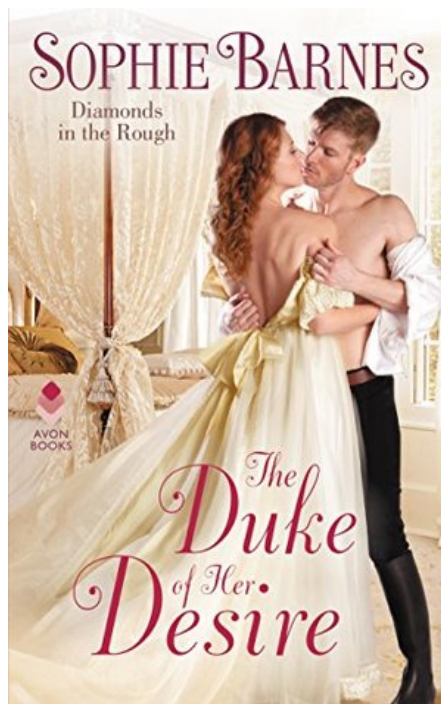




The Duke of Her Desire

Sophie Barnes

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The Duke of Her Desire Sophie Barnes

He was only supposed to keep an eye on his friend's sister . . . now he's about to lose his heart . . .

When Thomas Heathmore, Duke of Coventry, agrees to steer his friend's inexperienced younger sister through society, he doesn't expect the lady in question to be so infernally stubborn. Amelia Matthews seems to have little interest in balls or suitors at all. Instead, she intends to open a school, and against his better instincts, Thomas offers to help. Yet somewhere along the line, Amelia ceases to be a simple responsibility . . . and becomes an undeniable temptation.

Since her brother inherited a dukedom, Amelia's prospects have transformed. But though she's long been secretly infatuated with Thomas, she refuses to heed the arrogant aristocrat's advice. If only it were as easy to ignore his heated touch. And as Amelia soon learns, the *ton* is a minefield, where one moment's indiscretion can unleash a scandal—or entice her to surrender everything to the duke of her desire . . .

The Duke of Her Desire Details

Date : Published December 26th 2017 by Avon

ISBN :

Author : Sophie Barnes

Format : Kindle Edition 384 pages

Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Historical, Historical Fiction

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From Reader Review The Duke of Her Desire for online ebook

Hannah says

ARC REVIEW

Duke of Her Desire is book two of Sophie Barnes' Diamonds in the Rough series, it can be read as a stand-alone. The only thing you need to know for this book that happened in the previous book was what and where they were before Rafe Matthews inherited a title, which can be explained in about a sentence. Rafe and his new wife need some time alone so they arrange it where Coventry will be his sister's escort to all their social functions with the help of Coventry's mother and the girl's eccentric aunt.

Amelia Matthews has no luck when it comes to deportment whenever she is around Coventry, she always finds herself in a situation that doesn't show her at her best. He is seemingly perfect and that alone makes her nervous and always manages to mess up around him and the fact that he manages to point it out as well is even more disconcerting. Amelia is willing to go along with the matchmaking her aunt and Coventry's mother have planned but Amelia has plans of her own. Now that she is in a place to help the children of St. Giles she will not be stopped, she's going to start a school and already has the property. When Coventry finds out about Amelia's plan he is proud of her endeavor and is willing to help, but when it turns out that someone doesn't want Amelia there he will protect her and not just because he promised her brother he would.

Coventry always thought that Amelia was the prettier of the two sisters but now that he's spending more time with her he finds that he actually wants to spend time with her even if they do end up arguing most of the time anyways. He has convinced himself he is not in the right place to court and eventually get married he has other obligations, but his feelings for Amelia make him want to rethink his stance on that.

Overall, it was a good read. Coventry and Amelia had a nice romance both of their hard headedness and their inability to communicate with each other and not to mention jumping to conclusions (Amelia) get in the way of them finding their HEA much sooner. I love Sophie Barnes writing style, she has a great narrative going on switching the third person POV of Amelia and Coventry it gives great insight into the characters. The mystery was really good, I wish there was a little more to the romance. I liked the little tidbit letting us know what the third book is going to be about.

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.

In this stunning new book I fell in love with this story, and yes it's not quite a five star read, but it was so enjoyable and sweet and charming and I honestly think this is some of Barnes' best work so far. I feel like her writing improves with each book that she writes. Now I did miss out on reading book one "A Most Unlikely Duke" but in all honesty I don't think you need to read this trilogy in order. And even though I always prefer to read books in order, I caught on quickly.

But basically here is what happens in this story. Amelia and her brother and younger sister are thrown into a life they never planned on. They all grew up on the streets, learning to survive in St. Giles, and then they learn that her brother is up for being a Duke that he inherited. And their life is torn upside down and turned. Amelia is having to learn so many new things and living a lifestyle she never really wanted and there are

expectations for her to marry and VERY soon and she is just not quite ready. But when her brother leaves on a honeymoon with his new bride, his best friend, the Duke of Coventry, is to help Amelia and Juliette out in society.

At first, there is a good friendship that forms between Thomas and Amelia which quickly turns into something more. Thomas knows that Amelia is off limits, she is the sister of his best friend but Amelia is so different from the regular debutantes he meets among the Ton. And as they work together on a project that Amelia is passionate about, those sparks turn very real and Thomas will have to be brave enough to take a chance on Amelia.

Even though friendship would never be enough. With Coventry, she would always long for more.

There are so many unique dynamics in this story that makes this for a great romance. First off we have the forbidden romance between the best friend of the brother and the sister....I really love this trope so much and I do love reading a nice forbidden romance and this book was simply endearing. Then we have the fact that our hero is a father with a son who deals with autism (although back then they had no idea what that was, and just referred to it "troubled" children who needed more attention) and Thomas has been focusing on his welfare for years that he has neglected what he really wants until he falls in love with Amelia and he has to face up to himself and make some decisions for his future.

Then we have Amelia, who is struggling with her new life and wants to give back to the community. So she has a dream of building a school for those less fortunate who are poor and struggling. I truly admired this quality to her character, seeing a young woman who has only known the streets, and now has a life of luxury but wants to help those in need. The only aspect I wasn't sure about is the reaction of the Ton. Many of them were pleased and approved of her actions, but from what research I have done of England society back then, that was NOT approved of much so I thought that was a bit odd, but I think it worked out for the story as a basis and I loved that our heroine stands on her own and goes after her dreams which work with her new position pretty well. And we only get a couple interactions between Amelia and Thomas's son, but boy they were so charming especially since she "connects" with him in a way that no one else does and these moments definitely are heartfelt.

I found the romance to be very swoony and man some of the "moments" between these two especially the kissing scenes were beyond sexy. There is just something about kissing in the bushes and trying to keep it from everyone without being "ruined" that just adds a bit more excitement which is one of the reasons I just love this era and makes for a great setting for a romance. And boy they definitely have powerful chemistry, but there is only one bedroom scene toward the end, but what I found most impressive is that these "embraces" during the story are just as sexy as the actual bedroom scene. Which shows the true talent of a great writer. So good job to this author for creating such a warm and sexy romance that leaves you happy and eager for Juliette's story.

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Stacey is Sassy says

Needed a change, and I'm glad I did

Sometimes, a change of genre (well, sub-genre) is all it takes to get me out of a book funk. Maybe book funk is the wrong word, more like book flats. You know where it's OK but it's kind of a straight line with no passion to turn the page or desperation to find out what's next.

I admit, at first I was just humming along, thinking flat thoughts, but then it starts to get a little interesting. I wasn't sure how I would go considering I had not read the first book in the series. I was fine. Yes, I was definitely curious about the first book but I managed to follow along without any problems.

Historical romance is a genre that satisfies my deep need to be a lady. Anyone who knows me knows that I have an interest in fashion and can be quite obsessive about table manners. This does not mean that I am always well put together. I love lounging around in trackie daks. My boys know and follow most of my rules on eating etiquette but I have been known to let them turn their fork over to scoop up their peas. Even with my knowledge of etiquette and manners, I would probably fail and scandalise the ton, as a lady of those times, but I find it fascinating. I have standards though, I'm not going back in time unless I'm wealthy and titled.

Thankfully, there is no time-machine in my life and I'm quite happy to step back in time through my reads.

I really enjoyed *The Duke of Her Desire*. This is an interesting storyline where a family of aristocratic birth, are left destitute. Now quite a bit of this was skimmed over (because it was in the first book) but I got the impression (view spoiler). This left our heroine, her older brother and younger sister to grow up in St Giles, poor and living rough. Well, after years of rough, the older brother finds out that he's been named Duke of something or other.

From the slums to the ton.

Duke, does OK, falls in love (book 1) and settles his family into town. Unfortunately, with their rough upbringing, the girls need a little polish before they can join society. It's hard work, with books balanced on heads while quoting Shakespeare, but Amelia (the heroine) and her sister Juliette, are up to the task. Next step, marry them off of course.

Amelia has the hots for her brother's best mate. Thomas, Duke of something else, has helped Duke of something or other to settle into society. Their friendship is tested when Thomas and his mother are asked to keep an eye on Amelia and Juliette when Duke of something or other goes on his wedding tour. At first, it seems like it will be a fairly easy job until Thomas sees Amelia dressed in rags and walking towards the bad side of town. What follows is a courtship that starts with a deal.

While still maintaining the excitement of balls, teas, pleasure gardens and fashion plates, *The Duke of Her Desire* has a little more. We get a strong and determined young lady who wants to do a good deed but doesn't have the cutthroat mentality to win over dastardly deeds. There's a baddie trying to scare her off, and solicitors trying to take advantage. Each time these bad events happen Thomas is there to help. Unfortunately, Thomas is a bit of a knucklehead. In the usual fashion (of historical romance), his affection and desire for Amelia must be put off because of his duty to his family and title. Blah, blah, blah...bloody Thomas...look inside my man, feel those emotions. You can't just push them away.

Anyways, I really enjoyed *The Duke of Her Desire*. It was an entertaining read that kept my attention from start to finish. If you enjoy historical romance with a dash of mystery, a strong and chivalrous hero and a determined heroine, this will be perfect for you. I definitely recommend and think it could be read as a standalone but would probably be enhanced if the first book is read.

Stacey is Sassy, received a complimentary copy of this story. The copy provided is not the final copy and may be subject to edits and changes.

Jaclyn says

This is one of the those romances where the "hero" never really redeems himself. Considering the cutting remarks that said "hero" makes towards the heroine, Amelia in the guise of friendship, I expected there to be more of a dissection of those comments. Thomas would often correct Amelia on her behaviour and it really affected her self esteem, which was fragile to begin with. I was hugely disappointed that the author didn't address this fact later on in the novel. Thomas had reasons for his behaviour, I guess, but I still don't understand why Amelia would put up with some dude who criticized her and I don't think Thomas ever realized that his commentary on Amelia's appearance and behaviour was not quite the thing. Quite frankly, this one wasn't for me.

Katie Michaels says

This second story in Sophie Barnes' *Diamonds in the Rough* series marries the fish out of water trope with an older brother's best friend romance. Amelia is just a few months into her reintroduction to society after spending most of her life in the slums of St Giles. Her older brother, Raphe, is happily married now and wants to take his wife on a wedding trip, so he asks his friend, the Duke of Coventry, to keep an eye on his sisters while he's away. Of course, he has no idea that Amelia is nursing a giant crush on the man.

Not only does Coventry agree to watch out for the girls, he promises to draft his mother to help Amelia find a husband. That means lessons in dancing and comportment and a little bit of matchmaking to boot. He's only doing a favor for Raphe until two things happen which make it into something more. First, he discovers Amelia's plan to launch a school for unfortunate children. Though she doesn't show enough regard for her own safety, he can't help but be impressed by her determination and smarts in creating a business-plan. His appreciation for her grows... so that when the second thing happens—and he sees her in a low cut ball gown—it gets harder to see her as just his best friend's younger sister.

That would normally be enough to push the romance forward, but Raphe is hiding a big secret and he's afraid a relationship will bring it to light. So he pushes his feelings—and Amelia—away, only to find he keeps coming back for more.

I liked the story well enough. Amelia is a good person who wants to do a good thing, and it's hard not to root for her to get her heart's desire. Coventry's big secret is super-obvious from the get-go, which made it kind of meh as it played out. Everything develops exactly as you'd expect, which is for the most part satisfying, though I will admit, it was rather difficult to develop any kind of strong feelings or an attachment to either the characters or their love story. There were no feels. And the small danger plot tied into Amelia's school

almost felt like an afterthought or filler. There wasn't enough to it to make me worry and the resolution was decidedly weak.

Still, it wasn't a bad book, simply an innocuous one. It's a quick, easy read and it makes good on the promise of its premise. The events of book one are referenced, and there are hints about the romance in book three, but this holds up fine as a standalone.

Rating: B-

**ARC provided by Avon*

Debby "Piene Raven" says

Enjoyable read but very simplistic. Duke asks friend, who is also a Duke to watch his sisters so that they can have good connections in society in order to make good matches.

3.Stars

Isabel says

4.5*

Carole (Carole's Random Life in Books) says

This review can also be found at Carole's Random Life in Books.

I liked this book. I really enjoyed the first book in this series, A Most Unlikely Duke, so I was really excited to read more of the series. I didn't love it and I don't think I will remember much about it long term but it was a nice enough story. I thought that this was a pleasant read and am glad that I read it.

Thomas, the Duke of Coventry, agrees to watch over his friend's sisters while he is away. Amelia and Juliette are still trying to fit into society after living in poverty most of their lives. Amelia has other dreams and hopes to open a school for children where she used to live. Of course, she starts this process while her brother is away and Coventry jumps into to help. She is still keeping social commitments and considering potential husbands at the same time.

This was a really tame historical romance. I actually don't remember ever reading one quite this innocent. I don't need a lot of heat in this kind of story to find it enjoyable but I found it rather surprising. I really didn't feel a whole lot of chemistry between this pair and I do wonder if part of that could be because most of the book was rather chaste until the story got closer to the end. I don't think that you need sex in a story to have chemistry but it just seems that something was missing between this pair.

I did find both Amelia and Thomas to be interesting characters. Thomas has quite the story which I was very eager to learn more about as the story progressed. Amelia's quest to run a school was ambitious and really showed what kind of person she was. I was probably most entertained by everything that went wrong with

the preparations for the school. I liked that they both seemed really committed to the cause.

This was a book that I liked in the end. It was a nice enough read and a nice way to spend a bit of time. It wasn't my favorite in the series but it was an acceptable installment. I am actually not sure if I will be picking up the next book in the series or not at this point but I would like to read more from Sophie Barnes in the future.

I received an advance reader edition of this book from Avon Books via Edelweiss.

Initial Thoughts

This will end up either being a 3 or 4 star read. I am going with 3 for now but that may change. I liked the book but I didn't fall in love with it. I would have liked to see a little more between Thomas and Amelia. It seemed like the book was nearing the end before things really started moving between them besides very tame interest. I did enjoy reading this one.

alexis says

✿ Huge thanks to HarperCollins for providing me with an ARC in exchange for a fair review ✿

The formula of The Duke of Her Desire was great: brother's best friend, a heroine who wants to marry for love, a forbidden aspect, and a nefarious plot. However, the execution left a lot to be imagined. Reading The Duke of Her Desire felt like reading books I've already read in the past.

Both the hero and the heroine were underdeveloped. Throughout the story, I tried to get myself attached to them. I wanted to like them. Of course, wanting to like them wasn't enough. Thomas and Amelia failed to have that "spark" that makes me invested in two characters' love story. Often, I found myself more interested in the side characters like Amelia's sister, Juliette.

Even during the "heightened" moments of drama when Amelia was in danger, I was easily pulled out of the story. It lacked the "couldn't put it down" factor that I always look for in Romance.

Overall, The Duke of Her Desire isn't a bad story; It just failed to enchant me.

Barbara Rogers says

Series: Diamonds In The Rough #2

Publication Date: 12/26/17

I loved this book. It is one of my favorite books (and series) for 2017! The writing is excellent – as always – the story is well plotted and the characters are well developed. We met most of the characters in the first book, A Most Unlikely Duke. While you get some of the family background from this book, it is well covered in the first book. So, I'll give you a little detail here. The definitely unlikely duke, Raphe Matthews, was born into the gentry - his mother was the daughter of a viscount -- but through an awful set of circumstances, he, at the age of 8 ends up living in St. Giles with his three younger sisters in his care. For fifteen years he manages to care for all of them by working on the docks and prizefighting. Sadly, he does lose one sister, and that eats at him. Can you imagine any 8-year old today managing to do what this child did? Never happen - but they seemed to mature earlier back then.

After a month or so of marriage, Raphe is taking his bride on a wedding trip. That leaves his sisters with an eccentric aunt, Lady Everley, as a chaperone. Raphe also asks his best friend, Thomas Heathmore, Duke of Coventry to help steer his two younger sisters through the beginning of the season. While he is hesitant, Thomas agrees. Little does poor Thomas know what he is getting himself into.

Amelia has lived almost her entire life in St. Giles. She's learned to be resourceful, smart and determined because she had the care of her younger sisters. She cleaned, scavenged for food, prepared meals and otherwise did all the things that needed to be done to see to her family's welfare. She has had a really hard time adjusting to her new life in Mayfair since her older brother inherited a Dukedom a couple of months ago. She's been diligent about her dancing, deportment and other lessons, but she just doesn't feel as if she belongs. She's at a loss and needs something to do with herself – and she knows what that is and what she needs to do. Hang on to your hats – you are in for a ride! Almost as soon as her brother is gone she begins to put her plan into motion – much to her own peril as well as Thomas's. She just needs to manage to avoid Thomas as much as she can – because she is so very, very attracted to him.

Thomas has changed over the last five years. The once happy and cheerful man has become a recluse who seldom smiles and cuts himself off from society. He is a very loving man and has taken on many responsibilities that he feels keeps him from being able to marry himself – not to mention his big secret. However, he finds himself more and more drawn to Amelia's sunny and determined personality. He fights that attraction with everything that is in him – but he has no success. As they are thrown together more and more his attraction grows.

I love how accepting Thomas is of Amelia's project and how he tries to help her. I also love the other suitor's Amelia has. They genuinely care for her and are lovely and understanding when she doesn't return their regard. They even pitch in and help with her project as well.

It is a true delight to watch Amelia and Thomas dance around their love for each other. You begin to wonder if Thomas will finally come to his senses, but a firm sock in the face can do wonders for making one see the light. Of course, you also have a bad guy in the story who, I'll almost bet, will be back in the next book. Can't wait to see that one.

Please check out my reviews at:

Blog: <https://flippinpages.blog/>

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/flippinpages...>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/FlippinPagesRev>

"I requested and received this e-book at no cost to me and volunteered to read it; my review is my honest opinion and given without any influence by the author or publisher."

Maria Dariotis says

The Duke of Her Desire
by Sophie Barnes

Such a wonderful Romance!

Thomas Heathmore Duke of Coventry is not looking for love or a wife or a liaison, all he wants is to take care of his son and to pass a law in parliament for Peers to acknowledge their illegitimate children. Tasked with escorting his friends sisters to balls, soirées and keeping them out of trouble, particularly one sister- Amelia Mathews. Easy peasy right?

His life as he knows it will for ever be changed.

Amelia Mathews has been secretly in love with the arrogant uptight Duke from the day she first laid eyes on him. Living the life of leisure and wealth is a far cry from her life in St. Giles. Determined to find a purpose in her new life she sets in motion to open a school for the least fortunate. But the uptight stickler of a Duke is always in her path. Until they share a toe curling explosive kiss! Losing control is not like Thomas and his heart is lost to Amelia.

When Amelia's life is threatened will it be his undoing and accept that he can't live without her?

What will it take for a man to let go of his boxed in desires and grab happiness and temptation with both hands before it slips away?

The second book in Diamonds in the Rough series is another winner by Sophie Barnes.

Unexpected passion, a man unravelled by love and the woman that changed him forever! Lots of intrigue, nasty cut throat villains a handsome swoon worthy Duke will keep you turning the pages. A most enjoyable romantic read. Sophie is a magnificent story teller I highly recommend her books. Can't wait for the next one.

I received a complimentary copy from the author and publisher through Edelweiss for my honest unbiased opinion .

Sissy's Romance Book Review says

The Duke of Her Desire by Sophie Barnes is book Two in the "Diamonds in the Rough" series. This is the story of Thomas Heathmore, Duke of Coventry and Amelia Mathews. I have read the previous book (and loved it) but feel you can easily make this a standalone book.

Amelia and her sister Juliette along with their brother Raphe once lived in the slums of St. Giles. But a few months ago her brother, Raphe Matthews, became 'The Duke of Huntley'. This has lead them into a higher station in life along with feeling not up to the towns standards.

Thomas is good friends with Raphe and has tried to help him along with his sisters have a easier time being accepted by the town. So when Raphe ask him to watch his sisters while Raphe takes his wife Gabriella on a wedding trip, Thomas of course agrees. Amelia and her sister will have their eccentric Aunt as a chaperone but Raphe feels they need more guidance than her. So Thomas agrees to ask his mother the Dowager Duchess of Coventry to help him. But Amelia now that her brother is gone thinks to put into motion her part to help the less fortunate children. Amelia has always taken to helping other along with animals. Amelia had help to take care of her siblings when they were on the streets of St. Giles. So Thomas finds he is in for more than just helping her to be seen as a lady. Thomas has issues too from his past that has caused him to change greatly...is Amelia what he needs to get back to who he used to be.

I am so in love with this series! Can't wait for more stories!

Michele says

3.5 - 4 Stars

See the full review at HarlequinJunkie.com

The Duke of Her Desire is a swoon-worthy brother's best friend trope with strong characters, danger at every turn, and a romance so genuine and true it will leave readers sighing happily.

I do so love an "older brother's best friend" story and this one had me enchanted right away. I will admit I didn't read book one, Amelia's brother Raphe's journey, so I had a bit of catching up to do. But Sophie Barnes gave enough background on the family and their rise in the ranks of Society to understand the struggles Amelia went through here. Seeing how differently she and Thomas, the Duke of Coventry, viewed things was one of the most interesting bits to me. [Read More](#)

Gaele says

Amelia's brother Raphe inherited the dukedom, and moved he and his sisters from St. Giles and a hardscrabble life into a Mayfair home. After years of supporting the girls, and subsequently trying to hide his own history from the tonne (he was a boxer), he's found love and a challenge in Gabriella, and the two are off to honeymoon. Knowing that his sisters Amelia and Juliette are still struggling with their newfound positions and the social events that will soon be filling their hours, he's asked his friend Thomas, Duke of Coventry to chaperone and guide them through the maze that is appropriate and acceptable social interactions. Raphe's desire is to find Amelia a match that pleases her, and he doesn't wish for either of his sisters to feel slighted by rough edges, so Thomas is the perfect choice to soften those and provide entrée into the drawing rooms that matter.

Amelia has always had a crush on Thomas – as he and her brother are good friends of long standing. But she's also bored with the 'usual' pastimes thought appropriate for women of her standing in society. She's not fighting the endless rounds of lessons and corrections, but the whole thing feels rather limited and pointless – and if she doesn't find something that challenges and excites her, she's in danger of just digging in her heels and refusing to play the games necessary. And then there is Thomas – gone is the friendly banter she is familiar with – instead he is haughty and almost cold in his reactions, praise is hard to come by and the banter and friendliness she so wants, mixed lightly with what she felt was appreciation, is missing.

Thomas isn't going to test his friendship with Raphe by reacting in the way he would like when Amelia is around. He's worried that he may steer her wrong from a match, or that he'll be tempted and her reputation may suffer. His frustration with the situation makes him standoffish and rather cold, and those moments don't feel comfortable to him. Of course, Amelia is reacting and confused by the change in their relationship, but he just can't help reaching out to touch her.

Oh these two were sweet and cute together – and Thomas was hard not to like with his determination to be proper and right, giving his best friend's sister the best instruction and care he can provide without overreaching or stretching propriety. The two of them didn't have the banter and push-pull of many of Barnes' couples – I think it worked well here though as both felt constrained. Thomas from a big secret and his promise to Raphe, where the utter boredom and mind-numbing repetition that neither challenged nor excited Amelia have her feeling trapped and confused about Thomas' reactions. Of course, time, proximity and the rightness of their connection and explosive moments when they first kissed are huge players in their relationship as it progresses to an end that is not unexpected but wholly satisfying.

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

Stacee says

I love the older-brother's-best-friend trope, so I was quite eager to see how this one went.

Amelia and Thomas are both decent MCs. They both have a bit of a scandalous background and together they form a sort of friendship. I was hoping for a lot of feistiness and banter, but that wasn't really in the story. And while I liked the progression of their relationship, I was sort of let down by their feeble bits of chemistry.

Plot wise, it was...interesting? There was an entire thread about the house and unseemly men that felt unnecessary, but I get that conflict was needed. However, the resolution was quite unsatisfying.

Overall, I did like the story, yet there was something keeping me from loving it. I'm mildly curious about Juliette's story, but I'm not sure if I'll read it.

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