an estate and all that entails. Charlotte accepts the generous gift and as they travel to their new home, she becomes acquainted with the estate's steward, Mr. Henry Morland. Henry is loving and kind and anxious to help Charlotte settle into her new station. But the thing that surprises Charlotte most is how her sister takes to him. Their bond and his concern for their welfare cracks open her heart, but she doesn't want to let herself feel anything for

him. If she becomes attached to any man there is a family secret that could destroy them. Or will it?

This is a sweet story of family relationships and finding where we belong. The author does a tremendous job of describing the Willowkeep estate and its surroundings to add more than a hint of realism. Our heroine is genuine and sincere, even while making mistakes, and will pull on the reader's heartstrings. She is loyal to a fault and tries to hard to belong in a family that doesn't seem to want her. Yet, Charlotte has suffered so much, it's easy to see why she needs that in her life. I thought her character had a lot of depth, especially when it came to her sister and how fiercely she protected the young girl from anyone who might treat her differently because of her challenges. Beyond that, I particularly enjoyed her letters to Anne Boelyn and the tiny whisper of a ghost story throughout the book. It also deserves a mention that our hero, Henry, was everything a woman could want---sweet and compassionate, trying to do the right thing no matter what it costs him, and yet strong and protective when he needs to be. This tender love story was a beautiful unfolding of what it truly means to build a family.

Originally reviewed on <http://ldswritermom.blogspot.com>

Lisa (Bookworm Lisa) says

4.5 stars

This is a book that I have anticipated reading. I have enjoyed Julie Daines writing and knew I would be in for a treat.

Charlotte is left to take care of her disabled sister. The time is regency, so the attitudes of society toward Suzie was to institutionalize her. Charlotte knows that Susie needs love and nurture. Taking care of her sister puts her in a bind. She can't work, so they are out of money and have few options. When it seems as if all is lost, or her "ship is sinking", Charlotte receives word that she has inherited an estate and a large allowance. This saves them.

Her steward, Henry Morland, is young and an exemplary man. He doesn't judge and sees the love and devotion between the sisters. He immediately wants to protect them. He shields and saves them at every opportunity.

There are many unlikely regency scenarios in this book. I loved it. Two ordinary people who do extraordinary things are the main characters. Each sees themselves as less than their worth. Both have troubles that they try to hide from each other and the world. To me this book was about opening doors and windows when it seems that there are many barriers.

I love regency, but I like the realism in the characters. They are not "puffed up" and are not the typical gentry.

Julie Carpenter says

After reading the synopsis and some reviews about this novel, I really thought I knew what it was going to be about. I was wrong in my thought process but was not disappointed by the storyline and characters at all.

The MCs are great and I loved the change of POV so that as a reader we could see and feel what they both were experiencing.

Miss Charlotte Darby has seen much heartache and sorrow in her life. On the flip side she has also been blessed with much love. She has been abandoned by everyone she loves, except a much younger sister, and is on the brink of utter ruin and a life on the streets. Yet she does everything in her power and strength to find a way of surviving and making sure her sister is safe. Her love and care revolves around her sister, Susie. If anything were to happen to Susie, Charlotte would cease to fight.

Salvation and relief come in the form of the death of her uncle, her mother's brother. He has died and on his deathbed transfers all he owns into Charlotte's possession, thus making her a very wealthy and independent heiress. To say Charlotte is a fish out of water in her new life and world would be a gross understatement. She was not raised to be a lady...she lacks the speech, the refinement, the etiquette, the understanding, and yet for her sister she will jump any hoop to make it work.

I really enjoyed this novel by Julie Daines. When I picked it up I was thinking that it was my first novel by her but I soon realized that I have read, and own, *Anna and the Iron King*. So having now read two of her novels I will definitely pick up more by her. This one felt a little slower paced than the *Iron King* but was done well. She tackles an issue that you don't find in many books of this genre. Children with special needs. I really applaud Julie Daines for the way she wrote this novel. I have worked with special needs children since high school, teaching at a summer school for them in college, working as a personal teaching trainer with them individually, playing with many who are children of dear friends and most especially loving and knowing my sweet, perfect niece who has Down syndrome. How these many individuals were treated for years, and even very recently is very hard to fathom. Why?

I loved Charlotte's love, devotion and unending sacrifice for Susie. Such a sweet relationship.

The last thing I'm going to say about *Willowkeep* is that there is a sweet romance throughout. I love her hero. He was the perfect counter match for her. With lots of twists through the plot and everyone vying for one thing or another about Charlotte, he was a constant and supportive force. Charlotte at times is very naive but considering her upbringing that isn't wholly surprising.

I came to like most all of the characters, probably because of Charlotte's goodness and loving/forgiving nature.

If you are looking for a sweet read about hardship, forgiveness, heartache, intrigue, love and sacrifice then I would recommend grabbing a copy of *Willowkeep*. Very well done!

There is some mild fighting, nothing graphic, and some very mild kissing in the book. I'd say it was a squeaky clean read.

My awesome and wonderful hubby bought me a copy of this book for my birthday. Thanks sweetheart for all the many, many books you've bought me to feed my reading obsession over the years!!!

Happy Reading!!!

Aimee (Getting Your Read On) says

I absolutely adored this book. The characters, the setting, the time period- everything. I was drawn in from

the very beginning and had a hard time putting this book down.

Nobody has a better, kinder heart than Charlotte Darby. I love how fiercely she protects her sister and how ready she is to help those around her. Charlotte longs for family and a safe place to fall. She is so endearing. My heart loved her almost at once.

I dare you not to fall in love with Henry. Honest. He is exactly the kind of male lead I love. Strong, steady and reliable. So unassuming and he's never late. :) His quiet strength gives Charlotte exactly what she needs. He is always there for her. It was perfect.

This book had a bit of intrigue and suspense and it played out like an excellent movie in my head. I can still picture it now. This will go down as one of my favorite regency novels so far this year.

Content: Clean- some mild violence

I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for my honest review.

Lucinda says

I really liked this one. Charlotte and Ryan have a great story.
