



Snowdrops and Scandalbroth

Barbara Metzger

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JUST WHAT MUST A GENTLEMAN DO TO PROVE HE'S A NOTORIOUS RAKE

Stranded in London at the mercy of strangers, Miss Kathlyn Parkland was mistrustful of Lord Chase's sympathy, surprised by his hospitality . . . and positively shocked by his outrageous offer: He wished to pay her to appear with him in public!

It seemed His Lordship wanted to counter the virtuous reputation that had branded him an oddity in the ladies' eyes. But Chase assured Miss Parkland that it would just be a ruse, for he strongly believed that if a bride was expected to enter marriage with her honor intact, so should the groom.

Miss Parkland needed the money; he needed a mistress. Several strolls on his arm would be enough to establish his character as a roguish connoisseur and complete rake. But, of course, love had a scheme of its own. . .

Snowdrops and Scandalbroth Details

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From Reader Review Snowdrops and Scandalbroth for online ebook

Dawn says

++SPOILERS++

5 stars.

REALLY great writing. Fun, great pace, lots of conflict, and fantastically witty! I LOL quite a few times.

There is so much to say I don't know where to begin.

I love the old fashioned slang even though I didn't understand some of the meaning from time to time, but it didn't matter, I got the jist of it through the context. The dialogue really set the tone of the time period.

I LOVED the heroine! I am a fan of strong female personalities, and this author did well in making her strong, intelligent, yet beautiful and feminine. In fact she was absolutely gorgeous, and I really like that.

The hero was perfect, yet flawed. He was so honorable and noble that these very same qualities became a flaw at one point..but in a good way.

All of the characters were connected to each other and blended well together. Each set of characters added to different plots but the author was brilliant in weaving these plots together and intertwining them so they weren't different stories in side the main one but connected and enhanced it.

A very quick summary:

The hero is a virgin by choice due to his upbringing and his distaste for the way men in society are expected to be rakes. Anyway, after he dumps his fiancée, (when he finds out shes was very sexually active in the past), he fights in a war for two years, comes home, and the talk of his peers is that maybe the hero mat be homosexual. He decides to find someone who can pose as his mistress.. only pose.. so he can salvage his reputation. He meets up with the heroine who is a poor country girl, in London to become a governess, but her coach was held up due to weather an other circumstances, and the position is no longer available. She has no where to go, and the hero, being honorable, convinces her (and it takes a lot of convincing) to stay with his nanny until she can find another position. He sees how beautiful she is and makes a proposition to her, offering a years salary to pose as his mistress. She agrees since she will take another name so as not to ruin her reputation, thinking she is also helping the hero (she thinks he's impotent lol) to obtain a potential bride. Lots of great stuff happen when she is being drooled over by every male that sees her, making the hero furious jealous. Yadda yadda, we have some jewels thieves, some Bow Street runners, and nasty relatives , plus the devious ex fiancée (who has now become very physically unattractive.) who all add to the conflict. Just fantastic!

For my safety gang friends:

Do not get turned off by the beginning (should you take the chance and read this). As I said, the hero was engaged to another, and we start off seeing them getting caught in a snow storm. So they stop at a barn for shelter, and they do engage in some kissing and a little more, but nothing is detailed, most likely some

touching.. but the hero stops it..being very set in his ways..of saving himself for his wedding night. But the woman gets upset at his restraint and ends up admitting to the hero that she has had sex plenty of times with 3 other men. This APPALLS the hero. he is disgusted, and breaks the engagement. I loved it.

As the story progresses, we see how much the hero is struck by the heroine's beauty, and he becomes very protective, possessive and jealous of any man who looks her way. It completely makes up for the vile woman he was engaged to. In fact he is so grateful he didn't marry that gold-digging woman..who is also nowhere NEAR as beautiful as the pure heroine.

FYI- his ex-fiancee ends up unhappily married to an old man.

The hero remains celibate until he finally marries the heroine (at the very end), and declares he only wants her, will never cheat nor have a mistress. So no worries on that front.

I totally recommend this book, and plan to look at more written by this author.

This is a clean read, but it is so fantastic. I think there is a lot to be said for a romance book that doesn't need to lean so heavily into sex due to excellent writing. I am impressed!

Safety:

Hero & Heroine -both virgins and remain each others first only and last.

Cheating-No - The hero does consider going to a brothel, when the heroine refuses him..but doesn't.

OM/OW-Just what I mentioned above about the first fiancee.. he dumps her and never reconsiders her.

Sex-No-off camera

Abuse/rape/violence/torture-No

Cursing-No

Humor-Yes. Very witty!

HEA/ILY-Yes

Marriage-Yes

Baby-No

Insta love/lust-No

Anneceleste says

This is not my favourite Metzger so far but this doesn't mean that I will stop reading her. The first half was amusing but in the second half a lot of characters were mixed and the farce was not so interesting any more. Mr Dimm the detective from A Suspicious Affair is here again searching for lost jewels and matchmaking.

Donna says

Well, as compared to the prior books read for the Romance Genre Study, this one was a bit more to my liking. Regency in setting, it did have a more modern tone than Austen. The complicating feature here is the high moral standards of the hero and the fall-out from not having sex (pre-marital or a mistress). In the end, all love-making is "off-camera". Historic specifics seemed accurate.

Frances says

Snowdrops....

Not as lively not as entertaining as the other books by this author I have read. Glad I have a library card.

Sruthi says

[He can be nominated for the Best noble Hero Ever in the history o

Wendy Sparrow says

This was unique in that the hero was a virgin and intended to stay one until after marriage, but he's getting a reputation in society as not being interested in women. He runs across the heroine who is having a really bad day and is stuck in a snowstorm without hope of the job she came to London for. He convinces her to pretend to be his mistress for a short amount of time. She thinks his injuries have rendered him impotent and agrees because she feels sorry for him. So hilarious. This is the second book of hers with the bow street runner in it as a POV.

Kitcatscratch says

First, I am awful and knowing when to include spoiler alerts so having said that, just assume there are spoilers littered in here...

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Second, I thoroughly enjoyed this book. What I have come to learn about the author is that her books are witty, often sensual (with innuendo more than graphic description), and hidden among it all are some really keen observations. I think that for those who are what I call "close or observant" readers, will appreciate most of her works where she often shows among all the "madcap romance," the darker reality. Women of breeding have few options where they have little to no legal rights and are considered of a commodity to be bargained by those with power (men) and women with no breeding or prospects have even less.

Having said that, I love that in this book, the H is NOT a rake. In fact, in a class where the worst rakes are forgiven if married, with money, titled or all 3, he stands by his values and morals. He has seen what infidelity has done to his mother as he remembers all her tears and sadness. He has seen what his nursemaid's husband left her with as well, heart ache and a struggle to find a way to make a living. He has vowed that he will not be that kind of man. That a real man stands up for his values. That if women are held to a standard of purity and expected to come into a marriage a virgin than she should expect the same of her future husband. Now, to the casual reader this may sound very dull but it's not. I attribute that to the fact that Ms. Metzger

doesn't make him a saint. The H acknowledges the temptations, the difficulties involved in staying chaste until marriage. He has also made the mistake already of being engaged to marry someone who had already lost her virginity and have slept with more than one man. I think many readers focus on the "act" and hold it against the H that he is judging a woman based on her chastity. No, he is judging the women for not holding the sanctity of chastity and fidelity before and during marriage as sacred as he does.

I loved the h who was not helpless. She was simply...nice. And that was ok! She had the same values as the H despite her reduced circumstances.

Finally, I know the H's final proposal to the h put up some hackles but I feel it was taken a bit out of context. When he asks her to marry him, she says:

"But...but our lives have been so different. We have nothing in common."

"Do you love me?"

"Of course."

"Are you a virgin?"

Blushing, she replied, "You know I am!"

"There, that's two things in common right off...Nothing else matters, my love."

I think people fail to note WHY he asks that question (things they BOTH had in common!) and BTW, he responds that HE TOO is a virgin. I thought it was sweet because it showed that they were 2 people, both inexperienced as to physical intimacy, who both shared the same values. I thought it was a pretty d*mn good way to start out a marriage myself! Though I like to lose myself in "fantasy," I can never really ignore a little bit of reality creeping in and the H won me over early when he decided that he would be a virgin until marriage because aside from coming into the marriage state the same as his bride, he also acknowledges rakes who bring back diseases and illegitimate children to his wife and you know, AMEN TO THAT. Because a part of me is always thinking in the back of my mind that the pox was deadly and all...

So ultimately, no overt sexuality, mostly just minor innuendo, but a lot of sweetness I think.

Bynz says

Not as good as Loyal Companion which was my Metzger's first book. Oddball comedic story.

While looking up which book to read of hers next, I read someone say the virgin hero here is better than Mark from Courtney Milan's Unclaimed. After having read it now, I have to firmly disagree. Milan's Mark is chaste first of all for socio-political reasons. Moreover, he doesn't insist that the women he courts are virgins. Here the guy breaks an engagement with his non-virgin fiancée (although, while it isn't explicitly said at least from what I can remember, I think his objection was more to the fact that she didn't intend to stay faithful after) and considers his and the heroine's virginity to be common ground (although, again, this said in just). Anyway, I'm glad the book has a virgin hero but in no way is he comparable to Mark who not only understand the sexist double standards but was an activist that challenged them vocally.

Janet says

Really delightful ... a hero who holds himself to a higher standard but he's not a prude. The heroine is a darling and the hero's retired nanny takes her to her ample bosom. A book like this, so witty and effervescent, reminds one of what is possible.

Kiki says

Hero's obsession with finding a virgin bride was rather sickening by the end.

This is his "romantic" marriage proposal to the woman he can't live without who he just rescued (she rescued herself but that's besides the point):

“Do you love me?”

“Of course.”

“Are you a virgin?”

Of course he knew she was! But make no mistake just in case she wasn't that undying love he felt for her would have meant nothing whatsoever, because hymen!

willaful says

3.5 stars. This was unexpected: a traditional Regency romance that's also a screwball crime caper and a bit of a sex farce. It's a shame it wasn't written until 1996, because it would have made a great 1930's movie, preferably directed by Ernst Lubitch.

Courtney, Lord Chase is that rarest of romance heroes -- not just a virgin, but a virgin because of *principles*. His unusual forbearance leads to some unfortunate misunderstandings amongst the *ton*, causing him to need a fake mistress, fast. Enter the poor but virtuous Kathlyn Parkland, who agrees to help him -- less for money than because she feels terribly sorry for the tragically wounded hero, who obviously needs a fake mistress because he has nothing to offer a real one. Meanwhile, various threads of a complicated plot involving a jewelry heist, Courtney's mother, Kathlyn's aunt, several bumbling thieves and two less than brilliant Bow Street Runners are also coming together.

It took me a while to really get into this story, because the caper elements were tiresome and seemed out of place. But the mildly risque humor was entertaining and the main characters quite sweet. After awhile I realized the whole thing was basically a farce and started to enjoy it more. The book is written in very broad strokes which keep it from being as genuinely romantic as I'd like, but it's certainly fun.

Ritsky says

Maybe I've been too tired after reading same old plots of (historical) romances that I found this book refreshing...and FUNNY! True, it's more like a fiction with a touch of romance rather than a romance with subplots (of which I don't like), but to me it's waaaay better! The writing is very good, I enjoy reading it and can't help laughing every once in a while. There may be too many characters with different interests, but it's acceptable for stories like this. As a matter of fact, even with so many supporting characters and subplots, the interaction between two main characters is still sufficiently portrayed. It still amazes me that with limited portion in the plot (compared to other romance books), I can still see how their feelings grow and their relationship develops.

Also, the main characters are very likeable. I especially LOVE Courtney, our virgin hero. Kathlyn/Kitty is lovely by being independent but sensible. In short, I love that both hero and heroine is sensible most of the time.

The downside is the lack of steamy scenes. Seriously, the writer has so much left to readers' imagination. Almost too much, thank you. But anyway, maybe this is how a standard historical romance would be without all the...ah, activities.

My first Barbara Metzger, definitely not my last :)

Georgie says

Sweetly silly.

Amy Aelleah says

I really thought I was going to like this book. It sounded like something that could have been turned into a Grant/Hepburn film and that's always a good sign. However...

I did like the two leads, even if I never felt any chemistry from their romance. The secondary plotline was decent, even if it took way too long to become amusing and I never found it as funny as it was probably supposed to be.

The big issue I had though was the writing style. I liked how there were a lot of different people to follow and I never had problems keeping them straight. They shined the most though, when the chapter was about them - like the first few building each of the main characters. Once more people were introduced to the story, the writing became 'third person omniscient' - which means that at any moment in the story, we would be afforded an inside look at character a, then one paragraph later we would get to see inside the head of person b.

While most (though not all) of this was limited to the main two characters, some of the others got their moment in too.

I don't like this writing style. It reminds me way too much of head hopping - something that actually gives me a headache when over done. This book quite nearly over did it for me. Some people might like it, but I much prefer each character to have their own chapter - or even just a couple of pages, and then switch to someone else, instead of back and forth each paragraph.

Karen says

I discovered Barbara Metzger's novels by accident a few weeks ago via my local digital library, and enjoyed this one more than any I've read so far. When so much of what passes for Regency-era romance today is little more than dolled-up soft porn, it's a pleasure to read a story that is true not only to the language and social

customs of the time, but to the traditional moral beliefs as well. The interesting twist in this one is the male lead, Lord Chase; he's not only a man of principle and honor, but virginal as well. His strong but voluntarily unfulfilled yearnings are touching and very compelling in their own fashion. Ms. Metzger has proven there doesn't need to be a "rake" to reform (usually at the expense of the moral compromise of the lead female) to hold the reader's interest. Well done! I hope I'm not disappointed when I get around to her more recent books.
