



His Penniless Beauty

Julia James

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Four years ago, Sophie loved Nikos Kazandros with all her heart. What she didn't know was that Nikos would take her virginity and then move on....

Now, not knowing where to turn for money, Sophie has taken a job she wouldn't normally have considered. But on her very first night things go disastrously wrong when she bumps into...Nikos. He's outraged to see how she's earning a living and knows he needs to stop her immediately. But the only way to do that is to keep her close and pay for her time....

His Penniless Beauty Details

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From Reader Review His Penniless Beauty for online ebook

Caro says

La heroína trabaja como scort por no tener plata.

El héroe después de acostarse con ella la tira por ahí como si fuera un zapato viejo.

No me dieron ni un poco de pena estos dos idiotas, sí sentí lástima por mí misma que soy una pobrecita que gasta plata en estas porquerías xD.

Missy says

A sweet fairytale like romance....a wonderfully sweet good daughter falls in love with a Greek knight in shining armour then misunderstandings happen & he leaves her in the poor house. Her father falls ill & major money is required for him to get well leaving the daughter no choice but to become an dinner escort. Enter the Greek knight who sees this & sets out to rescue her for her own good. They can't help but to be drawn back together by their love but will it be enough to conquer their past.....of course.

Lynsey A says

This was a little ridiculous that the heroine's only choice to earn extra money was to be an escort. I mean later in the book we find out she turned down working at a "bar job" because of the sexual harrassment she would receive. Seriously? Because there is no harrassment when working as an "escort." Albeit, she did have another job as a shoe clerk and did need more money but the escort storyline was just created for drama and was a bit over the top.

This book didn't really do it for me. I felt the hero was really stupid to think that the heroine was working as an escort because she had huge credit card debt and couldn't tell her father the truth. He knew her father was in financial trouble four years previously. Wouldn't the natural assumption be that he lost all his money and wasn't able recoup all? I don't know. I just felt the hero was dumb for being the CEO of a multi-billion dollar company.

The one thing I did like was the epilogue. I love an epilogue. I was glad to see her dad improved and the little baby.

RLA says

The hero Nikos is at a party that he really doesn't want to be at when he sees Sophie, the heroine, dressed up like a tart and on the arm of a lecherous businessman. He is reminded of how Sophie and her innocence were once his, and now she seems anything but innocent, and his anger gets the better of him. Sophie is devastated to see Nikos for the first time since he abandoned her and her whole world had come crashing down. She

especially hates that he has to see her now, in her lowest moment, acting as a sort-of escort in order to get the money she so desperately needs to keep her gravely ill father in a care home. Nikos only thinks that Sophie has become like every other avaricious woman, but can't stand the thought of her virtually prostituting herself and offers her money providing she leaves town for a little while. She accepts, which only makes Nikos think he is right about her however after she has gone he can't stop thinking about her or stay away. When the passion between them erupts Nikos wants to hate Sophie, but only ends up learning the truth about her situation and the role he played in ruining her life.

There is something about Julia James's overly dramatic stories that really appeal to me, and I very much enjoyed this one. The gradual retelling of the shared history between the hero and heroine is incorporated into the story perfectly, and really well written - the author really did show how both the characters felt about everything, so the conflict felt three dimensional. As usual in a Julia James book, there is that one great big misunderstanding, but you know what, that is what she does best and it works.

There book is over the top, and emotional yet very compelling. A great book.

Originally posted at <http://everyday-is-the-same.blogspot...>

Alex is The Romance Fox says

This was a very sad story and until the last chapter I kept thinking....no these two people will never be together!!!

A sophisticated, rich and handsome hero is captivated by a very young, innocent and endearing heroine, who very quickly is enthralled for the first time in life and after being seduced by the hero, believes she has found her knight in shining armour and being young and immature tells that to him!!

So what does Nikos do??? He throws her away and accuses her of using her body to get him to save her father's crumbling business!!!!!!! That was so cold.

Flash forward 4 years...Nikos has been working hard in Greece building his empire and is in London, where he's popped in to some club andexactly....there's Sophie, in the arms of a lecherous and fat Greek tycoon.

Suddenly Nikos has this "eureka" moment!!! He's never forgotten Sophie but still he's shocked to discover she's working as an "escort". That's no surprise, Nikos!!! That's what you accused her of being when she was 18 and you so cruelly discarded her...remember!!!!

We know that, in these stories, there has to be a good reason for the heroine to have such a "heinous" job and once we find out what that is, in our eyes, she will be redeemed. Yes, she worked in a shoe store during the day, so she only did this job because she needed money desperately and..... also she did not sleep with any of her clients!!!! Really!!!

But, funnily enough, I believe her. Sophie is just too naïve.....how her life changed from being the spoilt and pampered daughter of a rich man, who lost his fortune, having to live in a crummy bedsit and working two jobs to get money. I felt for her. She had something inside of her that I connected with.

And then the bastard Nikos comes back into her life. The manner in which he treats her is so horrible. Accusing, pushing, threatening, making assumptions.....but she never “caves” in.

So much conflict between them and as I read in loads of flashbacks about these two...I was still convinced that no...this is not a match in heaven!!!

But in the end....Nikos does some groveling when he discovers the reason Sophie needed money so desperately (view spoiler)

The epilogue, which I loved, made me forgive.....not totally though.....Nikoshe’s damn lucky Sophie had such a kind heart.

Dianna says

As a guileless teenager, Sophie spent happy days at piano college and every afternoon, walked home across the park to her millionaire father’s millionaire mansion in London. She’s not talented enough to be anything more than a plinky piano player, but she’s daddy’s princess so everything will be lovely always, and while she’s spoiled she’s a really nice girl. She’s a little troubled because daddy is a bit worried about money, but it’s probably nothing terribly important and then one afternoon, bam: Nikos.

He’s the scion of a Greek billionaire family and Sophie’s daddy has invited him to dinner. Sophie falls hard for this handsome prince, and they go out and she’s floating on clouds and it’s all pretty dresses and sparkles and magical kisses, until Sophie makes a Great and Terrible Utterance, and it’s all over.

The Utterance itself and its circumstances are concealed until rather later in the book, but the impact is immediate and devastating. Sophie is cast aside as a conniving scheming proto-man eater. And her life of ease and sweetness is over.

Four years later, that Utterance still echoing in his ears, Nikos is displeased to see Sophie wearing a cheap slutty dress and in the sweaty paws of a flabby rich man. She’s an escort Nikos, that means she dates for money, that’s all, get your mind out of the gutter! Nikos is not having any of it, because Nikos lives in a little dream world of his own, where escorts are hookers and rich girls might sometimes get a little less rich when you don’t save their daddies from financial ruin, but nothing really bad can happen to them.

Although, perhaps that’s actually a bit too real world, because my goodness, Sophie is devastatingly poor for Reasons, and she needs 5,000 pounds. She also lets Nikos continue to believe that she’s probably what he thinks she is, a little rich girl trying to pay off her credit card before daddy finds out. It’s none of his damn business why she needs the money anyway, the jerk, and she couldn’t wallow in her status as the outraged innocent if she had come clean at the beginning.

Nikos does Sophie a deal. He’ll give her 5,000 pounds (which of course, Sophie is determined she’ll eventually pay him back somehow, even though he could probably lose 5,000 pounds down the couch and not notice, but she’s too moral to have a debt to a jerk like Nikos, even though he’s so rich etc) if she stays out of London for a couple of weeks. Plus, she has to endure a couple of lectures from him about the dangers of becoming a Fallen Woman, which are interminably dull, misplaced and rather bad mannered.

After she agrees the deal, Nikos sends her to this ramshackle country house he's just bought, and has fond fantasies of her having spoiled princess tantrums about the primitive living conditions. Instead, Sophie has a great old time cleaning up and eating cheese sandwiches and weeding the garden, scratching up her delicate princess hands because she doesn't care for such niceties as a good pair of gardening gloves. It is a sign of true purity to revel in the pain of nettle stings and slashes from thorns. Only demon women use gloves.

After a suitable interval, Nikos can no longer bear to simply imagine Sophie's suffering: he must see it for himself. On the flimsy excuse of meeting up with an architect, he journeys to the Country. Naturally, his reaction to seeing that she's coping just fine is ambivalent. He manages to get in another lecture, and because the architect is a no show (how convenient) he arranges to take Sophie out to dinner.

There's this awesome dinner conversation where Sophie gets super monosyllabic about what's going on with her life, but Nikos manages to interrogate her sufficiently to discover that when she's not in danger of becoming a hooker, she works in a shoe shop. He immediately concludes that it's a pretend job, and starts rabbiting on about label shoes. Sophie enjoys her meal with a side of cold rage, because every mention of Valentinos and Blahniks and Choos (oh my) is another piercing arrow into her bleeding heart.

Then they go back to her place and have bedtimes. Sophie flees while Nikos sleeps, because she has flashed back to the circumstances of the Utterance, and anyway, it's time to reveal completely to the reader how completely undeserving Sophie is of Nikos' disregard.

Sophie is so painfully good and poor, and Nikos is so full of assumptions. It's all such a lovely good wallow of a book.

StMargarets says

Does anyone remember that TV show *Lost in Space*? In it a drama llama named Doctor Smith would bleat out, "Oh, the pain. The pain!" when things didn't go his way. He was usually in some kind of pain of his own making and he enjoyed the drama.

This is story about a heroine drowning in that sort of melodramatic pain - whether it is financial pain, bittersweet memories of her courtship with the hero, fear for her future, humiliation for working as an escort, or despair of ever seeing the hero again. It's a sublime pain that slices, stabs, sears and all sorts of other verbs Julia James piles on with a trowel. There is even a guillotine dropping in her mind when the memories get to be too much.

The hero is not much better - the tunnel focus after seeing the heroine across a crowded, coked up room full of hookers and seedy men is only for the girl who almost trapped him into marriage. He had a lucky break - but he can't leave her alone. *The pain! Oh, the pain!*

He makes up a story of why she needs to be an escort. She doesn't contradict him. (The guillotine was down or something) So he gives her money to leave London so the tabloids won't connect him to her. She stays in his newly-purchased dilapidated manor house while she gardens, befriends the birds and mice who make her a dress . . Whoops. Sorry. Different story.

Eventually the hero gets the whole story of why the heroine said what she said after their first (and only night

together) and eventually he finds out what she's been doing for the past four years. (Being TSL for one) Once all those misunderstandings are cleared up, it's HEA time. The epilogue is as hearts and flowers as it gets - and for once, it fits both of them - echoing the courtship memories and the heroine's dearest wishes.

What saves this story is that heroine is a genuine ingenue - even after four years out in the cold cruel world. The author surrounds her with nature imagery from her first meeting with the hero and carries it through the story. The hero had a golden opportunity to slut shame, but he just lectures her like a child about the dangers of men who hire escorts and does his protective alpha thing. He tries to keep his image of her as a gold-digger, but even this self-deluded alpha can't square that with the nature princess purity thing she has going.

Read it if you're in the mood for a fairy tale - where the only jobs someone can get without typing experience are shoe sales or escort. And where Google does not exist for the hero to find out what really happened to her father.

Jacqueline says

seriously? you are broke and the only way you can think of to make money is to be an escort? Waiting tables too good for you?

seton says

This is the American version of Penniless and Purchased. Same story, different title.

Four yrs ago, Sophie was a concert pianist. Now, she is a professional escort. Oh, the shame of it! The degradation! Brought to you by the author of Baby Of Shame.

This was my first Julia James. And my last. *Way* too over-the-top for me.

Ultra dramatic writing style.

Written. In. Very. Short. Sentences.

With lots of exclamation points!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

And lots of unnecessary, ridiculous, pontificating, overblown, specious, wasteful, exorbitant, gratuitous, profuse adjectives!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Could! Not! Bloody! Finish!

Nishtha says

A very emotional book.

A tearjerker.

Four stars.

Sophie was abandoned and insulted by Nikos Kazandros five years ago. After dating her and taking her to the moon, he left her behind thinking she was just after his money.

Sophie's father was facing a huge problem. A big debt which kept piling up, he had just one person who could help him, Nikos. Her dad never told her of his problems, she was the apple of his eye. But after Nikos leaves her, he leaves the last option her dad had.

Five years later, Nikos finds Sophie in a miserable condition, working as a escort for Money. He despises her but he can't see her like that, thus, makes a proposition.

Sophie has no other option but to relent.

The spoiler is what happened that she came to this condition?

What happened five years ago?

Why Nikos left her?

All over, this is a fantastic story written by a equally fantastic author.

Four stars.

Jenny says

No plot plus the writing style is atrocious! Endless inner monologues and descriptions and zero dialogue.

seton says

Four yrs ago, Sophie was a concert pianist. Now, she is a professional escort. Oh, the shame of it! The degradation! Brought to you by the author of Baby Of Shame.

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Could! Not! Bloody! Finish!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Note: this is the M&B version of His Penniless Beauty. Different title, same story.

willaful says

This was so exactly the sort of high-octane read I was looking for, that it was easy to overlook its flaws. You can't criticize a book for being cliched when you're looking for a story about a mean hero who thinks the heroine is a conniving slut, now can you? And there actually was a teeny bit of twist at the end, to make it a little different from its fellows.

There's no denying that the writing is repetitive and overwrought and the word choices occasionally odd. And the almost unrelieved suffering and conflict between the main characters -- well, you *really* have to be in the right mood. But as I said, I was.

Vintage says

Oy veh, the inner monologuing has begun.

Stupid character doing stupid things. I'm just not going to bother.

Lisa Kay says

★★★★☆ Okay, it's cold and rainy here. I worked my butt off over the week-end cleaning out the garage and all I wanted to do is crawl back under the covers and read! I knew I'd read this before, but it has been awhile. I've always loved James' plots so I grabbed this one out of the "donate to library book sale" pile and snuggles under the covers.

When I came back on to GRs I was suprised I only rated this one three stars the first time. Shows what a moody read I am. Sure, seems like the heroine could have found *something* else to do besides being an escort, if she was so desperate for money. But then, she was desperate for *a lot* of money. And very, very young and naive. This one has a nice little twist at the end, as I was pretty sure these two could never get their HEA.

