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Sarah MacLean

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Lady Sophie's Society Splash

When Sophie, the least interesting of the Talbot sisters, lands her philandering brother-in-law backside-first in a goldfish pond in front of all society, she becomes the target of very public aristocratic scorn. Her only choice is to flee London, vowing to start a new life far from the aristocracy. Unfortunately, the carriage in which she stows away isn't saving her from ruin . . . it's filled with it.

Rogue's Reign of Ravishment!

Kingscote, "King," the Marquess of Eversley, has never met a woman he couldn't charm, resulting in a reputation far worse than the truth, a general sense that he's more pretty face than proper gentleman, and an irate summons home to the Scottish border. When King discovers stowaway Sophie, however, the journey becomes anything but boring.

War? Or More?

He thinks she's trying to trick him into marriage. She wouldn't have him if he were the last man on earth. But carriages bring close quarters, dark secrets, and unbearable temptation, making opposites altogether too attractive . . .

The Rogue Not Taken Details

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From Reader Review The Rogue Not Taken for online ebook

WhiskeyintheJar/Kyraryker says

3.3 stars

I ended up liking this one way more than I thought I would, but the last twenty percent dropped my rating from a 3.7 stars (4 stars) to a 3.3 stars (3 stars).

Because the truth was that women in Britain in 1833 did not have options. They had the path upon which they tread. Upon which they were forced to tread. Upon which they were made to feel grateful they were forced to tread.

I flew through the first 40%, loving the snark and back and forth between Sophie and King. Did King's comments sometimes hit too close to meanness? Yes, but I liked how the author internally showed his remorse at times to what he had said. Also, I complain enough about insta-love that I won't stop myself from acknowledging and enjoying a couple who don't know each other and are a bit naturally porcupine-ish, and therefore act in a more natural progression way.

Sophie's feelings of not belonging will probably find many a kindred spirit in our more book loving community and I felt for her. She, of course, wasn't perfect with her feeling alone and out place making her even more contemptuous of aristocracy society and giving her a touch of better and above it all. I found her immaturity with her idealistic views and memories of her hometown more annoying at times but the girl was lonely and feeling like a misfit and if it hadn't been dragged out so long, I probably wouldn't even be mentioning it now.

She pursed her lips at that, her gaze setting longingly on the steaming bath. "You mustn't look." "I wouldn't dream of it." It might have been the most obvious lie he'd ever told. Somehow, she believed it, nodding and throwing back the coverlet to step out of bed.

King, for me, didn't really grab my attention outside of his interactions with Sophie; he came to life through her. His self-loathing was overdone and dragged on way too long. The last 20% I mentioned had everything to do with him. He becomes a super baby and creates an angst segment that was supposed to provide the ever present and more often than not tiresome overblown angst-y climax romance ending. The scene he talks about wanting, a romantic engagement in the Minotaur garden, would have been immensely better; these two already had their contentious moments, didn't need more.

This couple's repertoire was on key for me but in the second half, I was waiting for the development of feelings to catch up, it didn't quite fully make it there to my satisfaction. There was a bathtub scene that was full of tension but the sexual aspect was slightly lacking and I think this was due to the emotional aspects not being fully developed. I didn't like the life and death situation to show a character how much they really do love someone and the milkmaid lost love storyline, the reason our hero can't ever love again, was handled a bit clumsy. These authors build up these crazy family betrayal storylines (15yrs!) only to give them a five minute conversation that says, "Nope, sorry, everything you thought and have based your non-loving, non-marrying life on, is a LIE. Spend the night grappling with that and then admit to yourself in the morning that you love someone and marry them in a week or proper banns reading time, depending on what type of story you're in."

Overall, I did like this story, King and Sophie had a type of discourse that roped me right in and I have to appreciate how their first intimate scene wasn't a chaste kiss or full blown sex, their sexual scenes built up nicely. And this probably isn't a popular opinion but you all, my god am I dying for Seraphine's (Sophie's sister) story. The dark deep emotion that I'm thinking (and hoping!) will come from Seraphine and her husband has me salivating for their book ((view spoiler))

*She offered a little smile. "Not so boring after all, am I?"
He was all seriousness. "No, I wouldn't call you boring. At all."*

Naomi says

what should have happened: hero dies for being an asshole. heroine marries someone more deserving. the end!!!

Daniella says

Warning: There will be spoilers. And cursing. Lots of it.

I'm a very unforgiving reader. My GR friends know this. I don't know about you, but I have a very low tolerance for assholes who can't respect and trust the heroine. **I've always adhered to the belief that if you can't tolerate a man's bullshit in real life, you shouldn't tolerate it in fiction.**

And that's why I hate King. I hate him so much I want to go all Wednesday Addams on him.

King, our "hero" (scoffs), may not be the worst asshole I've met in Romancelandia, but he's definitely up there on the list. Let me give you a run-through of the shitfuckery that he's done in the novel:

CHAPTERS 1 - 10

“Really? You’re Sophie, the youngest of Talbot girls, aren’t you?”
“I am.”
“The unfun one.”

I wasn't angry at King during these chapters. The most damage he's done was attempting to leave Sophie to fend for herself, and telling her that she was uninteresting and stupid. I found these to be justified under the circumstances; they started out as enemies, and unkind words were bound to be exchanged. I was only mildly annoyed, but was still hopeful that the hero wouldn't turn out to be such a motherfucking cretin.

I was wrong.

CHAPTERS 11 - 12

Sophie shared with King of her plans to marry someone else back in her town. And you know how King responded? He seduced her.

“You said you wished to experience the bits and pieces of it.” He spoke close to her ear, where she smelled of honey and spice.

“The bits and pieces of love.”

One of his hands slid up to her jaw, his fingers threading into her hair. “Would you like me to show you this bit?”

What an honourable piece of shit you are, King. Bravo. Okay, sure, so they didn't do the deed. King merely “gave her pleasure” with his magical fingers (eew, sorry) but why the hell would any gentleman do that? Knowing that he had no plans for the woman?

CHAPTERS 13 - end

King came up with a plan of introducing Sophie to his father as his betrothed. He wanted to have revenge on him, by making him think that he was going to marry *someone so unsuitable for the role of the duchess*.

Let me ask you, wouldn't you find that offensive? Well, Sophie did. And then this amazing conversation happened:

“You didn't tell Robbie we were engaged for me. You did it for you.”

He shook his head. “For us. It works for both of us.”

She ignored the pang in her chest at the words. “You're asking me to lie to a duke.”

“To my father.”

She blinked. “I thought you planned to convince him that you'd never marry.”

“And I won't,” King replied. “I've no intention of marrying you.”

That's rich, coming from the guy who was fingering her in a carriage just the previous night.

Apparently, King was so furious with his father because the old man didn't approve of his former love, Lorna. And when that was brought up during dinner with the father, King implied that Sophie meant less to him than Lorna.

Oblivious to her thoughts, the duke continued, goading his son. “And this one?” he prompted, waving a hand in Sophie's direction, “Do you love her as well?”

...“Lady Sophie knows precisely how I feel about her.”

Sophie got angry.

They had a row.

King apologised and admitted that he knew that he was being an ass but he couldn't help it. (WTF)

King shared his sob story about Lorna.

Sophie and King kissed and almost had sex—AGAIN.

King said this:

“I've no intention of making love to you, Sophie. Not tonight. Not ever.”

King avoided Sophie.

Sophie avoided King.

King couldn't control himself so he sought Sophie out. (WTF)

This happened:

He understood, his gaze turning predatorial. He, the hunter. She, the prey. And then he said, "**I can't love you.**"

A single tear slipped down her cheek as she nodded. "**I know.**"

"I don't want you to leave. I want you to stay here. I want to keep you here, at the center of this labyrinth. Even though it's the worst possible thing I can think to do to you."

So basically, King told Sophie that he couldn't live without her, but he wouldn't love her or marry her.

King proposed they have sex.

They almost had sex.

King stopped at the last minute because he couldn't do it.

Fillers.

Fillers.

King and Sophie finally had sex. (Note: King didn't say anything about marrying her at this point.)

Sophie's father caught them.

King misunderstood the situation and despite Sophie's desperate pleas, proceeded to humiliate her and called her a gold-digger.

Pain flashed in her blue eyes, and he almost believed it. "King—I don't want this."

"You did, though, didn't you? You wanted to trap me."

Betrayed by the woman he loved.

She shook her head. "I didn't. I swear."

...King looked to his future father-in-law. "You'll have your wedding," he said, before turning away, stalking to his desk, extracting paper and pen. "**Now get out.**"

They married.

King continued to treat her like shit.

Sophie decided she had enough and left. (FINALLY)

King's father revealed something important.

King realised his mistake.

King found Sophie and apologised to her.

Sophie forgave him **AFTER ALL THE BULLSHIT HE PUT HER THROUGH.**

The End.

FUCK THIS MOTHERFUCKING PIECE OF SHIT. WHERE THE FUCK IS THE GROVELLING???????????

Bella Carstairs says

4.5

¡Por fin! La primera GRAN LECTURA del año.

Otro maravilloso libro de Sarah MacLean. Con ella nunca me equivoco y siempre es un gustazo leer uno de sus libros porque son ligeros, super-entretenidos, llenos de romance, aventura y unos protagonistas inteligentes y maravillosos. Las escenas y los diálogos son auténticos y enamoran a la vez que entretienen. La historia de Sophie y King me ha encantado. Hay mucha aventura, hay amor, hay pasión... King y Sophie son maravillosos.

Se lee en un suspiro y enamora. ¿Se puede pedir más?

Quiero leer más, más, más...!!!!!!!!!

Si os gusta el romance de época con un toque divertido, chispeante e inteligente, sin duda tenéis que leer a esta autora. Os enamorará.

Grecia Robles says

**** 4.5 *King of my Heart* STARS****

—No tenemos testigos, pero tendrás que conformarte. Te amo, Sophie Talbot. Me encanta tu belleza, tu brillo, y te juro aquí, ante Dios, en la Gran Carretera del Norte, que ayer quería casarme contigo y que hoy también quiero casarme contigo. Tengo intención de casarme contigo cada día durante el resto de mi vida

Estaba recuperándome de un bache de malas lecturas y este libro fue lo que necesitaba para liberar mi alma por completo.

Ya había leído a Sarah MacLean con el libro 9 reglas y me encantó y en este libro podemos encontrar un estilo muy parecido, rápidamente te enamoras de los personajes te atrapan y sientes un gran cariño por ello y ni hablar de los protagonistas que caes rendida a sus pies.

Esta historia es bastante divertida con momentos hilarantes y conversaciones ingeniosas, llena de aventuras que los ponen en aprietos con muchas escenas Hot que te calientan las venas y también románticas y dulces que te aprietan el corazón y que te hacen suspirar de amor.

También tiene un ritmo muy bueno, porque pareciera que se enamoran bastante rápido por los días que transcurren pero la autora hace que no lo parezca porque hay un desarrollo en la relación pasan de ser enemigos a estar fingiendo una relación que se va desdibujando a ya no ser fingida

PERSONAJES

Un libro puede tener una buena historia pero si los personajes no te gustan o no tienen esa química o sea BYE, o también puede ser al revés como me pasó aquí que la historia puede ser lo más cliché del mundo pero no importa porque los personajes llenan todo los huecos los amas y te llegan.

Sophie y King son un pareja genial y todavía no sé si superan a Callie y Gabriel, pero hubo momentos en que la historia me gustó un poco más que 9 reglas.

Sophie no es la típica dama de sociedad inglesa de hecho no entra en el molde, hija de los llamados “nuevos ricos” con un título de nobleza comprado, ella y sus hermanas no tienen buena reputación son llamadas “Las Peligrosas Tolbie”, Sophie lo odia solo quiere ser libre y feliz, lo que más me gustó de ella es que tiene las ideas claras y una personalidad muy definida y no cambia.

This girl is on fire ... ???

King oh amor de mi vida eres tan perfecto para mí???

Quiero ser ese hombre, Sophie. Necesito amarte. Necesito que me ames de nuevo. Necesito que enseñes a amar a nuestros hijos. —¿Hijos?—. Espero que no te importe, pero me gustaría mucho tener unas cuantas hijas de pelo castaño y ojos azules a las que les gusten los libros

Siempre soy una fácil cuando se trata de hombres literarios, pero muy pocos me hacen delirar tanto de amor y en este género es raro que uno me llegue tanto y King lo hizo me enamoró empezando por su nombre, su rostro y cuerpo sexy, su personalidad de un canalla y sobre todo siendo tan protector, es de esos hombres que tienen un pasado oscuro que se niegan amar pero cuando lo hacen dan todo de sí. **La pregunta del millón**
¿Dónde puedo encontrar un King?

En sí el libro tiene sus fallos como en el caso de las hermanas que hacían todo tipo de escándalos sólo para ser notadas, dudo mucho que eso sea creíble, pero de ahí en fuera ME ENCANTÓ.

Btw quiero leer el tercer libro

Alyssa says

Review posted on The Eater of Books! blog

The Rogue Not Taken by Sarah MacLean
Book One of the Scandal & Scoundrel series
Publisher: Avon Books
Publication Date: December 29, 2015
Rating: 4 stars
Source: eARC from Edelweiss

Warning: this is an adult book, and for the eyes of mature readers

Summary (from Goodreads):

LADY SOPHIE'S SOCIETY SPLASH

The youngest of the infamous Talbot sisters scandalized society at the Liverpool Summer Soiree, striking her sister's notoriously philandering husband and landing him backside-first in a goldfish pond. And we thought Sophie was the quiet one...

When she finds herself the target of very public aristocratic scorn, Sophie Talbot does what she must to escape the city and its judgment—she flees on the back of a carriage, vowing never to return to London...or to society. But the carriage isn't saving her from ruin. It's filled with it.

ROYAL ROGUE'S REIGN OF RAVISHMENT!

The Marquess of Eversley was espied descending a rose trellis—escaping an irate Earl and his once-future countess. No lady is safe from Eversley's Engagement Ending Escapades!

Kingscote, the Marquess of Eversley, has never met a woman he couldn't charm, a quality that results in a reputation far worse than the truth, a furious summons home, and a long, boring trip to the Scottish border. When King discovers stowaway Sophie, however, the trip becomes anything but boring.

WAR? OR MORE?

He thinks she's trying to trick him into marriage. She wouldn't have him if he were the last man on earth. But carriages bring close quarters, dark secrets, and unbearable temptation, and suddenly opposites are altogether too attractive...

What I Liked:

This is my first Sarah MacLean book! I decided to read it as part of the Avon Addicts recommendations (and I received this book for free from the publisher via Edelweiss, this did not affect my opinion, etc.). This year has been a good year of first - I also read my first book by Lisa Kleypas, Richelle Mead, Rachel Vincent, and Rachel Caine!

Sophie is youngest of the Dangerous Daughters, the one who hasn't been embroiled in a scandal... until she pushes her brother-in-law in a fish pond when she catches him with a woman who isn't her sister. So, Sophie does the logical thing - she runs. She buys the livery from a boy waiting on a carriage, and hitches a ride with that carriage. It turns out it's the carriage of the Marquess of Eversley, notorious rake. King (the marquess) is heading to Scotland to meet his dying father. Sophie is trying to head to Mossbend, also near the Scottish border. While King doesn't want to help Sophie, he definitely doesn't want to see her bumble her way to Mossbend - with the money she took from him, no less. He doesn't want to arrive into marriage by ANYONE, especially not a Dangerous Daughter. But the attraction between the pair simmers and boils, and it's not long before Sophie finds out secrets that King holds close, and she wants to be there for him.

The beginning of this book was HILARIOUS. Sophie pushing her brother-in-law into a pond of fish? Priceless. Of course, you can't do that in polite society - especially if the man is a duke. Cheating brother-in-

law or not... so Sophie runs away, and runs into the Marquess of Eversley - quite literally. She is convinced that he will take her to as far as Mayfair, but as it would turn out, they're both going towards Scotland. The journey awaits!

I liked Sophie, for the most part. She is very intelligent and supposedly sort of plain? She's not the most appealing of the Dangerous Daughters, and people know it (including her). She's smart and opinionated, the "unfun" boring one. I like how intelligent and kind she is, as well as how she stands up for herself.

King, the Marquess of Eversley, is quite the dashing rogue. He isn't as roguish as most people would think, but he certainly has a reputation for sneaking out of ladies' bedrooms and getting caught. King is actually one of the noblest rogues I've "met" in historical romance novels. He's also one of the sweetest and most thoughtful, and he has a conscience that really bothers him when he realizes that he can't just leave Lady Sophie to find her own way to Mossbend (even if she did take his carriage wheels and money).

The two of them don't quite like each other at first - in fact, Sophie can't stand him, and he wants to be rid of her. But she needs him (he doesn't need her), no matter how tough she thinks she is. The two of them masquerading as husband and wife is soooo funny because literally all they do is quarrel and nearly kiss and quarrel some more. Their banter is great!

The chemistry between them is simmery, not necessarily smoking hot, but a slow-burn chemistry that burned for the entire novel. Honestly, I expected more from MacLean, but what do I know, this is my first novel by her. There weren't enough steamy scenes, but I did like the chemistry between King and Sophie.

King has a lot of secrets and a lot to deal with from his past. His father was not the nicest man, and King's love life seems to have ruined love for him forever. But Sophie gets under his armor and past his walls, and he'll find it in himself to love her like she grows to love him.

Overall, this was a great story, definitely a worthwhile historical romance novel to read. It's my first MacLean book, but I'll definitely be looking for the next book in this series (A Scot in the Dark) and more books by MacLean!

What I Did Not Like:

Two things - this book wasn't hot enough, and the drama in the last couple of scenes were too much. I really thought MacLean's romance novels were hotter? Did I get that wrong? The chemistry is totally there, but there is like, one sex scene. At the very end. Just an fyi.

And then in the last couple of scenes, the drama skyrockets. It's a lot of back-and-forth between Sophie and King. King keeps pushing her away, saying that he can't love her. Sophie pulls him back, but then SHE pushes HIM away. Then they come back together, and he pushes her away again... honestly I was getting whiplash, watching these two push and pull each other. When they finally settled, I was like, FINALLY!

Would I Recommend It:

If you're a MacLean fan, this book does not disappoint. Historical romance fans will love this one! It's a smart and clever and and sweet - there is so much humor and adorable romantic scenes in this book. I loved watching King and Sophie's emotional development and growing relationship.

Rating:

3.5 stars -> rounded up to 4 stars. I'll be looking out for Warnick's book! Warnick is supposedly an even greater roguish rake than King - I can't wait to experience that!

Stacey is Sassy says

Aristocrats be damned...unless you fall in love with one.

In *The Rogue Not Taken* we see how awful the aristocrats acted. With their belief that they are better than others and the lazy way they live their lives, they do not sound nice. I do love reading historical romance, but get very frustrated with them too. In this case my eye was twitching when a Duke had the power to ruin a whole family because his pride was hurt. Obviously, these things happen in modern times too...maybe not with a Duke, but in this particular case the Duke was an ass and I wish more than his pride was hurt.

Sophie is the youngest daughter of a very scandalous family. Her father, a newly made Earl, was a coal miner by trade. The gossip is that he acquired his position in a game of cards. Not even his five daughters know the truth. Besides the questionable inheritance, the daughters also seem to attract gossip. One of the daughters supposedly trapped a Duke into marriage, and three are betrothed to unsuitable men. Sophie is the plain, boring and unfun one who doesn't want anything to do with London and the aristocracy. At a party, Sophie defends her sister...but upsets the town and the spoilt Duke. She decides to escape the party and on her retreat a man falls practically in her lap.

King has a reputation. He's quite happy with it and it serves his purposes well. While escaping from a Lady's bed chamber...through a window, he lands with boots in his hands at Sophie's feet. After introductions are made and insults have been flung, King declines Sophie's requests for help and thinks that's the end of it. It's only the beginning.

For quite a lot of the story, both Sophie and King butt heads. They don't particularly like each other and King has a very bad habit of insulting Sophie and then regretting it. The first half of the story dragged for me a little. I wasn't sucked in like I normally am with a Sarah MacLean novel. There were funny parts and interesting parts, but I started to get impatient with the couple. I wanted to get to the bottom of their issues and understand their history.

The second half was much better. My emotions were all over the shop. One moment there was a tear in my eye because Sophie's feelings were hurt, then I kept crying because King does something extra sweet and then two pages later (give or take), I wanted to punch his head in. These were all great though, because my heart was pumping and my feelings were engaged. The second half also had some steamy scenes too.

I really enjoyed *The Rogue Not Taken* especially the characters and the scenery depicted. The love story ended up being sweet and I smiled at the twist that came when King is at home visiting his father. I can't wait to see what's next in the series.

To buy *The Rogue Not Taken* from Amazon - <http://amzn.to/1JQu7ys>

I'm an Aussie chick who loves to read and review romance, drink coffee, be a *Style Setter* and stalk David Gandy. To see more of my reviews, fashion, food and pervathons -

UniquelyMoi ~ BlithelyBookish says

Full review now posted...

Sarah MacLean is one of the few authors whose stories will, without fail, take me on a wild ride of emotions, so it came as no surprise to me that this first in her new *Scandal and Scoundrel* series did just that. *The Rogue Not Taken* had me laughing, crying, and clenching my hands in fists of outrage because Sophia and her sisters grabbed hold of my heart from the start and never let go. And when you add a roguish scoundrel like King to the mix, things become (fanning myself) interesting, to say the least!

Blurb...

Lady Sophie's Society Splash

When Sophie, the least interesting of the Talbot sisters, lands her philandering brother-in-law backside-first in a goldfish pond in front of all society, she becomes the target of very public aristocratic scorn. Her only choice is to flee London, vowing to start a new life far from the aristocracy. Unfortunately, the carriage in which she stows away isn't saving her from ruin . . . it's filled with it.

Rogue's Reign of Ravishment!

Kingscote, "King," the Marquess of Eversley, has never met a woman he couldn't charm, resulting in a reputation far worse than the truth, a general sense that he's more pretty face than proper gentleman, and an irate summons home to the Scottish border. When King discovers stowaway Sophie, however, the journey becomes anything but boring.

War? Or More?

He thinks she's trying to trick him into marriage. She wouldn't have him if he were the last man on earth. But carriages bring close quarters, dark secrets, and unbearable temptation, making opposites altogether too attractive . . .

From the first page to the last, *The Rogue Not Taken* is a delight to read! Well, a delight and steamy and funny and thought-provoking and heartbreaking and hopeful... it's absolutely everything I love about Sarah MacLean's way of telling a story!

I can promise you this, dear readers of my review... *this* is going to be a fabulous series!!!

An ARC was provided by Avon Books. In appreciation I'm giving them an honest review.

Karen says

Loved this one!!!

Bubu says

I have read worse books than The Rogue Not Taken, books I DNF'ed, books that made me laugh because they were so ridiculous. Which is why it's taken me a couple of days to make up my mind about its rating. All things considered, though, I cannot rate this higher than I have. There were too many factors that made this book an unpleasant read.

Let me start with the plot. Road romance, adventures, bookish heroine, a rake/rogue/scoundrel. All this reminded me of A Week to Be Wicked. It was just not anywhere near as good or entertaining. That Sophie disguised herself as a footmen with her "ample bosom" and noone but the hero recognises her, was just silly, and not in a funny way either. The story was one dimensional and predictable and there was no true chemistry between Sophie and King. For most of the time they both actually believed that they didn't like each other. Not helpful!

The next problem I had was the writing style. It's something I noticed in Sarah MacLean's previous books. The technique of writing one-liners.

Like this.

Throw in a few italics.

Just in case we miss the significance of the moment.

This happens almost every 3-4 pages.

Whilst a technique used by many authors, intensifying a memorable situation, if used as often as MacLean does, it becomes a rather tedious exercise. Not every thought process is an epiphany and it made me roll my eyes more than once. It becomes boring and loses its effect.

Now to the actual problem. The characterisation of the MCs. Where to start? See, when it comes to characters and their actions, I want to understand. It is *the* single biggest criteria I have when it comes to character development. At the beginning of a book, I am pretty open-minded when it comes to character traits. Give me an arsehole hero or a TSTL heroine, but please pretty please make me understand why they are who they are, why they act the way they act and why they change the way they change. If an author fails to make me understand her characters' motivations, I'll certainly not be pleased. I don't have to like the h/H straight from the start, nor their actions, but I'd like to be able to see things from their point of view, start understanding them, and for that context is everything.

We don't get to hear King's sob story (aka his background) until the last third of the book. By then he's hurt, insulted and pushed away Sophie repeatedly. He's an obnoxious prick and stays an obnoxious prick almost for the entirety of the story. He has his "I'm an ass and she deserves better than me" moments, but fails to act or change on these thoughts. Maybe, just maybe, if the author had given me more of his story sooner, I would have been more forgiving/understanding. But to be honest, it didn't help that he remained an obnoxious prick. That actually surprised me quite a bit. I would have thought that once his story was out, he would finally stop being an arse, but nope, no such luck. There was no change in him or his actions, no development. How was I supposed to like him? There was not one redeemable action from his side. Not one!

Which brings me to my biggest disappointment. Sophie! She's actually quite likable, if I ignore her footman-disguise-stunt. I understood her much better than the idiot, King, whom I didn't get at all, admittedly. I got

why she wanted to get away from her current life. But, why oh why, would a woman with a brain ever choose King? So many opportunities where she could have turned around and walked away from him. I felt like shaking and slapping her, screaming at her, but whenever it came to that pathetic excuse for a hero, she seemed to lose any sense. She was so, so needy around him, without a backbone. I was wondering how many times that man had to walk all over her, before she would get her head straight. If it is not okay to repeatedly hurt and insult someone, then it's certainly not okay to be hurt and insulted repeatedly until the very end either. It simply isn't.

This takes me back to my initial point of having to understand the characters' motivation. You get hurt once, you get insulted and pushed away once, and you learn from it. Okay, let's give Sophie a second try. Again, King behaves like the prick that he is. What's the excuse now? Certainly not his non-existent charm. I know I'm being harsh here, but she's a woman and I'd like to see my heroines with more backbone. I still fail to see her attraction for King.

What finally buried this book for me was the ending. Seriously, what the hell? After treating her like shit throughout the story, all he has to do is say "Sorry" a few times and all is forgiven? Is this the message the author wants to get across? Are women to be treated like that, and a few "I love you"'s make all the hurt disappear? King is an emotionally abusive wanker, but all he has to do is promise her that he'll make her happy, and he gets his HEA? I mean this happens literally on the last 5 pages. This is not okay...at all!

I didn't get this book or its characters. I didn't understand them...sadly.

♥?elody says

Review up

Finally! I made it. Whew.

I feel like this took me a year to finish.

I think I'm falling out of love with MacLean's writing. Three books back to back that haven't worked is one too many for me.

This was way too melodramatic for me all around. The plot, the ever present overblown 'shameful secret' trope, the hero, the heroine, the **writing**. It's a 416 page book and it had no reason to be IMO. A good 100 pages could have easily been cut out. I mean I got to the half-way mark which felt more like the conclusion but there were 200 pages left. I think I whimpered at that point, out loud. 200 pages left of what exactly? The hero continuing to lament over and over again how he needs to tell his father *the line ends with him* (RME) and the heroine constantly having to remind herself that she can't stand the hero. Oy. Give it a rest.

I feel like I've been saying this a lot recently but it bears repeating. Dear Authors: The more you drag out a 'shocking reveal'? The bigger you make it? The bigger readers expectations will be. I'm sorry but King acting like a jaded rake for all the world simply because Daddy dearest ran off the milkmaid girl he fell in love with is not shocking or worthwhile IMO. Like...*are you kidding me?* **That's it?** He swore off love because of some adolescent misguided love?

Come on! Suck it up and grow up dude. I found this so weak and made the hero come off juvenile. And it certainly didn't excuse his arrogant, sad 'woe is me' behavior.

"She died inside the damn coach, at my hand."

No wonder he hated riding in coaches. "That's why you race the curricles," she said. "You pay your penance. You risk yourself."

"I told you that my father killed her. As though he put a pistol to her head."

She nodded, not knowing what to say.

"It wasn't his hate that put the pistol to her head. It was my love."

Shall I pass you your hanky now?

MacLean's writing is known for being on the dramatic side, with the constant breaks, the repetition (oh my gawd the REPETITION), and the overly dramatic internal monologues that boarder a 3 hour theater play and you are wondering when it will be over. Here it was twofold because you have a couple who have no chemistry and a plot that is so poorly executed and thin that the author's dramatic tone just screams off the page.

Yours.

He stayed with her until she returned to earth, to the labyrinth, Ariadne to his Minotaur, somehow able to destroy him with her touch.

Yours.

He would hear that word, spoken in her voice, for the rest of his life.

Yours.

Truth and utter lie all at once.

She couldn't be his, of course. She couldn't be his, because it would require him to be hers. It would require him to love her the way she deserved. And that would never happen. It was impossible.

The number of times we are reminded on *every. freaking. page* how the hero can't have her and she can never be his is ridiculous. Like....**enough**. The last 100 pages felt like a year. Because all that was left was regurgitating the same information over and over and over again. There was no rhyme or reason behind it because it added nothing to the plot. You have your main characters just sitting around in different rooms lamenting over which one should leave first and say goodbye, nothing else. For 100 DAMN PAGES.

And the dialogue is not smart. You have these two constantly bickering with the heroine counter-arguing & questioning the hero at every turn just to have the final say that she ends up sounding stupid.

"You should not bite the hand that feeds you," he said.

"Are you calling me a dog?"

I mean really? I didn't ask for this. If I wanted ludicrous juvenile sparring I wouldn't be reading Sarah MacLean. So yeah I'm annoyed. I remember that little cameo Lady Sophie made in *Never Judge a Lady by Her Cover*, the quiet, smart Wallflower who seemed witty and got to dance with the rakish handsome 'Lord E' (which turns out to be King), I was immediately intrigued. But what I got here makes me want to ask for a refund (of my time).

"Why not? They shan't be looking for me there."

It was likely the truth, but he'd had enough of this woman and the carelessness with which she lived her life. "Because you have a habit of getting shot on mail coaches."

"It wasn't on the coach."

Yes because that makes a world of difference. SMH.

And what's with all the lame monikers?

"Royal Rogue"

"Soiled S's"

"Dangerous Daughters"

Really MacLean? *Soiled S's*?

You can do better than that.

I honestly was gonna lambast the heroine once I finished this because she drove me insane a good 80% of the story but then things happened and my opinion changed. Only slightly. Sophie Talbot is the kind of bluestocking I abhor, she carries the snippy 'I'm smarter than everyone' attitude that really gets under my skin. Yes the aristocracy are a bunch of snobbish sexist assholes, but the end of the day, a snob is a snob. I just found her haughty know-it-all judgmental attitude no better. There was just literally nothing at all to make me like this girl or empathize with when she kept acting like an indignant naive brat for a good portion of this. She doesn't like her aristocratic life so she decides to run away, back to her old country life not even thinking her plan through. But when she falls for the hopeless fool hero I started to feel sorry for her. I guess my biggest issue above all my other gripes is that I couldn't buy into the love between the MCs. Everything came off flat and half-approached. The hero King, I struggled to connect with entirely. He's probably the most underdeveloped flat Sarah MacLean hero I've read to date. I just didn't care for him and could not buy into this careless rake falling for the boring "unfun" Talbot sister. How does one go about not caring at all about a girl, leaving her stranded at an Inn then suddenly rushing to save her and having the shakes over possibly losing her so quickly? This happens by **Chapter 5**. It just made everything following it weak and insincere. The character development and romance build up was super weak and abrupt. You can't convince me a dude willing to dump a girl at an inn without so much as a backward glance can then turn around and act like he nearly lost his whole world in a matter of 5 pages. No ma'am.

As for the next book, I'm not even sure I want to give it a try. The Scottish Duke of Werrick didn't rev my engine in here, he's a walking HR stereotype. The whole back thumping, cigar smoking, curricles racing with the chums I find so juvenile. You guys are in your 30s why the hell are you racing up and down London for?! Find a more interesting adult (sexy) hobby please. And the fact that the author felt she had to justify the hero's curricles racing as a 'penance' for his self-induced ~~martyrdom~~ punishment was just cringe-worthy. My eyes couldn't roll any harder. So yeah like I said...not MacLean's best.

Sarah MacLean says

Well...I mean, of course I like it.

But the question is...will you? Let me help you decide. If you enjoy the following things, you might like Sophie & King's story:

- * Romancing the Stone (or *any* enemies-to-lovers story)
- * Roadtrip romances
- * Men who don't know what's hit them
- * US Weekly, People Magazine, Defamer.com, or that sidebar of "news" on your Facebook page
- * Any of the following: Beyonce, the Kardashians or the Middleton Sisters
- * The idea of wildly-sexy afternoons in hedge-mazes
- * Heroes who end up realizing their idiotic mistakes and end up on their knees for love

I can't wait to hear what you think of the book, and to tell you more about my next book, A Scot in the Dark! For immediate updates on the book (and other fun subscriber-only stuff), please sign up for my newsletter (I will never ever spam you. I promise.).

In the meantime, find me online!

Twitter: @sarahmaclean

Website: sarahmaclean.net

Instagram: @sarahmaclean

Facebook: Facebook.com/sarahmaclean

Viri says

*****4 Just my King STARS*****

Está es la Sarah MacLean que me encanta. Que hace que adore a sus personajes como no tienen idea.

A ver si me explico ahora sí bien... sabía que no podía ponerle menos de 4 estrellas desde que el personaje principal apareció. Porque bueno,

Tiene el nombre

El porte

El estilo

La osadía

Protección y perfección de su lado.

Es un canalla encantador de esos que tanto me derriten como nieve al sol.

???

Y sí. Desde la primera frase que salió de su boca caí rendida a sus pies. Porque soy así de facilota.

Y sí. También morí de risa y placer con cada una de las situaciones hilarantes y diálogos chispeantes de este par.

Pero a pesar de todo lo que me gustó, no puedo dejar de notar que tuvo muchos errores también. **Por ejemplo, algunos comportamientos no fueron muy acordes a la época. Por más liberales o nuevos ricos, me cuesta creer que las hermanas hicieran lo que quisieran y siguieran siendo aceptadas en sociedad.** O el final fue demasiado rápido. Incluso tuvieron algunas situaciones poco creíbles y que no iban acordé a lo que decían (lo del papá). Su amor si fue demasiado rápido pero a mí por lo menos, **la autora me lo vendió muy bien jajaja.**

Y es que a pesar de eso, Sophie & King fueron dos personajes muy bien trazados y con sus personalidades super bien marcadas. Sus acciones iban con su personalidad, sus sentimientos y emociones fueron coherentes y la profundidad que no se vislumbraba en un principio fue pieza clave.

Con momentos emotivos, románticos, tristes, y muy pero muy divertidos este es un libro que entretiene, que se disfruta y que me recordó porque me encantaba tanto esta autora.

El libro está plagado de aventuras, idas y venidas, romances del amor al odio, exasperaciones por parte de ambos protagonistas, un tira y afloja cardíaco, escenas +18 muy bien narradas y romances fingidos no tan fingidos. Venganzas y canalladas pero un amor que yo si sentí real.

Porque si, **no es un argumento original y está plagado de clichés pero para mí este libro tiene vida.** Y me ha regresado a la Sarah MacLean que extrañaba tanto desde mi **Gabriel y las 9 reglas de Callie ?♥??**

PD: Sophie... lo perdonaste demasiado rápido, pero teniendo en cuenta que siendo él yo también lo perdonaba no puedo alegar nada jajaja

Damaris *the perpetual dreamer* says

It's official. I'm giving up on Sarah MacLean. This book just re-affirmed my decision.

The hero was a bloody assh*le, and I can't tolerate him.

Natalie says

I'm giving this 2.5 stars because I loved Sophie, I enjoyed some of the road trip rompy stuff, it was funny in parts.

But I can't give it any more because King was a raging asshole. He hurt Sophie so much, he was so cruel and callous with his easy words, and every time he apologized, he cut her two new wounds. He was cruel to her about her appearance, her personality, her family, her dreams, her life, her reputation, everything. And he never groveled or apologized sufficiently imo, although I don't know how you can sufficiently make up for that.

I loved Sophie, she was headstrong, independent, brave and moral. I liked the epilogue and I did like some of the sexy stuff but I can't on my conscience give this one more because Sophie really deserved better.

