



While the Duke Was Sleeping

Sophie Jordan

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Sometimes the man of your dreams . . .

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. . . is not who you think.

An illegitimate second son, Struan may have built an empire and established himself as one of the wealthiest men in Britain, but he knows he will always be an outsider among the *ton*. Just like he knows the infuriating Poppy is a liar. There's no way the haughty Duke of Autenberry would deign to wed a working class girl. It doesn't matter how charming she is. Or tempting. Or how much Struan wants her for himself.

While the Duke Was Sleeping Details

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From Reader Review While the Duke Was Sleeping for online ebook

Caz says

I've given this a C+ for both content and narration at AudioGals, so that's 3.5 stars

How much you enjoy the storyline of **While the Duke Was Sleeping** (the first in Sophie Jordan's new series, *The Rogue Files*) may well depend on how familiar you are with the plot of the 1995 Rom Com, **While You Were Sleeping** and whether or not you enjoyed it. Adapting a plot from a well-known source can be a double-edged sword, as fans of the original are bound to make comparisons, although some such retellings have worked extremely well. **Clueless**, for example, is a brilliant re-working of Jane Austen's **Emma**, successfully translating the action of the novel to Beverly Hills while keeping very much to the spirit of the original. And Sophie Jordan's isn't the only Historical-Romance-Rom-Com-Makeover currently doing the rounds; Maya Rodale's current series, *Keeping Up with the Cavendishes* also uses famous films as the inspiration for its plotlines, having so far mined **BrIDGET Jones' Diary** and **Roman Holiday**.

Coming back to **While the Duke...** now I've listened to it, I think anyone considering it would be best off NOT thinking about the original movie while listening. In fact, the only real similarity between the two is the premise; in the film, lonely Lucy falls for the gorgeous guy she sees every day from her booth at the train station and after she saves his life, a mix up leads his warm, loving and wonderfully scatty family to believe she is his fiancée. In the book, shop-girl Poppy Fairchurch worships the handsome Duke of Autenberry from afar, eagerly awaiting his weekly visit to the flower shop where she works. When he becomes involved in an altercation with another man in the street and is knocked into the path of an oncoming carriage, Poppy pulls him to safety, and is afterwards mistaken for the duke's fiancée.

You can read the rest of this review at AudioGals.

Alyssa says

I'm glad I gave this one a chance. I liked it a lot!

Review posted on The Eater of Books! blog

While the Duke Was Sleeping by Sophie Jordan

Book One of the Rogue Files series

Publisher: Avon

Publication Date: October 25, 2016

Rating: 4 stars

Source: eARC from Edelweiss

Summary (from Goodreads):

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An illegitimate second son, Struan may have built an empire and established himself as one of the wealthiest men in Britain, but he knows he will always be an outsider among the ton. Just like he knows the infuriating Poppy is a liar. There's no way the haughty Duke of Autenberry would deign to wed a working class girl. It doesn't matter how charming she is. Or tempting. Or how much Struan wants her for himself.

What I Liked:

I actually wasn't sure that I would enjoy this book, since the premise was all about a girl who is infatuated with one man from afar, but really falls in love with another. BUT, this book surprised me! The romance was so fun and steamy and shippy. Jordan's historical romance novels have been good and not-so-good, for me, but this one was great.

Poppy Fairchurch is a shopgirl, working in a florist's shop. One of the shop's best customers is the Duke of Autenberry, who comes every week to buy flowers for a different woman (doubtless his various paramours). The first time Poppy sees him, she is totally infatuated. She builds a fantasy in her head that they fall in love, and get married... despite the fact that neither has said more than five words to each other. One day, she sees the Duke punch another man, and a fight ensues. She runs to stop the fight, and the Duke gets hurt to the point of a coma. When she accompanies him and the stranger (who turns out to be the Duke's half-brother), Poppy is beside herself. She mutters something along the lines of "we're to be married someday, remember?"... and the housekeeper hears her muttering, and mistakes Poppy as the Duke's fiancee (the Duke has no fiancee though). Soon everyone is convinced that Poppy is Autenberry's fiance (the dowager duchess, the Duke's siblings, even Struan Mackenzie, the Duke's half-brother from the fight). But Poppy finds herself drawn to the half-brother, and not the Duke. As the Duke lies in a coma, Poppy plays along with her lie, and she and Struan get closer. But what will happen when the Duke awakes?

Like I said, this book's premise didn't really appeal to me, so I wasn't sure I'd like this book. Even if Poppy is simply pretending to be the fiancee... she is infatuated with Autenberry. But as the story progresses, we can clearly see that she adores the idea of Autenberry - the idea she has in her head. Who he really is, that's a completely different story.

So, Poppy is a romantic and a dreamer. She follows her heart and not always her head, though she is clever. She feels awful about the lie, and would have come clean within the day, but Autenberry's friend Lord Tucker asked her to continue the lie, since Autenberry's family was so happy about him finally settling down (Autenberry is a rake of epic proportions). Poppy is kind and selfless, giving up a lot of her life to take care of and raise her beautiful and vivacious fifteen-year-old sister.

Struan Mackenzie is the bastard son of the late Duke of Autenberry, just a year younger than the current Duke. He's from Scotland (hence the name), and he has never had anything to do with his father's family. His father threw Struan's mother out, and the current Duke never wanted to be reminded of his father's indiscretions. So Struan has no relationship with his half-brother, or half-sisters, or the dowager duchess.

And after Struan's mother died young... Struan has no one. And he wants nothing from Autenberry. Struan is extremely wealthy and successful. He came to England looking for a bride, and he definitely found what he was looking for.

I adored Struan! He had an incredibly difficult childhood, but he made himself into something much more. He's big and rough and a little possessive, and he likes getting what he wants. Jordan writes this type of alpha really well.

You'll recall Struan being in Jordan's Debutante Files series - he courted Aurelia in All the Ways to Ruin a Rogue! I like this crossover between the series.

The Duke of Autenberry was in a coma for the entire book, and anyway, there was no real romance between Poppy and him. The romance is entirely between Struan and Poppy, and it's steamy and sweet. At first everything is purely physical, but you can see that the two are drawn to each other. They have verrrry hot chemistry, and the tension boils throughout the book. But I liked seeing them fall for each other too. It wasn't easy, because Struan believed her to be his brother's fiancee, and Poppy knew that she wasn't but had to keep up the pretense. So in a way, it was wrong of them to fool around, but the engagement was never real. Still, questionable morals much, Struan?

One thing that I especially loved was the ending, for several reasons. Yes, we get a nice happily-ever-after. But I love that Struan leaves after Poppy pushes him away (and the Duke too - after he wakes up), and POPPY is the one to chase Struan down. Often in adult romance novels, you'll see that the woman pushes the man away, the man leaves, and then the man comes back begging and pleading. To me, I'd like to see the woman fight for what she wants more often... especially if she's the one messing up (in this case, Poppy kept saying no and pushing Struan away). So, good for Poppy! I'm glad she created her own ending.

Overall, I enjoyed this book! I look forward to reading more from this series. I'm sure Jordan will write a book for Autenberry, redeeming him in some way. And we'll see Tucker's story too (I hope). I would love to read about Bryony (Poppy's younger sister) too!

What I Did Not Like:

One could say that the entire idea behind this book is silly... Poppy's ridiculous dream about marrying the Duke, and getting overheard muttering that. BUT. I liked how absurd it was, though at first the idea really bothered me.

Another thing - so Jordan specifically writes that Struan has rough, slightly more adventurous tastes than English noblemen... I was totally hoping to see this wild side, when Struan would get it on with Poppy. Sadly nothing they did together was "wild" or "rough". Still steamy, but nothing different.

I felt a little weird about typing this dislike. Hopefully that made sense though!

Would I Recommend It:

This was probably one of the more fun and steamy historical romance novels I've read recently, and I would definitely recommend it. It's not bogged down by angst and drama and hardships, though it's not cute and fluffy either. This book is full of fiery passion!

Rating:

4 stars. I'm glad I wasn't deterred - I almost didn't read this one. I hope the next book, The Scandal of It All, will be just as good!

Laura the Highland Hussy says

Review posted on Got Fiction?

While You Were Sleeping but with a duke and a Scotsman? Did she reach inside my brain to find all of my favorite things? Oh boy! This is my catnip! Going into this, I was thrilled!

The hero, Struan Mackenzie appeared in All the Ways to Ruin a Rogue, but you don't need to have read that one, this can stand on its own.

The heroine, Poppy is a shopgirl. Twice a week, the Duke of Autenberry stops into the florist shop where she works, and buys flowers. He's beautiful, polite, and asks about Poppy when he sees her. Of course, Poppy is in love.

I wanted to love this book so much! And I did love the first half. I mean love. But if you're going to reboot While You Were Sleeping, you need to understand why it worked so well.

You need show all the family as more than a quick whirlwind who blows in and sweeps you off your feet. You need to show the scene where Joe Jr. leans, and you definitely need to show your main characters falling in love. There was so much banter and sexual tension, and then...that's all there was. There was very little romance and love, but a whole lot of sniping at each other and kissing, then regretting it. The ending was so ridiculously rushed that I kept swiping back and forth between pages to make sure I hadn't missed anything.

That's not to say this wasn't a fun book! I really liked it. But I think it's missing some core parts. I didn't feel that Struan and Poppy loved each other. I felt that they lusted after each other and bickered. Sophie Jordan is talented enough that she could have pulled this off. I'm disappointed it wasn't a five star book for me.

***ARC courtesy of the Avon Addicts program

WhiskeyintheJar/Kyraryker says

I read this in between doses of NyQuil, so my memory is a bit fuzzy but suffice to say, it did not live up to its inspiration of the move While You Were Sleeping.

I was not a fan of the "hero" in this one. He is basically constantly telling the heroine that she wants it. I still read bodice rippers of old but heroes like this in modern romances get my foot on their bum and kicked out the door.

Follows the movie's script pretty closely, even some same lines!, but because of the hero, the story was meh

for me.

Hollis says

"Infatuation is oft mistaken for love. In whatever form, it drives people to act idiotic."

"Idiotic? Love is idiotic?"

"I didn't say that. I said love makes people act like idiots. Evidently you love him."

So the major thing I've come away from after reading this book? I really really need a Sandra Bullock movieathon. And I need to start with *While You Were Sleeping*. Yes, obviously this is a historical romance based on the aforementioned movie. And I think I enjoyed this a little more than other readers simply because I literally remember only the bare bones of the flick and therefore my comparisons are more vague and hazy.

"Stubborn chit--"

"I'd appreciate it if you did not call me names simply because I won't let you order me around."

While this was by no means the perfect romance or story, with perfect leads, it was actually a lot of fun. Even without the similarities to the movie, I love the idea of the shop girl landing the Duke, or building up a fantasy in her head about someone who seems perfect and lovely, only to be completely taken awares by another who she thinks is all wrong for her and all wrong in general. And in this case.. the chemistry between Struan and Poppy? It was pretty fiery.

"Wouldn't you rather be doing this than fighting? You and I would fit together just right, lass."

There was one scene.. I mean, it's not exactly hate-sex because this is a historical romance based on a romantic comedy, but there was some pretty close to it hate-making-out and this one scene.. whew. Wow. Hello.

Straun did not make her feel comfortable. He made her feel like she was on fire from the inside out. He made her feel necessary.

I'll admit it wasn't all smooth sailing on the banter and swoons train (mixing metaphors but whatever). There was a lot of repetition, one or two inconsistencies that probably only a few others would ever notice, and the sister, Bryony, was annoying af more often than not.

"I can see you both belong together -- that you want to be together. The man did not even respond to my flirtations and not many men can do that, let me assure you."

"Bry. I feel as though I need to deposit you in the nearest convent."

Considering all the lies and deceptions floating around in this story about a girl who pretends to be in love with a man who can't refute it, egged on by another in order to keep the family's spirits up, all while dodging the advances of someone who might truly like her, I enjoyed how the lies both were and weren't an issue. Most romantic climaxes have some kind of big epic breakdown or break-up and I liked how that didn't come into play. It's always refreshing when an author mixes up the formula.

This was all she had ever wanted and more. Belonging. Her charming duke. An instant family. Everything

she had dreamed to the letter. Only now she realized that getting what you want wasn't all she thought it would be.

I did love the cast of characters that made up the Duke and Straun's family, and am glad to see *The Rogue Files* seem to be connected in that sense (Strickland & the Dowager up next!), so am excited to read on.. especially as I was lucky enough to get my grabby hands on an ARC. So I'll be diving right into that one.

"You lied about loving my brother, about being betrothed to him? That's the sweetest lie I ever heard."

So even though it was a little rocky at times, and I would've preferred some more resistance and/or self-realizations from Straun, the man who professed to be resistant to love and then busted out quite the confessional at the end, I did enjoy this read. But I think I'll like book two even better.

3.5 "the reality of you is better than any fantasy I've ever had" stars

?Julalicious Book Paradise? says

Rating: 4.5/5

Original review on Julalicious Book Paradise

Getting to read this book made me so happy, you have no idea. I was really looking forward to read more about Struan Mackenzie since we met him in All the Ways to Ruin a Rogue. He was this character that you didn't know what to think about. Not many seemed to like him, but I don't know, I was intrigued by him. Reading about his backstory, you really get a good feel about what kind of man he is and what kind of man he doesn't want to be.

Poppy Fairchurch is the kind of character that reminded me a little bit of a lioness; she was caring and sweet, but don't you dare harm those she cares about or else, she attacks. She is sassy yet she looks innocent and I think that's why Struan is firstly intrigued by her. She isn't described as the most beautiful girl in the world, but I liked that the author seemed to describe her beauty like a subtle one; one you discover as you get to know her.

And from the moment these two meet, they bicker for every little thing. It was quite entertaining to read about these moments because he always seemed surprised when she wouldn't back down from confrontation. There's obvious attraction between the two of them, but she is supposed to be engaged and she doesn't want to be attracted to him while he is interested to find what the Duke could have found interesting about that girl while trying to justify his interest in her.

Poppy's sister is a character who I wasn't sure how to like, but she was a teenager forced to stay inside for her own security so I could understand some of her frustration. She was also quite aware of just how beautiful she is and sometimes, that could cause some headache to Poppy. Sometimes, I liked her and sometimes, she annoyed me and I wanted to send her to her room hahaha

And the Duke's family... God, I loved them. I loved the way his stepmother is so welcoming and his sisters just as much. I'm looking forward to read more about them (hint to Sophie ;)).

So overall, I fell once again in love with one of Sophie's books and she is the reason I might start to expand my collection of historical romances and search for new authors.

I was giving an advanced copy of this book by Edelweiss and Avon Books in exchange of an honest review.

Mei says

While I don't remember watching the movie 'While you were sleeping', I admit that I have mixed feeling for this book!

I had a few quibbles here.

The first one is that there was overmuch inner dialogue for my taste; the second was the behaviour of the hero, Struan.

About Struan, I found he treated Poppy very badly at the beginning. He supposed that Poppy was the Duke's mistress without any proof, just because she was of lower class! Just because of that he treats her like a prostitute, using crude speech, making salacious innuendos and inappropriate words. I didn't like it!

I had the impression that he keeps pursuing her, even after she directly tells him to leave her alone, because he wants some kind of revenge on his half-brother, the Duke.

After the first half of the book his behaviour gets better and his obsession with Poppy becomes more affection than lust, but it still took me more time to get to like him.

Poppy has her own problems. First of all her romantic notions were a bit exaggerated. She saw everything through rose colored glasses on one hand, but on other she was overly responsible. It clashes somehow for me...

I didn't like her sister Bryony - a spoilt and irresponsible young girl! If she was my sister I would have been much more stern. When Bryony maked a move toward Struan in the stable, I was appalled!!! It was the behaviour of a prostitute!!! And Struan was amused (while thinking Poppy was one!!!)!!!

So, I have a mixed feeling: I liked the writing and the story, but not the characters! So for me it's 3 stars!

***TANYA* says**

I've seen this book in a movie!! It was called While You Were Sleeping, except this had a historical setting and I loved it. Super cute and endearing!!

Mary - Buried Under Romance says

Readers may remember Struan Mackenzie as a suitor from All the Ways to Ruin a Rogue. He may not have won that heroine, but he'll do here. With a true heroine (one who goes around saving people)

Amy says

Notice what they did with the title there? Yes. This is a historical romance reboot of *While You Were Sleeping*. It made me realize a few things

1. The movie hinges on its strength as an ensemble piece. If you can't recreate the banter between family members and if you CUT Joe Jr. and if you cut the main character's relationship to the "Saul" character you had better work your butt off to make up for it. I don't know that Jordan did that here. So you don't see the heroine falling in love with the family. You don't see her developing a friendship with someone you know doesn't want the family hurt. You don't see her in the trap of living a lie and needing these people in her life, which makes the heroine seem less cool.
2. The brothers kinda need to get along. Here they don't. Jordan makes the hero a bastard brother that the duke cannot abide. So there is this acrimony that gives the hero latitude in thinking the worst about the relationship between the comatose brother and his "fiancee." So he thinks the worst of her morals and Jordan just doesn't do a good job of making this obviously self-respecting woman mind that. It is almost like, if the brothers got along, Jordan would have had to write a clean romance and she had no interest in that.
3. The social difference between the comatose brother and the heroine is much less marked when you are talking about a somewhat slimy lawyer from a solid working class family than a Duke and a Shop girl. Seriously. A shop girl. And a Duke. The work to overcome this is, again, extreme. It was work that Jordan didn't do.

This romcom from the nineties/early naughts seems to be a possible trend. See Maya Rodale's *Lady Bridget's Diary*. Very meta. Do better than this and I am yours. I relish the idea of falling back into these stories. *French Kiss* would be a great choice. Just don't leave out the Jean Reno Character. Seriously. He matters.

Jo says

*No, it was far safer falling in love with an impossible fantasy. A fantasy couldn't come true.
A fantasy couldn't hurt you.*

Poppy Fairchurch knows that fantasizing about the Duke of Autenberry is wishful thinking for a plain shop girl, but dreams are harmless. Until she saves the Duke from being mauled down by a carriage. And when the duke goes into a coma, Poppy's life is complicated when she's mistaken for his fiancée. All of the duke's family is happy to believe that he fell in love with a shop girl, everyone except his estranged half-brother, Struan Mackenzie. Who is arrogant and far too handsome for Poppy's peace of mind. Her feelings for Struan was nothing like she the warm and content feelings she feels for the duke. He makes her blood boil, her nerves tingled as he continuously challenge and bicker with her.

As the illegitimate second son to a duke, Struan is used to being an outsider. He is a self-made man, one of the wealthiest men in Britain and knows a liar when he sees him, or in this case her. There is no way his snobbish half-brother would ever stoop so low as to propose to a mere shop girl. No matter how intriguing,

how charming, how tempting she is. And Struan can't help but want her for himself.

Is it possible that the sleeping duke is not the man of Poppy's dreams?

Struan did not make her feel comfortable. He made her feel like she was on fire from the inside out.

He made her feel necessary.

Poppy was a great heroine. She's responsible, loyal and protective of those she cares about. I love that she's a dreamer but also a fighter. She's isn't this great beauty that men fall over their feet for, which just made me like her even more. The way she changed her entire life to care for her teenage sister after her father passed away, just made me admire her even more. And I liked how sassy and feisty she was around Struan ;-D

"I want your love because God knows you have my heart. It's yours. I love you. I love you more than I thought I could ever love a person."

I loved Struan, with his scottish brogue and his very unusual but sexy name. He had a very hard childhood, with just him and his mom, struggling to make ends meet. It broke my heart at what his mother had to do for income after she became pregnant with Struan, and the duke refused to take care of them. I love how he pursued Poppy, even though she was his half-brother's fiancée, he couldn't help but want her. And I loved his nickname for her :-D

"And you didn't want that? Your duke? The fantasy? Being a duchess?"

She shook her head. "The reality of you is better than any fantasy I've ever had."

The romance was awesome. I loved the early animosity between Poppy and Struan, their banter was excellent, and the chemistry between them was so intense and hot. Neither has much family, and both are quite alone, and it was wonderful seeing them fall in love.

I loved the duke's family, especially his stepmother and best friend, and I really hope their will be a book about them.

I loved the movie 'While you were sleeping' and I'm amazed that he author managed to keep the most important aspects similar to the movie, but that she also had many differences that made it unique and wonderful. This was a wonderful HR that i enjoyed immensely. Highly recommended to all HR fans.

Sissy's Romance Book Review says

Loved the story.

I could not put this book down. Another great story by Ms. Jordan!! Hopefully we will have additional books with the secondary characters.

Stacee says

3.5 stars

I loved the movie *While You Were Sleeping*, so I was pretty much sold on this premise.

I liked Poppy and Struan. Their banter is playful and amusing and their chemistry is off the charts. I'm a bit surprised she didn't end up pregnant just from the way he looked at her. At the very essence of the story, they're both two people who are alone, but find each other. And that's what kept me reading. Well that and those lusty glances.

This particular plot line seems a bit unbelievable for the time period, but it was a fun story with minimal angst. I'm definitely interested in other books in this series.

Huge thanks to Avon Books and Edelweiss for providing the arc in exchange for an honest review

Esther says

ARC from Edelweiss and Avon for an honest review.

I enjoy Sophie Jordan's books. But this one I did have some issues with.

Poppy works at a flower shop and has developed a crush for one of the customers. The Duke of Autenberry purchases flowers there regularly. Poppy dreams and hopes that he'll notice her one day and they'll fall in love and marry.

But one day as the Duke was leaving there was an altercation right outside the flower shop. Poppy runs out to help and finds the Duke fighting with his brother Stuart (half brother). The unfortunate outcome of the fight is the Duke is in a coma. And the fortunate part for Poppy is she somehow mentions she is his fiancee and word gets out they are to be married. Oh what a tangled web we weave. This starts a very slippery slop for Poppy, while the Duke is in a comma and she's caring for him, she slowly gets to know Stuart, the Duke's half brother. Feelings start developing on both sides. And Poppy starts questioning herself and her growing feeling for Stuart, realizing she's going to have to make a choice soon and also reveal the lie she told.

I really liked the writing and pacing but struggled with the storyline. Found it hard to accept the concept of a man in a comma, with the lie that Poppy told and then growing feelings for the brother. The whole premise just didn't sit well with me and might not bother others.

♥?elody says

2 the movie was waaaay better stars

This wasn't what I was hoping it would be.

Since this is a very obvious retelling of the beloved romcom *While You Were Sleeping*, it's hard not to draw comparisons while reading this. And this fell very short in comparison unfortunately. It's a regency interpretation of the story so of course some things were obviously tweaked but Sophie Jordan missed the beats and hit the wrong notes. And the things she did change I honestly wish she hadn't.

The coma aspect didn't bother me because again..... the movie. Is it farfetched for a historical? Yup, you bet. But I was expecting that before reading this. You kind of have to suspend belief for this part especially if you are familiar with the movie. For me though, it was everything else that was a bigger issue.

First thing, I did not like the heroine Poppy.

This girl is no Lucy Moderatz let me just get that out there. She's a shopgirl who is struggling to make ends meet to provide for her and her younger sister. She has a starry-eyed crush on Marcus, the Duke of Attenbury, who comes in to buy flowers for his countless paramours every week. A point which seems to just fly right over her head (a recurring theme here). Oh no, her Duke is a *perfect* gentleman. He's kind, generous and has a good heart.

Who is a complete stranger.

Who she knows **NOTHING** about.

But more on that later.....

Overall I found Poppy lacked compassion, kindness and just substance of any kind. I don't think she was very dimensional and not enough effort was put into *showing* readers how & why she's considered sweet, "guileless" (?) and kind hearted. There is **nothing** sweet-natured about this girl. Every character in this book labels her as sweet and tender hearted immediately after meeting her without missing a beat. And that kinda drove me batty considering her obnoxious OTT defensive contrary behavior around Struan and how she acts around her sister. This is more of personal taste but uptight shrewish attitude is never charming to me. At one point she's even labeled as shy...lol **SHY?** When??? Where? Did I blink and miss it? If this bitch is shy then I'm Madonna. lmao. ??? Come on Jordan, give me damn break with this. I felt I was being pitched a false product. And what the hell was with all the wincing? Was this seriously the only way to show this character showing remorse? Honestly?? Argh. Her reactions to things in general were so misfired, getting snippy & offended over the dumbest things yet not batting an eye over meaningful revealing moments with Struan. I just found her so damn unsympathetic with her nonreactions that I couldn't understand her. It just made emotionally charged moments fall so flat.

Moving on to my next issue. The Duke thing. What ruined the story was the fact that the heroine thought herself to be in love for **90% of the story** with an unconscious Duke who in reality is a self-entitled hateful snob.

Why do this? It's just an absolute buzzkill to see your heroine spinning fantasies in her head & constantly defending the honor of a virtual stranger. It's absurd. Not what I had in mind. Because of this the h/hr's connection greatly suffered.

Another problem: Where was the romance? All Poppy and Struan did THE WHOLE TIME was argue and fling empty-headed barbs at each other. That's it.

That's not the kind of charged tension I like to read about. I found them so incompatible. All the constant 'let me say something mean to her and let me say something mean to him in return' tossed back and forth with no sympathy or feelings in between was really tiresome. The lack of sensitivity between these two just made things unpleasant, superficial and not genuine. The author focused too much time on them bickering, being nasty and misunderstanding each other for their to be any real genuine heartfelt moments together. I think Jordan confuses 'battle of wills' with 'battle of cruel awfulness'. Struan took a backseat to a comatose Duke which was so depressing because he was worth so much more page time....and more development. There is no development, no growth or emotions shared between the two outside of contempt and lust. I honestly did like Struan....at times. What made this story lose it's edge was having the brooding hero constantly provoke and corner the heroine into lifting her skirts for him. There is nothing to recommend or gauge why Struan feels anything for Poppy besides the fact that she says 'no' to him all the time. Which is probably my **least** favorite trope of all time with battling couples. Do NOT fill a whole book up with a hero chasing an obstinate heroine around who's constantly telling him to leave her alone, go away and running away like a scared defiant rabbit just to avoid being alone with him. Where is the romantic angst in that? Jordan kept missing the beats entirely.

My other issue: the family connection. Where was that? In the movie, the brothers' family fall in love with Lucy gradually & separately and you see them spending time with her and enveloping her into their family and accepting her. Here Jordan entirely cuts out the whole 'bonding' part and we are just told they fall in love with her on sight and think she's perfect for Marcus. Uh...ok. There is literally no follow up to that to show us why the Duke's sisters and the eccentric Duchess would be singing Poppy's praises after first meeting. This was such an obvious cheap ploy to get readers to like the heroine, the good ol' *if all the characters love her, you will love her too!* schtick.

A big fat NO there. Marcus's best friend Lord Strickland also is immediately smitten with her and talks her into continuing on with the charade, to make Marcus's family happy. Which completely avoids the elephant in the room, how will this not break their hearts in the long run once he wakes up? Strickland doesn't want his best friend's family hurt by a lie, yet convinces her to keep lying to them until/if he wakes up.

Who exactly does that benefit? In the film, it made sense for old Sal to at least (passive aggressively) continuously try and break the news to them, here it was the complete opposite and made no sense. It's as if Jordan doesn't think her plot through, just throws contrived plot points to push the plot along. And a borrowed plot no less. If you are doing to do a retelling, don't reinvent the wheel IMO. *shrugs* At least, not like this.

Honestly, I'm not even sure if I will read the next book. The secondary characters, except for maybe Enid, just confused me and left me feeling nothing. I thought I was going to like Poppy's spirited younger sister Bry until she opened her mouth and was nothing but an OTT bratty brazen idiotic flirt. (PS: Was anyone seriously supposed to like this girl? She's ridiculous and how Poppy treats her like some prized show horse who doesn't know any better is even more offensive.) The dynamic between the sisters was seriously bizarre and a little disturbing to say the least. It's like the author has no understanding of basic meaningful relationships. And Strickland giving heated stares to the much older Duchess was such a turn off. But given how much page time was spent on Poppy championing and defending the much lauded Duke, I have a feeling he will be the hero of the next book or down the road. If so, all I will say is Jordan has her work cut out for her. Just please.....don't tell your readers about your characters, **show them**. Give them depth, layers and emotions.
