



A Lady by Midnight

Tessa Dare

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Spindle Cove, nestled in a peaceful corner of Regency Era England, has long been known as “Spinster Cove,” due to its preponderance of unwed ladies of “delicate constitutions”—and that’s the fictional setting for a delightful historical romance series by *USA Today* bestselling author Tessa Dare. In *A Lady by Midnight*, a young woman searching for her family finds love unexpectedly with a handsome colonel—but the secrets of her heritage threaten to disrupt their romance...and their upcoming nuptials. Concerning the heart-soaring romantic fiction of Ms. Tessa Dare, fans of Lisa Kleypas and Eloisa James would do well to heed Julia Quinn’s admonitions and “prepare to fall in love!”

A Lady by Midnight Details

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From Reader Review A Lady by Midnight for online ebook

Sandra says

4.5 STARS TO A FRUSTRATING AND HEARTWARMING HISTORICAL ROMANCE READ!

Love is composed of a single soul, inhabiting two bodies.

A Lady by Midnight is the 3rd book in the 'Spindle Cove' series. I have read the previous 2, and i absolutely **LOVE, LOVE, LOVE** them. They are amazing! Even though this book wasn't as good, it was pretty damn close!

I was a tiny bit hesitant to read this because i didn't really like the characters when i first met them in book 1, but now? I'm happy to say my opinion changed.

Meet the main characters!

His embrace is all she's ever wanted.

Kate Taylor finds friendship and acceptance in Spindle Cove after years of fending for herself. She finds everything, except love, that is.

The very last place she'd look for it is in Corporal Thorn's unwelcoming arms. The militia commander is cold to the bones but brutally handsome at the same time. But when mysterious strangers come searching for Kate, Thorn steps in as her fiance. He claims to only have her safety in mind, so why is there smoldering

passion in his kiss?

Long ago, Samuel Thorn devoted his life to guarding Kate's happiness. He wants what's best for her, and that's definitely not him. To outlast their temporary engagement, he must keep his hands off her and block out her warm smiles out of his empty heart. It's the toughest battle of this warrior's life... one he's destined to lose.

" You're like a gift," he said, his voice rough. "All wrapped up for someone else. A man can't look at you, but think of losing those bows, one by one."

I think i would enjoy this book so much more if it wasn't for the main characters. They were seriously getting on my nerves most of the time.

Thorne was a very....cold character in the beginning. I really didn't like how he treated Kate, he kept on ignoring her and being rude. But he had his reasons, and i understood why he was the way he was. And even if he was sometimes a cold hearted asshole, you could still see the good in him. He is probably one of the most strongest characters i have read about. It's hard not to love him. I really liked how crude he was -

I'm not a smoothly spoken man. If i put my wants into words, i'd have you blushing so hard your frock would turn a deeper shade of pink."

What i didn't like was how he constantly kept thinking he wasn't good enough for Kate. Throughout the **ENTIRE** book he thought of himself as unworthy and as a result did things that just made me want to put my fist through a wall.

"Am i causing you pain?" she asked.

"Always. Every time you're near."

She turned her face away to hide her wounded reaction. "I'm sorry."

"Not what i meant." He sounded drunk. With his healthy hand, he nudged her jaw until she faced him. "You're too beautiful. It hurts."

Kate was a great character that i kinda loved. She had such a good heart! She was kind to everyone, even those who tried to bring her down. She was smart and funny.

What i didn't like about her, and what was most annoying, was how hard she tried to make Thorne like her. She literally begged him for complements. Even when the man pushed her around like shit, she was still clinging to him like freaking glue. Ever heard of something called dignity, girl?

"Katie, i want you. I can't make it poetry. I can't make it sound anything other than crude, because it is. I want you in my bed. I want you under me, holding me. I want to bury my cock so deep inside of you."

Wow. If that doesn't make you swoon, then i don't know what will! The sex scenes between Kate and Thorne were so passionate and hot, but also sweet and tender. Loved them! Especially naked Thorne ***wink***

Overall, *A Lady by Midnight* was definitely not a disappointing read! It was funny, passionate and entertaining. A beautifully written Historical Romance that i recommend to anyone! I'm really looking forwards to reading book 4! :)

...."Whatever soul i had, Katie, i think i placed it in your keeping twenty years ago. And now, it's as if.... every time we kiss you give a little piece of it back."

Thanks Susanne for reading it with me! <3

Aileene says

And the buddy read saga continues...

Reading this **MAN**struating grumpy male on 27 June with my lovelies Jess and Alp

////////////////////

One of my best discoveries this past few weeks has been the Historical Romance and one of the best

discoveries in this genre is Tessa Dare's Spindle Cove series, And A Lady By Midnight is, well, one good reason why I'm loving this genre more.

This is a sequel (of sorts) to A Week To Be Wicked.
This is the story of Kate Taylor and Samuel Thorne.

{Samuel} Thorne. The delicious MANstruating corporal of Spindle Cove who was very tough and rough, who perfected the art of glowering on his too ruggedly handsome face, but secretly loving Kate from afar.

Kate Taylor. Our heroine who grew up as an orphan, her positive attitude is unparalleled, tirelessly searches for her identity and roots as she yearns for a family to belong to.

Thorne is drawn to Kate with such a primal need it makes you believe there's a deeper connection rather than just the physical. His desire for Kate is a palpable.
Whilst Kate just thinks he's rude and very intimidating yet still she couldn't ignore his raw masculinity.

Thorne made Kate uncomfortable. Kate distracted Thorne.

My expectations?
Explosions of love.

Did it happen?
No.
Because our sexy but very stubborn corporal, no matter how he made me imagine naughty images

"Good heavens. Some part of you is moving."
"No, it's not." Thorne conducted a quick, silent assessment of his personal equipment."
"His gaze never left her bodice, surveying. Strategizing. "I could rip them with my teeth."
"Her belly met with the hard, pulsing ridge of his arousal.
My goodness. (MY GOODNESS INDEED!)
Someone notify Lady Harriet. There was a monumental erection to be found in Wilmington, after all."

*Did you really think something else would load up? *grins**

Was shut entirely because of all the secrets he was keeping. Secrets that involve Kate and himself.

But our very buoyant heroine, Kate, who never fails to see the light at the end of the tunnel, didn't give up and persistently peeled Thorne's layers oh so slowly revealing his true feelings that gave this story short bursts of sexy times.

Did I like it? Hells bells YES!

I loved how it was rationed out to me. It kept my neurons in my brain firing sexy and naughty images in my head.

But as much as I loved it, I wanna kick Thorne's equipment no matter how monumental his man jewel can get when it's saluting Katie.

Why? Because, he just kept pushing Kate away, that's why.

Not just once, not just twice but many a time. The bastard even (view spoiler)

This made Aileene annoyed. Aileene doesn't take rejection kindly. If more than one rejection happened, be prepared as Aileene will make sure you won't see the next daylight.

But if you were Momoa... WELL! Aileene will definitely sing a different tune.

Aileene doesn't know why she talks about herself in the third person but Aileene's having fun.

Anyways, we're deviating from the reason why I'm here - my review.

I really adored the characters. Kate and her spunk. Thorne and his stubbornness, though was too much at one point but he is what Katie wants so I wanted him for her.

The storyline is enjoyable. This is my second HR read so my experience is very measly but I can say it's quite different from what I expect from a historical romance.

Rating this **4 Grumpy-is-sexy Stars**

By now, I think I'd even recommend a grocery list if it was written by Ms Dare.

Shout out to Ms Joanita for recommending this awesome series. I adore you, woman!

Jilly says

Ugh! Shoot me if I ever lose enough self-respect to act like this girl!

We have Kate, the love-sick, desperate loser, and Thorne, the alpha-jerk who treats her like crap and continually tells her to go away. But, she won't listen. No. She is convinced that they belong together, so she throws herself at him over and over again. It's pathetic. Not romantic.

The only reason I gave two stars to this book is because Kate's family is awesome. There really needs to be an entire series based on these eccentric aristocrats themselves. I would totally read it. Unless Kate is there. She sucks so bad that she's pulling small planets into her personality.

Anne says

2.5 stars

This is one of those that I didn't know bothered me...until I was done with it.

You know what I mean?

Like, I enjoyed it while I was reading it, but once it was over, I had all these complaints in my head.

So.

It's not going down as a favorite, but this was fluffy enough to scratch my trashy romance itch. Even at (what I thought) was her worst, Tessa Dare still spins a readable yarn.

Plus, there was a cute puppy that helped push them together.

Dawwww!

But.

The love story between these two could have been so much better if there hadn't been so much unnecessary drama on Thorne's part. I'm not big on spoilers, but the *mystery* of their past was pretty evident from the get-go, and even if you don't exactly know *specifics*, it was easy enough to have a correct general guess. In other words, I probably *don't* need to tag this, but I will anyway.

(view spoiler)

So, **ta-da!**

Now, for the rest of the book, Thorne keeps pushing her away. Which, in the beginning, you can kind of understand. I mean, he doesn't want her to find out how their pasts intersected.

BUT.

After a while, she finds out what happened, and he **still** keeps pushing her away, because he insists that he isn't *good enough* for her.

Are you...? What?!

How does that even make sense, crazy man?! (view spoiler)

Thorne was the actual DEFINITION of *good enough* for her.

Ok, ok. I *get* that life had beaten him down as a kid, and he had some serious self-esteem issues. But by the end of the book, I was just fucking over his self-sacrificing shit.

She's crazy about you. Marry her, already!

There were also a few too many random things thrown into their path to keep them apart. Like his PTSD. It felt tacked-on, to me. And then at the end, that *thing* with her cousin(view spoiler)!

And after that, he & Thorne had that ridiculous big fight over her honor? I know it was supposed to be this funny scene - what with all the pulling javelins off the wall, and pausing so Kate could hear her student sing a song in the ballroom - but (again) by the end, I was just over it. It started out like the intro to the Benny Hill Show...

And then ended on this laughably odd, pseudo-dark note.

Ok. Even having bitched and bitched about all of this stuff, I have to say it was still a decent book. I think the majority of my problems with it come from this: I like my heroes to have self-esteem.

Especially the ones who are born into a *lower class* than the women they are courting.
It feels cringy when I read about someone who can't seem to get over their feelings of inadequacy, especially when it's not deserved.
I guess I just like my trashy guys to be confident and comfortable in their skin.

♥Rachel♥ says

Oh, I adored this installment! Stoic and taciturn Corporal Thorne had a mushy heart underneath it all! Katie was so sweet and strong! Of course, Tessa Dare's writing was beautiful, clever and wickedly hot!

Favorite quotes:

She could feel each kiss's imprint linger like a fiery brand on her skin. He was making her with stamps of his approval.

Her passion-swelled mouth...*Wanted*.

Her softly arching neck...*Desired*.

The sweep of her cheekbone...*Lovely*.

And last—the wine-splashed mark at her temple...*Sweet*.

“Remember what I told you,” Aunt Marmoset whispered. “Strong. Overwhelming at first. But with a bit of work, you arrive at the sweetness.”

“Whatever soul I had, Katie, I think I placed it in your keeping twenty years ago. And now, it's as if...every time we kiss, you give a little place of it back.”

Jill says

For the past year Corporal Samuel Thorne of the local militia has avoided Kate Taylor. Kate is glad for the cold, hard and intimidating Thorne to keep his distance. Until one day Thorne rescues her when she is stranded in a nearby town with no money and unable to return to Spindle Cove.

Having been orphaned and left at Margate School when she was four or five years old and raised as a ward of the school till she was twenty-one, Kate is used to being alone. But for the last two years she's found a home of sorts among the misfits of Spindle Cove as a music teacher. With the distinctive and noticeable port wine birthmark on her temple, Kate feels unattractive and unwanted. Thorne's avoidance is evidence of that. But Thorne has his own reasons for ignoring Kate. They have a shared past and Thorne is intent on protecting her from its secrets.

This is the fourth (counting the novella *Once Upon a Winter's Eve*) in this series. Ms Dare has again written an enjoyable, humorous and romantic story. Secrets in their pasts are revealed, and Thorne is a hulking yet sweet protector of the lonely Kate. Determined to leave the army and England and head to America, Thorne's

plans are thrown amok when strangers appear in Spindle Cove claiming Kate as one of their own. To protect her, Thorne proposes an engagement of convenience.

Although this novel is still to the high standards of Tessa Dare's usual, I didn't find it quite as memorable as her previous two in the series. Thorne and Kate are a wonderful couple and the story is enjoyable.

But one aspect that grated is Kate's easy acceptance of (view spoiler) Though I don't have to have complete historical accuracy in my historical romances, this was just glaringly anachronistic and annoying.

However, *A Lady by Midnight* is another very good instalment in the *Spindle Cove* series from one of my favourite historical romance authors. And Thorne and Kate's romance was delightful and made up for any issues I had.

Steam: 3

ARC courtesy of Avon via Edelweiss

Alp says

This was my ok read, neither good nor bad. Some parts of the story were wonderful, some parts bored me to tears, some parts nearly drove me insane, but other bits kept me patiently waiting in anticipation.

A Lady by Midnight had so much potential to be a great read because there was a brilliant plot idea. But alas, it didn't deliver the way I expected it to be. The story moved so slowly, especially in the first half. There were too many filler scenes in which I had to skim through some pages. Thankfully, the remaining half of the book got better. It picked up its pace a bit and I found myself eagerly wanted to know what exactly happened between Thorne and Kate in their past.

What worked for me.

1. The plot idea. It was so intriguing.
2. Badger. It's a smart and brave pup who stole my heart since he first showed up in a scene.
3. The mystery of Kate's childhood. It kept me wondering why Thorne lied to her, why kept this secret from her.

What didn't work for me.

1. The romance. It was a let down. I felt no chemistry between them. Thorne kept pushing Kate away while Kate kept chasing after Thorne. Nope. Not for me.
2. Kate. She was another character whom I couldn't connect with. Besides, she did irritate me at times.
3. The slow pacing.

At somewhere around 70% of the book, I started to think about giving it 4 stars. But near the end when (view spoiler), I went crazy! Damn, it was unacceptable! One of my most important rules: NO PUSHING AWAY. And look what he did! I immediately reduced my rating to 3 stars. And that's me being generous.

Perhaps Tessa Dare's works and I are not destined for each other. Three books should be enough to prove this. So, it's the right time for me to say goodbye to this author.

****Thank you for the buddy read my lovely friends, Aileene and Jess.**

Susanne says

Buddy read with Sandra!

Kate realized she had a grave problem. She was infatuated. Or mildly insane. Possible both.

"That's a very intimidating scowl," she teased. "Do you practice that look in the mirror? I'll be you glare into the looking glass until it shatters."

*She had been accustomed to thinking of Thorne as an enemy, but after that incident...
They were on the same side.
The two of them, against the melons of the world.*

*He looked up, pinning her gaze with his. "I know precisely what you need." The deep richness of his voice melted and spread over her skin.
"Then please." She tugged at his coat, trying to pull him closer. "Please."*

Kate suddenly had the urge to call a temporary halt to this entire interlude and pay a hasty call on a few of her married friends. Then she'd return wiser, worldlier, and prepared with some kind of soothing poultice for afterwards.

The two halves of his being were at war - the half that wanted the best for her, against the half that simply wanted her.

What a fabulous book! Full review to come...

Zain Otoom says

Again, incredibly ridiculous, cheesy and over dramatic. But this one was surprisingly sweet, and I enjoyed the sweetness it offered.

UniquelyMoi ~ BlithelyBookish says

A Lady by Midnight is such a wonderful story. Tessa Dare is so talented, so creative... her *Spindle Cove* stories are every bit as funny as they are poignant, and every bit as sexy as they are romantic!

I may write a longer review one day, but trust me on this - just read the series. If you're a fan of historical romance, if you love quirky but compelling characters... just read the series. It's quickly become a favorite, and I am excited to read more!

Robin (Bridge Four) says

Oh Captain, my Captain...well I guess Thorne is a corporal but that is close enough for me. He is a hard and sturdy man who seems to have a little soft spot for Kate, not that she would ever know it as he has kept his distance for both their own good. Thorne seems to know something of Kate's past and wants to keep it hidden from her as the truth might hurt more than not knowing.

Kate has always noticed Corporal Thorne and she had heard many tales of his exploits with women but she has always assumed his indifference to her was because of the heart shaped port birthmark on her temple. Little could she know that he is holding a key to her past. They are thrown together in unexpectedly when a group of people come to town believing she is their long lost relation. As they spend more time closely together everything starts to unravel and the secrets of the past will not stay at bay forever. Kate must decide what she wants more, the family she has always longed for or a love she never knew existed.

'Love is composed of a single soul, inhabiting two bodies.' ” *He took her by the shoulders, drawing her close. “It rang true for me, in a way nothing else did. Whatever soul I had, Katie, I think I placed it in your keeping twenty years ago. And now, it’s as if . . . every time we kiss, you give a little piece of it back.”*

I like Kate, she is stubborn and headstrong but also very loving and tender. I felt very sympathetic to her from the beginning as she had such humble beginnings and was an orphan. If anyone was going to break through that hard shell around Thorne it was her. Thorne is very likable even though he tries to put on a tough exterior he is very broken inside from his past and all of his actions are what he believes to be in the best interest of Kate

Tessa Dare novels are usually fun and flirty with just enough angst to make it interesting but not over the top. I really like the way the two of them gradually came together and the bond they were able to create. I also enjoyed how their past played a role and how.

Sometimes side characters are what make a novel as well and I do have to say the marquess, his sisters and aunt were fun additions. Harry cracked me up with her unusual manners for a woman of means, Lark with her complete obliviousness to anything dubious and Aunt Marmoset with her wicked tongue.

“Well, that’s a lovely view for a picnic,” Aunt Marmoset said, joining them. “I do enjoy gazing upon a well-carved man.”

“He’s called ‘the Long Man of Wilmington,’ Aunt Marmoset.” Lark scribbled in her journal.

“How odd. I’d been under the impression his name was Corporal Thorne.” Aunt Marmoset came and put her hand in Kate’s pocket. “My dear, hold onto that one. Tightly, and with all four limbs.”

Kate blushed. “I don’t know what you mean.”

*“Yes, you do. We have similar tastes.” The old lady withdrew her hand, leaving Kate’s pocket oddly heavier—full of spice drops, she assumed. **“Remember what I told you,” Aunt Marmoset whispered. “Strong. Overwhelming at first. But with a bit of work, you arrive at the sweetness.”***

What I have learned from reading novels set in Spindle Cove is that anytime there is a ball something eventful is going to happen, they do seem to be cursed. I really did enjoy the characters of this novel and the very cute ending to their story.

Solid Fluffy Happy Day Historical Romance.

Dino-Jess ★ The Book Eating Dinosaur ★ says

[MAKE HER MARRY ANOTHER MAN (hide spoiler)]

Frankie Lovely says

3.5 stars

I was basically here for Thorne!

~~And yes ok maybe a little because his name is Thorne and I'm Lunar Chronicle's trash~~

What I Liked

Corporal Thorne has played supporting roles in the first two books in this series and I will be honest ... when I heard about this quiet brooding imposing figure, I immediately sifted through the Spindle Cove series book descriptions to see how far I would have to read till I could see more of him (a LOT more if you know what I mean *wink*). Tessa Dare did not disappoint!

This story was probably the most emotional of the series yet. Both Kate and Thorne have struggled to find their place, their worth in the world. Pretty early on, we get the sense that Kate and Thorne have more than just similar pasts, but maybe even pasts that twist and tangle and intertwine. Pasts that hide pain and hurt and loss. Walls have to be broken, barriers torn down ... and along the way there are hurt feelings, kept secrets, and a lot of tension.

Kate is a very likeable heroine who exudes strength and thankfulness. She is a steadfast friend and she faces the world with an always positive attitude. Although she struggles with her place in the world and has no family she can remember, she doesn't let her past define her. These are qualities that I love to see in people and in characters! She is able to be a safe place for Thorne who struggles internally with his own tragic past.

There is also sex (which ok I'm 100% here for that too). Yeah, there are some pretty heavy and beautiful (sometimes cliché) sex scenes in this book, but the true intimacy comes from the emotional journey that these two take with each other. This is the true beauty of Kate and Throne's romantic development!

The writing is exactly the quality that I have come to expect from Tessa Dare, as well as the character development of not just our hero and heroine, but of supporting characters as well.

What I Did Not Like

Like with a few other books in this series, I felt as though the natural ending of the story came to a close about 100 pages before the actual ending of the book. Like riding a roller coaster of exciting ups and downs that finishes with a 20 minute slow ride on a straight track before finally landing at the platform. So I will admit ... I skim read pretty much the entire ending of this book.

At around the 60% mark, Dare basically introduced a whole new storyline into the mix which, I felt, was not melded as well as it could have been into the narrative. I feel like either the inclusion of the new characters and plotline should have been introduced earlier, or perhaps this last bit simply condensed. The plot twists felt a little too melodramatic when paired with the first 60% of the story that I loved. Don't get me wrong, I think that these twists should have been included, but again ... maybe in a more simplistic manner?

In Conclusion

If this book had condensed the last 40% of the story a significant amount, this book would have been a 5 star read for me! Unfortunately it dragged significantly toward the end. All in all, an enjoyable story of a beautiful and emotional romance and another great addition to Tessa Dare's Spindle Cove series!

Read this review and other on my blog
A Thousand Lives of Frankie Lovely

Warda says

Not as great as I hoped it would be, but there's no doubt that Tessa Dare writes the most wonderful of characters and dialogues.

And don't even get me started on the slow-burn romance and the sex..

Good lord.

Sam (AMNReader) says

Apparently I need more heroine tags. I really enjoyed Kate in this one. That said, it was a little bit of a miss for me...but only just. I enjoyed the terse and serious Thorne, Kate was a strong, patient, kind character. I really saw her warmth and dug how self-assured she was. Their relationship was great, as was the backstory (I'm a sucker for that)-but that's where my first hang-up is. I wish the enemies-to-lovers thing would've played out a little longer or had a bit more bite. It would've been nice to have it revealed to us a bit more slowly, especially since the sexual tension was great and lasted SOO long.

The length and pacing of the relationship is the main reason for the only just. I love that Dare did not make her hero some articulate charismatic man in love, she kept him at few words and Kate learned to interpret his actions.

The subplot of her heritage wasn't awful but it was incredibly overboard. That 25% or so of the book was where I got a bit impatient. I think this is what I'm referring to when I say the enemies-to-lovers could have had a bit more play. This had so much time and felt like it became an unnecessary distraction to the rest of the story and characters which felt quite strong. Unfortunately, that's why this is only a 3 despite featuring some of my favorite tropes and feeling light and funny with characters I liked.
