



That Despicable Rogue

Virginia Heath

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A lady's mission of revenge...

Lady Hannah Steers has three reasons to loathe and despise Ross Jameson. He's a scandalous libertine, he stole her home and he was responsible for the death of her brother!

Determined to expose Ross for the rogue he is, Hannah dons a disguise and infiltrates his home as his new housekeeper. Unfortunately, this scoundrel proves himself to be the epitome of temptation and, instead of building a case against him, Hannah finds herself in a position she never expected...falling head over heels in love with him!

That Despicable Rogue Details

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From Reader Review That Despicable Rogue for online ebook

Imogen M says

A friend recommended this book. It is by a new author and I will admit I was a bit dubious because of that- however, I loved every second of it. Hannah and Ross are two delightful characters, their banter is witty, and the story is fast-paced. I absolutely loved the ending...

herdys says

Maybe I have become pickier lately but the moment the hero kissed our heroine, while still thinking she was his housekeeper, I said NOPE. Especially since she clearly said NO. I don't care how charming he is and that she enjoyed it in the end. It feels wrong, even if it was normal in that time..

Leslee says

Extremely enjoyable and well written book, with a likable heroine and hero and just enough spice to keep things interesting. Was well paced and had enough twists and depth to keep the reader hooked and hoping for a happy ending. I highly recommend the book for any one who is a historical puff, or anyone who just wants a good fun read.

Mandi Schreiner says

A light romance that has an undercover heroine trying to win back her family home. Cute and easy read - maybe a little slow at times.

Review coming

Angela Withrow TheArdentReader says

Lady Hannah Steers is on a mission! She is pretty sure that the man who now owns her family home, is responsible for her brother's death and he must be a terrible person! She passes herself off as a housekeeper to gain access to the home and to her target. She must find a way to get him charged with something. Anything really, as long as she can then buy back her home.

Mr. Ross Jameson is doing his best to put down some roots. He comes from the streets and has made himself one of the richest and most successful businessmen in London . but he would like to have his sister and mother with him. Just not London, it is too dangerous for a young woman to live there, so he decides to make over a house he won in a card game.

I really loved this story! Lady Hannah is a stick in the mud for a housekeeper! The interaction between her and Mr. Jameson is hilarious! I liked that he enjoyed poking fun at her. Since he was not born to the aristocracy, he feels no compunction in pushing her buttons until she cracks. He even calls her "Prim" since she is always so prim and proper! He knows she is lying, but he thinks she is maybe a spy for The East India Company, who is his direct business rival.

The writing is fun and light. It was a fast read, but I will add this to my re-read list! Great characters always bring me back. I'm going to look for more by this author as well!

I received copy of this title for my honest review from The Romance Review

Gwessie Tee says

Literally just finished reading this again completely adore this book definitely found another author among many that I utterly love reading, the romance the fun, the cheekiness of the Rogue in question. Brilliant thank you Virginia xx

Tamara says

I received a free copy of this book for an honest review.

I really enjoyed this book. I think the hero is fascinating, and it was interesting to watch the heroine fall in love with him in spite of herself. She was a bit foolish, but that was necessary for the narrative. The plot is different than your typical historical, as the heroine pretends to be a housekeeper to get revenge on the hero. It was a quick read, and I definitely recommend it.

Michele Clack says

An enjoyable read.

Megan says

I won this book from a goodreads giveaway and I am sure glad I did! I devoured this book in one sitting! The Despicable Rogue is filled with such passionate characters that you can't help but fall in love with them. The story line has many twists and turns that just kept making me turn the page to find out what happened next! I would highly recommend this book for those who love a good passionate historical romance.

Melinda M says

That Despicable Rogue by Virginia Heath is a regency story that is a love story but an adventure as well. It is

well written with attention to details. It goes into how life was for a woman that is born into the upper society and how she felt about things that happen. This story grasp your attention and keeps you involved from start to finish. Looking forward to reading more by Virginia Heath.

Becca says

After reading Virginia Heath's *A Discerning Gentleman's Guide* and absolutely loving it, I added everything from Heath's short backlist to my pile (she is a relatively new author which is impressive because her ability to create layered characters is superb).

That *Despicable Rogue* is Heath's debut novel and one I greatly enjoyed, though not as much as *A Discerning Gentleman's Guide*. In this novel, the heroine, Hannah pretends to be a housekeeper for the hero, Ross, so she can gather dirt on him in order to avenge her brother's death. Things are dark and messy at the beginning of the book where Ross ends up winning the deed to a house in a card game and the losing man commits suicide at the club. The book then picks up almost a year later when Hannah forges some references and leans on her old friend to get her hired as a housekeeper for her ancestral home, the same home that she believe Ross stole from her brother and caused him to kill himself.

As a reader, we know some truths, but for the most part, things are revealed to us in layers, much as Ross and Hannah learn more about each other. This complex layering of the characters was also present in Heath's other book and if this ability to create fully-fleshed, flawed characters is a trademark of hers, then consider me an auto-buy fan of hers forever.

This story mostly takes place in the ancestral home as Hannah helps Ross restore the place while still conducting her furtive search for his "dark secrets." As her quest for dirt continues to fail and she only sees Ross' kindness, fairness, and humor, she begins to doubt her preconceived notions and slowly opens up to him. I loved Ross from the get-go, but Hannah was harder to like. She clung to her assumptions to the bitter end and even slept with Ross without telling him the truth. Her persistent lying is what kept this book from being a full 5 stars. Additionally, the ending is really dramatic and over the top which jarred with the slower pace of the rest of the book. Despite these quibbles, this is still an excellent read. Heath does a great job building a character-driven story and I appreciate how well she has her characters explain themselves. Even when they do stupid things, I still understand why, and that is awesome.

I look forward to my next book by Heath. I am so pumped she has several releases slotted for 2017.

JoAnne says

Read my review on [RomanceJunkies.com](http://www.romancejunkiesreviews.com/) by clicking on the link below:

[http://www.romancejunkiesreviews.com/...](http://www.romancejunkiesreviews.com/)

Chi says

There was a lot to like about this book, and a lot to dislike.

Ross Jameson is a bit of a rogue, very charming, flirtatious, and all too clever by half. He was good fun, and his cocksure attitude and ungentlemanly behaviour was really fun to read. I delighted in his trying to rattle Lady Hannah, in her disguise as Mrs Preston - or as he dubbed, Prim. Lady Hannah though, took a while to warm to. I had to place myself in her shoes: would I react the same way she did on being told unpleasant truths? Yes. (view spoiler)

Nevertheless, for someone who was quite sharp (she'd have to be if she could pick up on how Ross liked his tea and what things he needed to be able to distract himself from work), Lady Hannah didn't assess what she saw with what she knew. It bothered me that the both of them could argue with each another and know what it was like to not be believed, and then not give the other space to disclose things with each other. It was so true to life, it annoyed me!

There were a couple of other things too, but I'm too tired to figure them out presently. It was a good read, but there were a few choices taken that kinda threw me.

Caz says

I wavered a bit over the final grade, between 4 and 4.5 stars, but plumped for 4.5 (B+) because, in spite of some criticisms, I enjoyed the book a lot.

Virginia Heath registered on my radar when her début novel came out in the Spring of 2016, but I didn't manage to get around to reading it. I did, however, pick up her next book, *Her Enemy at the Altar*, and enjoyed it very much – on the strength of that one book, I decided I had a new author to follow by virtue of the fact that Ms. Heath's writing is accomplished, her characterisation is strong and she has a knack for humour and good dialogue. I finally got around to reading ***That Despicable Rogue*** and was pleased to discover that it's every bit as well-written as her other books, and that had I not known in advance that it was her first published novel, I would never have discerned that from reading it, as it's a very confident piece of work.

Seven years before the story begins, and in the wake of an unpleasant scandal, Lady Hannah Steers was banished from London and sent to live with her two aunts in Yorkshire by her brother, the Earl of Runcorn. At the time, he promised he would recall her to London once the gossip had died down, but somehow that never happened, and Hannah has remained in Yorkshire, her life a never-ending stream of monotony so dull that it's almost debilitating.

Several years later, Hannah learns that her brother is dead. Having lost his entire fortune and the family home at the gaming tables, he then proceeded to blow his brains out and has left his sister with nothing. She hears that his opponent was one Ross Jameson, a man whose name appears regularly in the scandal sheets which gleefully report his exploits with women and any number of other unsavoury facts about his debauched existence. He's a self-made man, which means he is looked down on by the great and the good, but his immense wealth cannot be ignored and he is admitted – if not welcomed – almost everywhere. Hannah is sure that a man of his reputation cannot possibly have beaten her brother fairly, and is convinced he must have cheated – but she has no way to prove it. Until, that is, she learns that, over a year since he won the place, Jameson is going to open up Barchester Hall, meaning that he will need to recruit more staff. Hannah has remained in touch with the cook, and with her help, secures the position of housekeeper, intending to use her access to all areas of the house to search through Jameson's papers to see if she can find evidence to support her theory that he cheated her brother.

Ross Jameson has worked incredibly hard to achieve success and to make something of himself. The son of a criminal, Ross grew up in abject poverty alongside his mother and younger sister, who both suffered at the hands of his father, a gambler and drunkard. Determined to protect them both, Ross did what needed to be done when he had to, and since establishing himself in business, has taken good care of the ladies in his life, setting them up with a comfortable establishment in the country. He is opening up Barchester Hall now because it's close to London and he knows his sister will soon want to come to town to enjoy the season.

Ross finds his new housekeeper a bit baffling – she's the one woman he doesn't seem able to charm with a smile or a quip – but she's efficient and he is impressed with the improvements and alterations she suggests. And there's something about her that makes him want to break through the barrier of frostiness she is so determined to maintain.

While she wants to continue to believe all the salacious gossip printed about Ross and is determined to prove him the worst kind of villain, Hannah can't ignore the evidence of kindness and good-nature with which she is presented every day, or the inconvenient stirrings of attraction she is beginning to feel for him. She stubbornly tries to maintain her belief in his underhandedness, but knows she's fighting a losing battle. Ross is an honourable, kind-hearted man who is fiercely protective of those he cares for – and Hannah is falling a little (or a lot) more in love every day.

The set-up is a fairly familiar one, but Ms. Heath puts a fresh spin on this well-used trope by her pleasantly different portrayal of Ross as a charming, funny, level-headed, all-round decent bloke rather than the sort of darkly brooding, ruthless bastard that is a much more frequent character-type found in this sort of story. Not to say he isn't ruthless in his business dealings – he'd have to be to have made a fortune considering where he started out – but he's clearly a very different man to the one Hannah had expected, given everything she'd read about him in the scandal sheets. In addition to the romance, there's a nicely developed secondary plotline in which Ross suspects that Hannah might be a spy working for the East India Company, one of his main business rivals; and a look at the effects and intrusiveness of gossip – something not limited to the 21st century – as we discover why Ross is so steadfast in his determination never to respond to the accusations that are regularly thrown at him in the press.

The central characters are both very well-rounded, with Ross definitely being the star of the show. He's pulled himself out of the gutter through sheer determination and hard work, but hasn't become overly hard or cynical; and although Hannah is a little harder to like because she insists on hanging on to her poor opinions of Ross for longer than she probably should, it does make sense in the context of the story and her character.

There are plenty of sparks between Ross and Hannah, and I really liked the way his gently teasing manner – he nicknames her “Prim” – and his willingness to listen to her and take her ideas seriously are shown to be instrumental in the progress of the friendship that develops between them. The romance grows out of that friendship as they begin to understand more about each other and there's a real sense of warmth and affection to all aspects of their relationship. In fact, the only thing I can really find to criticise in the book is the false note which is struck towards the end, when Hannah takes a highly improbable course of action following Ross's discovery of her true identity.

But all in all, **That Despicable Rogue** is a thoroughly enjoyable read and one I'd definitely recommend to others. In my **Best of 2016** post at **All About Romance**, I mentioned that I'd discovered some very good new authors during the course of the year; K.C Bateman and Cat Sebastian were two, and Virginia Heath is another. Harlequin Historical has some of the best writers of historical romance around on its roster and Ms. Heath is definitely one of their strongest recent finds.

Ursula says

It was a pleasant story with solid writing, nice MC's and some misunderstandings. (She did all the running in the end, and he played the offended BF.) Not one for my keeper shelf but an easy enough way to spend an afternoon.
