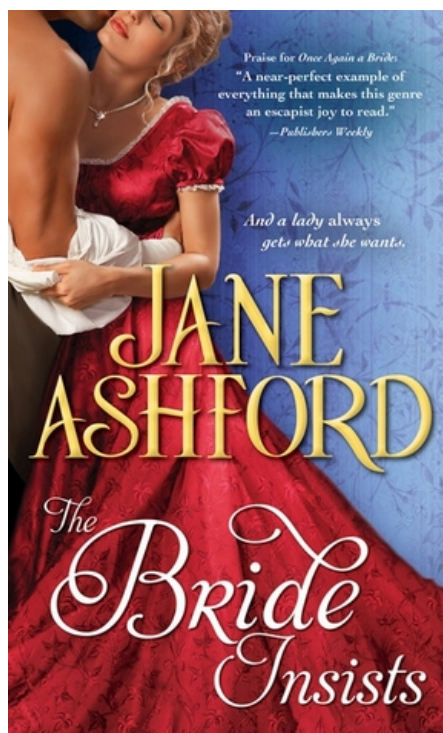




The Bride Insists

Jane Ashford

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When governess Clare Greenough learns she's inherited a fortune, the good news comes with a catch: it will be held by her cousin until Clare can find a husband.

To stave off ruin, Jamie Boleigh, the seventh Baron of Trehearth, agrees to marry Clare under the condition that she keeps the money, a provision he hopes to overturn. Their passionate relationship becomes a battle of wills.

When the cousin tricks Jamie into betraying his wife, he'll have to prove the truth or lose her forever.

The Bride Insists Details

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From Reader Review The Bride Insists for online ebook

Mrs Giggles says

This review is going to have some spoilers as I have an issue with the way the author handles some crucial plot development, so you know what to do if you want to read this story some time soon. Well, don't say I didn't warn you.

Claire Greenough is a governess who has long learned how to mask her feelings very well. Her employer and this woman's children make her want to pull every hair from her head, but she knows her place. It's not like she has any better prospects to look forward to, after all. No, wait, scratch that.

Shortly after the story opens, she learns that she has inherited plenty of money and even some property from a great-uncle. There is a catch: the funds are "supervised" by her much-despised cousin who would make sure that she would not receive any money if he can help it. She could make life easier for herself if she gets married, because then her husband would take over the reins of her finances, but how would she find a husband who would not take advantage of the situation?

As it happens, the solicitor that handles this matter also manages the affairs of James Boleigh, Baron Trehearth. Since his father committed suicide, the estate has fallen to pieces, and Jamie spent all his time trying to make things work by... drinking, complaining to his friends, and drinking some more. Maybe he has some plans, I guess, but I'm not given any insight into those plans. He has to agree with Claire's terms, of course, because he needs the money. Can a marriage based on such contractual foundation blossom into true love?

The packaging doesn't mention this, but The Bride Insists has Jamie's alcoholism being a big part of the conflict late in the story. It's hard not to see that coming, though. That guy has an alcoholic beverage in one hand every time he's in the scene... wait, there is one scene in which he is drinking coffee, but that's because he is hung over. Let's just say that boyfriend here is a drunk, a drunk who becomes increasingly mean as the story progresses.

Meanwhile, Claire flutters through the story like Mary Poppins with a working honey pot. She charms the villagers, makes Jamie's creepy siblings - unnaturally precocious, finish each other's sentences, probably skin bunnies in the cellar - docile and friendly, and generally does everything right. She is vulnerable only to Jamie's mighty pee-pee, but then again, since he's her first and only lover, I suspect she's overrating that buffoon's sexual prowess. He's a drunk fool, after all.

And that's the problem right there: Jamie's a drunk fool. He can't do anything right, but at the same time, he resents the wife for being so perfect and being in control of the family finance. Real men don't let their wives wear the trousers at home, after all, you know. Predictably enough, he drinks even more and ends up trying to seize control of his wife's money... while pretending to be all sweet and nice to her.

I don't dislike Jamie, let's make this clear. I pity him. He's a fool, and he lets the bottle control his life. The problem here is that Jamie's drinking habit becomes increasingly out of control, culminating in his betraying his own wife late in the story. The author spends a very long time building up Jamie's problem, and then uses Full House style of resolution to make things right again for the two of them. One hug, and I'm supposed to believe that these two would live happily ever after. Really, just like that!

I'm so glad that Claire understands that Jamie is just being a mean drunk because, I guess, he can't help it and he really doesn't mean to be so bad, but the whole thing seems like excuses used by a woman to enable her

partner's bad habits. The guy clearly resents his wife for being better than he is, and he also doesn't take criticism well. Jamie has an ego that is far bigger than his brain, and I have seen how far he can go when he loses his perspective and lets his resentment fester. I don't buy the too-neat, too-brief make-up moment in the last two pages, therefore.

Perhaps an epilogue showing these two being happy would have assuaged my doubts, I don't know. As it is, I close this book wondering how long it will be before he starts beating her. That's not the kind of take-home feeling I'd like to experience from reading a romance novel.

Oh, and the author's head hopping is out of control here. Every time there are two or more people in a scene, the author would hop from one character's head to another character's with every paragraph, to the point that I actually feel something like seasickness and have to read this book only in small doses each time.

All in all, The Bride Insists should have just been re-titled The Bottle Insists. I feel a bit like drinking myself once I'm done with it.

Blodeuedd Finland says

For a romance, there was not a lot of romance (but there was passion ;). When you read it you will understand. They had to build their relationship first.

Clare is a governess, and she longs for something else. She inherits money, but typically, her idiot evil cousin has a say on how she can spend it. Poor Clare, she just wanted freedom. To make her own choices, to have her own money. So she marries someone who needs money and signs a contract.

Jamie, oh Jamie. I wanted to kick him in the balls. It works really well with hating for for parts (do not worry about that!). I am not going to say where the issue lay, but it had to do with him being a male, and thinking a certain way at times. Then I wanted to kick him in the balls and slap him.

So as you can see their hasty marriage does come with issues. They move closer, they move further apart. Insert 2 siblings, a house falling apart, some passion and two strong wills.

I must say it has been a while since I wanted to slap someone like this. Mostly it's cos they are evil or does evil things but here, it was just different. And when they all got their heads straight it was nice to see a HEA.

Koki says

Jane Ashford prichádza s románom, v ktorom sa venuje zaujímavej otázke, a to: či žena dokáže robiť správne finančné rozhodnutia a spravovať majetok. V dobe, v ktorej žije (čap 19. storočia), je niečo podobné neslýchané. Pevnú ruku nad financiami odjakživa drží muž - manžel. Ako to nakoniec dopadne? Zvyšok recenzie nájdete tu: <http://kokinakniznica.blogspot.sk/201...>

Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

DNF @ 60% because it was excruciatingly dull.

MC: I need to find someone to marry so I can keep my fortune!

Love interest: Marry me! I will claim to respect you and allow you full control to your fortune if you will only allow me to use all your money repairing my broken-down estate. (You're gonna lose interest in being a controlling harpy after I fuck your brains out anyway! Who needs brains when you have babies!)

MC: *oblivious* Ok!

Lady's Maid: I have a bad feeling about this.

Vicar: Hmm.

Lady's Maid: That Vicar is annoying, but he's kind of cute. Maybe. No, he's not.

Love interest's twin sisters: WE ARE ADORABLE TWIN GIRLS WHO WEAR PANTS AND ACT LIKE BOYS! LOVE US!

MC: Okay!

Love interest: Well, I've been fucking her brains out and she STILL wants to control the money. Shit. Ugh, stupid cow.

MC: Man, everything's going so smoothly within our marriage!

MC redecorates the estate, Love Interest repairs shit, complains about money. They fuck

Lady's maid bickers with the vicar

twin sisters raise hell

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Lady's maid bickers with the vicar

MC redecorates the estate, Love Interest repairs shit, complains about money. They fuck

twin sisters raise hell

Nope.

SOS Aloha says

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. – Matthew 6:21

Clare Greenough is a resourceful governess – she is determined to make something of her life despite her challenging circumstance. She received an unexpected inheritance from a distant uncle, but her windfall is still controlled by her conniving cousin until she is married. Clare learns through her solicitor that James Boleigh, the 7th Baron Trehearsh, needs an infusion of cash. So she hatches a plan to marry Jaime, save his estate, but retain control of her inheritance. The last clause irritates Jaime but he still marries Clare.

THE BRIDE INSISTS focuses on Clare's introduction to Jaime's family and the Cornish countryside. It was a pure delight to witness Clare's new sense of self and security as she settles into bucolic bliss. As Clare explores her attraction to Jaime, the plot thickens. Jaime acts exactly as expected for a titled man in the Regency Era – a man who had no training for his position but only knows the comfort of the bottle. Ashford subtly addresses the era's disregard for women's rights and even the moral lapse of the bored ton. The secondary characters – Clare's companion, Jaime's friends, the twin sisters, and even the dog add to the

mayhem of miscommunication that tests the couple's union. But ultimately hero and heroine learn that what they want is not necessarily what they need.

Recommended read for fans of traditional Regency romance, lighthearted banter, and off the wall characters.

I received an ARC from Sourcebooks for an honest review.

Shauni says

Originally Reviewed For: Bodice Rippers, Femme Fatales and Fantasy

It seems to be women find their way week here on BR. Many of the books I am reading are dark and edgy which is not so unbelievable. What makes it interesting is the fact that these are historicals. Books written about Regency England, that time of possibility in England. England is not at war with anyone and life shows so much promise. But there is always a darker and edgier world out there and today's historical authors seem to be finding it and sharing it. Jane Ashford delivers a wonderful book about well, life. The Bride insists is a about a woman who could be any woman from any time.

Clare Greenough was raised to have it all, a debut, a season, life in society but when her life takes some drastic changes Clare is forced to reconsider her options. And at the time, for a woman alone, gently bred with no income, there was really only one or two options open to her. One of them, becoming a governess. Clare has been a governess for six years, not a Julie Andrews, Sound of Music Governess, nope she is considered nothing more than a drudge. With boring, dull and worst of all spoiled children. When she inherits a tidy sum life should be looking up. Except her greedy cousin has managed to get himself named co-trustee on the account. Clare will never see any of this money if he has his way and she knows it. BUT there is one caveat, if she marries, he loses any control. So Clare decides to find a man who needs her money and buy herself a husband. Only she has a one condition, she wants to maintain control of her money.

Jamie Boleigh, the seventh Baron of Trehearth, inherited a crumbling estate. Basically broke and getting broker, he knows he is "this" close to losing it all. He has done everything he can to make it work but while he has ideas, good ones, they take investment and he can't even manage to get a bank loan. So when his solicitor suggests he might want to consider marriage to an heiress he knows. Jamie goes for it. Sure he understands that she will remain in control of her money but really, who cares? He can save his heritage. Sounds perfect right?

Clare and Jamie have to work at making this marriage work. They are both decent people but have been raised in a world where men rule. Clare has every determination to make their world a better place but sometimes it isn't easy. Jamie on the other hand is not quite so appreciative while he loved the aspect of saving his heritage he honestly assumes that Clare will get bored with all the "man's" work and eventually turn everything over to him. Until then, poor Jaime is constantly getting his pride bruised and acting like an arrogant ass. At times he is not a likable character but he is redeemable. Possibly.

When things come to a head and Jamie insists Clare give him control of the money, Clare is not a happy woman. Worlds collide. It bothered me that Jamie never asked or understood why Clare wanted control. It wasn't about humbling him, it was about her security. If she had control of her money she would never be desperate again. Honestly had Jamie allowed their marriage to evolve and not get all het up.. these two probably would have evolved into a beautiful couple. Instead he forced an issue that creates a chasm between the two of them.

Seriously, I LOVED this book.. Jamie and Clare became real to me. I Could discuss the nuances of their relationship until the cows came home. Since I live in an Urban environment.. that might take a while. My point is, I was engaged.. I felt for Clare, I wanted to smack Jamie upside the head.. I... well you get the point. I am not sure what was so special about this book.. oh wait, excellent writing! I know these people.. I understand them.. They may be Regency era characters but they could be living next door, right now.

Check out this book! It is well worth the read

Shauni

This review is based on the ARC of The Bride Insists, provided by netgalley and is scheduled to be released on March 4, 2014

Kim says

I don't care for leisure reading where one of the characters is struggling with an addiction. I also wasn't completely sold on the two main characters. Overall, an ok read.

Nina says

So dull. The main character was very stereotypical, needing to be married to inherit a fortune. The male character is an alcoholic as well as a male chauvinist which is kept a bit subdued by the author though very evident. The villain is ridiculous and the ultimate happy ending was very predictable. I wouldn't recommend this book at all.

SSShafiq says

I think I've read this one before and liked it better then.

This was not bad but not good either. The writing is component but there isn't enough movement in the book. The characters hardly grow and the central conflict is weak. I get that the H/h have different views on the competence of women in matters of finance but the hero just came across as an idiot. I had sympathy for the heroine situation but it got stale.

Plus I think the hero is a alcoholic- which was a bit of sour note while reading. Other I didn't think he has a much of a character.

Julia says

aucun intérêt.

Sophie says

3,5 stars.

At 1/3 of the book I didn't know if I even want to finish it. Friendship between Selina and Clare was instant, but it was Selina that really put me off. She was acting as someone who is something more than Clare. The word describing her would be bitchy.

I really liked the twins. They were entertaining and funny.

Clare dissappointed me a little when she escaped in London after she and Jamie had a fight. And Jamie drank a lot. Like a lot, a lot.

Sarah (Head Stuck In A Book) says

There's nothing like discovering a new historical romance author, especially one you were never aware of and whom also has a healthy back catalogue to their name, Jane's writing is engaging, a delight to read and add to that this was a great story to get lost in.

Clare is a Governess who inherits a fortune after the death of an Uncle, her joy at this news soon turns to disbelief when she is told that the only way her cousin Simon will release the money is if she's married, not letting that stop her she goes to her solicitor inquiring as to whether he knows of any men short on money, who would be willing to marry her only on the condition that they sign a contract to agree that Clare will be in charge of her own money, enter Jamie, Baron Trehearth who after the death of his Father has been left with a lot of debt and no means to afford to keep his house and lands out of the banks hands.

With the idea that Clare will eventually come around to the idea, after they're married that she'll relinquish the funds to him he agrees and they wed, once arriving at Trehearth, Clare discovers that Jamie has kept two important details from her, namely his twin ten year old sisters: Tegan & Tamsyn, who are out of control and insist on dressing and acting like boys, add in the downtrodden state of the house and gardens and their work is cut out for them.

In time they both develop feelings for one another but all that is changed when Clare discovers that Jamie has gone behind her back about her finances, fleeing to London to put some distance between them while Jamie figures out exactly why she's mad at what he did, will he figure it out in time to save their marriage or will it be too late?

I adored this book the storyline, characters and setting made this for a book that I didn't want to put down, so absorbed I was in this world that Jane had created with her vivid descriptions and details, I will definitely be hunting down her other works, she's got herself a new fan and I will definitely be awaiting all her future releases.

Highly recommended for fans of well written historical romances.

EuroHackie says

OMG, I LOVED THIS BOOK. I can't even express how much I loved it. I have a thing for the Marriage of Convenience trope, and boy does this one deliver.

It's pretty much exactly what it says on the tin. The setup is beautiful in its simplicity: we meet Clare, learn of her dire circumstances and then her change in fortune. Unfortunately, her odious cousin is one of the trustees of her fortune, and he'd never allow her a penny if he had his way. She turns to her solicitor (the other trustee) to help find a suitable candidate for marriage, one who would be agreeable to her terms in allowing her to control her own money. It just so happens that said solicitor has another young client on the edge of ruin: Jamie Boleigh, Lord Trehearth. He's about to lose his estate and plunge the local village into disrepair, and he is completely and utterly depressed by the prospect.

Clare has the foresight to hire herself a companion so that she's not going into this crazy situation alone. She and Jamie meet, agree to terms, and are married by Chapter 5.

They immediately heard for Trehearth House, Jamie's estate and family seat in Cornwall. Clare and her companion, Selina Newton, are in for quite a few surprises, not the least of which is Jamie's rambunctious 10-year-old twin sisters and their larger than life dog. The house is practically in ruins, they have all of 2 servants, and Jamie is desperate to get to work on the estate.

The vast majority of the first half of the book details their life on the estate. Clare puts her previous vocation as a governess to good use and manages to bring the twins to a manageable level. She slowly begins to put the house in order: ordering furniture, hiring servants, etc. Selina is an accomplished seamstress, and she puts her talents to good use as well. (She also takes up with the local vicar, a very sweet second-chance-at-love subplot that rounds out this slice of life look at village life.)

It reminded me very much of the first couple of seasons of *Monarch of the Glen*, which of course just made me love it all more. I loved all the lush details about Clare and Jamie settling into their married life together as they begin to bond with each other, and Clare with the twins. Jamie's relationship with his sisters is strained, at best, right up until the end; he has no patience for them at all and doesn't seem to realize that his cutting remarks towards them are doing more to hurt than to help. They continue to rebel against him, but slowly start to trust Clare.

All is happy in happiness house until Jamie allows his resentment over Clare's control of the purse strings to boil over. The tipping point is when she hires builders to install a bathroom in the house without consulting him, but it had been festering for much longer than that. He explodes, and they argue, and Clare decides she needs to get away for awhile. She heads to Penzance, the nearest city, and is outraged to learn that Jamie has been going behind her back and authorizing huge drafts from her bank account. The banker treats her like a child, and she loses all of her reason. She stomps back to London, back to her solicitor, to assure herself that the men in her life can't just walk all over her.

Unfortunately, Jamie is just as stubborn as Clare is, and just as sure that he's right. He refuses to run after her, sure that she'll eventually come around and see reason like a good little obedient wife. Clare holds fast, deciding to stay in London to enjoy the Season, and she and Selina pitch up at a friend's house.

Jamie's friends in London become concerned about the obvious rift in their relationship and write to him, suggesting he come to London. He eventually decides to do just that. He's taken up drinking in Clare's absence and decides that he has the right to force her to reason and drag her back home. He shows up and basically makes a total ass of himself, which does nothing to endear him to his lady love.

Meanwhile, Clare's odious cousin has slithered back into the picture and decides to take advantage of the rift in her marriage. He cannot stand the fact that she received their uncle's money instead of him, so he maneuvers to overturn the marriage agreement that gives her control of her wealth.

They go on like this for awhile, but things are brought to a head when the twins suddenly disappear. Everyone races back to Cornwall to look for them, but they have zero luck, as the days stretch on. Clare finally happens upon the clue that brings them back, and she brings them home and confronts Jamie.

The two begin to hash out their differences. Jamie is the one who relents (yay!), finally giving up on his idea of male superiority by right of birth. He realizes that when he communicates with her, she's quite reasonable and isn't out to deny him anything.

Just when things are getting comfy and cozy again, the cousin rears his ugly head and gloats about his machinations to steal Clare's money away, using Jamie as his pawn. She is heartsick over it, and decides that she needs to get away again - but realizes that running away didn't help the last time, and that she can't keep running away forever.

The twins help her out by taking her to their hiding place, and they are eventually the ones that bring the couple back together. When Jamie returns and realizes what has happened, it's driven home to him in a huge way all of the mistakes he's made, and how long-ranging their effects are. He's grief-stricken without Clare, even going so far as to stop drinking, cold turkey. He can't continue on as he has, but for the first time, he recognizes his demons and deals headlong with them.

After three days, the twins bring Jamie to Clare and they have it out. She finally tells him about her odious cousin, and he swears he'll never unknowingly cross her again. She's a bit more realistic about matters, telling him that they'll continue to make mistakes, but they both declare their love for each other and boom, happily ever after.

I really, really enjoyed the female characters in this book. Clare has a good head on her shoulders. She goes to great pains to safeguard herself and her newfound wealth; at the same time, she throws herself into her marriage and her new life in Cornwall. She has an aura around her that draws others in; she even manages to get through to the twins, mostly by listening to them.

I liked the twins, too, though they had to grow on me. I'm not much for precocious prank-playing children in my romance novels, but they became central characters, surrogate daughters to Jamie and Clare. Realizing that they had to care for the twins made the protagonists grow the hell up. The twins became their own separate characters, too, and were great foils for each other. I wouldn't mind reading more about them as they grew up.

The London set were also quite fun: Jamie's friends and the old Mrs. Howland, who sponsors Clare in Society. There's a bit of drawing room intrigue, but they both serve their purpose in the story and round it out nicely.

Jamie is perhaps the least likable of all the main characters, mostly because he just drinks way too much. He loses himself in the bottom of a bottle for most of the second half of the book and it takes him way too long to come to his senses. But at the same time, we see the struggle with his alcoholism and what he does to overcome it. He has been handled a rotten lot in life, but he's willing to work hard and do better for himself and his family. He truly comes full circle, which was very heartening.

This is a bit warmer than a straight up Regency; what few love scenes there are, are fairly opaque. Still, these two don't hold back their passion for one another, whether they're having sex or butting heads :P

Susan says

Jamie, the hero, is a whiny, petulant self-entitled asshole. I'm not sure why he feels so entitled to everything he doesn't have but it makes him incredibly angry and a raging drunk.

I also groaned when the obvious plot device of the "precocious" twin sisters showed up. I don't need pages of boring antics of the tween set in my romances, particularly in a novel already lacking in any romantic character development between the main characters.

Sophia says

What happens when two people enter into a marriage of convenience with conflicting agendas? I don't suppose I even need to give an answer to that one really. Conflict and drama do appear on the list of answers though I'm sure. I have been on quite the Historical Romance kick lately and wanted to try many different authors in the genre. I grabbed up this book to both try a new author and give a romance with such a potential for disaster a chance. I enjoyed it to a certain extent, but there were a few moments when I was frustrated too. Let's just say this was probably a pretty accurate look at a marriage of convenience and the rosy glow of romance wasn't as present in this one as in other similar type stories. Haha!

Jamie Boleigh, Lord Tregarth, will lose it all if he doesn't come into a great deal of money soon. He is presented with an unusual opportunity if he is willing to take it. He is offered a marriage of convenience that includes the stipulation that he leaves his new wife in control of all her funds if she agrees to help him pay off debts and restore his estate. He accepts out of desperation and assumes that with time his wife will get tired of financial decisions and money matters and will leave that to him.

Clare Greenough was reduced to near penury when her brother dies and their cousin gets the family estate. Simon forces her and her sick mother out of their home and washes his hands of them. Her mother dies and she becomes a governess. When she inherits a fortune from a great-uncle, Clare is determined to never again be put in a situation where someone else controls her money, but to get to her money which is still in Simon's tender care, she must marry. She devises a plan to keep charge of her fortune even after her marriage. It doesn't hurt that she finds her new husband attractive even as she sees the appalling situation of his estate and household.

Jamie and Clare begin their marriage on a hectic note when she discovers just what she has gotten herself into. He jumps into taking care of the lands and tenants while she tackles the household. Fortunately, her newly hired companion/friend is there to help. Slowly, they both start to enjoy their new situation and each other, but their differences in thought on the finances eventually drive a wedge.

This book was somewhat of what I was expecting, but then not. I knew there would be conflict over their difference of opinion and I was ready for it. I also figured the evil Simon would play his part and he did- hate that weasel. The addition of Jamie's impish younger twin sisters, the cute autumn romance between Selena and the vicar and even the inclusion of the domestic scenes and village life were adorable. I liked the idea of two flawed people coming together and helping each other grow. Clare needs to learn to trust after her bad experiences with Simon and Jamie needs to fight his alcoholism and become a worthy lord and family man. All that I truly enjoyed and wanted more of.

But that being said...

I took up issue with things about half-way through. Both of the main characters went into the marriage with understandably selfish motives. They made an agreement because they needed things. I was willing to let that string along for a while until the relationship took and started to grow, but the thing is that neither let go of their selfishness and were blind to each other's needs. Jamie ran from issues into his bottle and lost his temper. Clare? Clare just ran. A few times, if she would have just stuck around long enough to ask instead of assume, it would have ended so much better. Clare couldn't seem to see that she just steam-rolled over things flinging her money and decisions about- basically treating Jamie like a kept man. She couldn't seem to see that he just wanted to be able to hold his head up for the first time and having to always come across decisions she made without him just kept reminding him of his place. You'd think working as a governess and kowtowing to spoiled children and their parents would help her see that, but nope. And Jamie, he was so busy trying to alieve his guilt and shame over the condition of his estate and feeling sorry for his circumstances that he neglected his sisters and neglected to see what was driving Clare to need control the way she did. I tried to understand because both were really shaped by their pasts, but it got annoying that they were so oblivious about things not on their own agendas.

Now I don't want to give the impression that I hated the book or the people. I struggled with their issues, but at the same time I loved them together. Against the odds, these two were really making a go at things and were true partners of a sort that was novel in that era bringing an estate and home to life. It was remarkable and I loved watching it happen. Their passion and eagerness to be together without playing games was what showed me that no matter how idiotish they both acted at times elsewhere that their relationship was right and good. They were good for each other.

I would have liked a bit more closure because I didn't feel that all issues between them were totally resolved and I would have loved a final confrontation with Simon who it never did say what his issue with Clare was. However, at least the two of them did lay a lot of things out there that needed to be said and were well on the road to getting it right this time around.

So all in all, I was glad to read Jamie and Clare's story (and yes, for those in the know I kept having Outlander moments because of the name similarities) and want to check out the author's other Regency Romances.

My thanks to Sourcebooks Casablanca and Netgalley for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for my honest review thoughts.