



A Gentleman of Substance

Julia Talbot

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Michael St. James is something of a cad, and now he's paying for it, banished to a backwater, post-colonial Virginia town for his sins. Happily, he finds something to occupy his time in the form of Daniel Calhoun, a stiff-necked local squire who simply begs to be taken down a notch for his arrogance. The two begin a torrid affair, and Michael pushes them to the very edge of social extinction with his wild ways, drawing Daniel into mischief at every turn. Eventually Michael realizes that he teeters on the very brink of ruining Daniel's life as thoroughly as he has his own, and decides to do the honorable thing. Will it be too late for him to convince Daniel he can do the right thing? Or will Daniel Calhoun decide perhaps he doesn't want a gentleman after all?

A Gentleman of Substance Details

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From Reader Review A Gentleman of Substance for online ebook

J says

3.5 stars rounded up to 4 stars. A nice historical romance between two gentlemen farmers, set in the 1800 U.S. colonies where M/M was frowned upon but tolerated if hidden, but lovers were shunned and ostracized if the relationship became public.

Misty says

**** 3.5 Stars ****

Daisiema says

This has been in my TBR files forever. I admit I put it off because I was unsure about reading about two men who fall in love in post-colonial Virginia having a happy ending. Finally my curiosity got the better of me, and I gave this book a try. I am glad I did.

Michael St. James is a rogue. Banned by his father for his scandalous behavior to a podunk town in Virginia, he believes he has been trapped in one of the four corners of Hell. Always fashionable and living in the now, he has a tendency to be a snob. To keep the boredom away, he can be quite outrageous, just to get a reaction from others. When he decided to attend a local souiree he isn't expecting anything exciting to happen. He figures watching paint dry on the wall will be more entertaining, so he is completely caught off guard when he lays eyes on the most beautiful man he has ever seen.

Daniel Calhoun has better things to do than to attend a party. But, the affection he feels for his wallflower cousin, compells him to at least make an appearance. As he is talking to his cousin and her husband he lays eyes on a dandy of a man, who seems to be checking him out. Daniel immediately feels contempt for the man. Yes, he may be beautiful in his own way, but he is obviously not a man who knows what hard labor is, so he has no respect for him.

When the man approaches he and his cousin, Daniel is surprised when he discovers that this Michael St. James has been very kind to his cousin in the past and that she likes him. Although, he is appreciative of the friendship Michael has obviously given her, Daniel still cannot be civil to the man because he doesn't respect him. When Daniel's sarcastic remarks to Michael makes him laugh instead of running him off, Daniel is livid. He is even MORE angry when his sweet cousin forces him to invite Michael over to his farm to get better aquainted. Unable to tell his cousin no, he reluctantly agrees to meet with the man.

First, let me say that I thought this book was very refreshing. Daniel is not gay, so this is a gay for you storyline. Despite himself, he sees that there is more to Michael than meets the eye. They soon become friends, then lovers. I liked that Daniel is a man who is controlled by his baser instincts. What I mean by that is, although at first he is appalled by Michaels attraction and attention he gives him, he soon realises that he feels the same way, and he goes with what his heart and body tell him.

I also liked that there was consequences for their relationship. Being set in Post-Colonial Virginia homosexuality is definitely frowned upon. When they are discovered, choices must be made. Hard choices.

I liked that both Daniel and Michael were well rounded characters. They brought out the best in one another, were willing to sacrifice much to be together, and deserved their happy ending. Michael despite his arrogance and manner captured my heart just like he did Daniels. There were some funny and sweet moments between these two that I really enjoyed reading, plus their relationship gets quite steamy in the bedroom, too. Whew!

I don't know who was shocked more, me or Daniel to find out that Michael himself is a gentleman of substance. I loved it.

I see that this book has received mixed reviews. I guess it won't be for everyone, but I loved it.

If you are offended by explicit homoerotic sexual relations this book is not for you.

4.5 stars

Matimate says

I picked this book for two reasons, the first was men in breeches and the second was those men doing it together in very hot way. The plot is not the thing which should be taken as the golden piece of literature, but it is surprisingly smooth and there is also some hint of characters development. The historical accuracy is practically none. But it is porn, right?

Michael St. James was a rascal to the bone, who was banished to the backwater town in order to get out of the sight of the society. He met a man and that man became the man for him. Daniel Calhoun, local squire who is proud as hell and whose attitude simply stirred Michael St. James into the action, which started as a game and ended as the torrid love affair which ended with happy end and lots of steamy sex

Susan Laine says

4.75 stars. In many ways, this is the kind of story filled with themes of forbidden love and enemies-to-lovers that's all predictable. But... the way this tale is written, it's just charming and drags you right into the thick of things, not letting go until the last line. I loved it. What I found quite refreshing also was that despite the historical period, the two men decide to forge ahead with their relationship, regardless of being maliciously gossiped about. They refuse to let others make their decisions for them, to allow haters to change what good they have.

Read the full review at [Joyfully Jay](#).

Heather C says

Well THIS was an unexpected surprise!! How have I never heard of this book before last week? Could it be because it has a string of pearls and (what I am assuming) a riding crop on the cover instead of two bare

chested men?! Hmpf. It deserves some love no matter what's on the cover!

I must admit that I wasn't quite sold on the story in the very beginning because the POV changes were too frequent...even though they were clearly marked. But as soon as I realized that Daniel couldn't stand Michael, causing Michael to pursue Daniel all that much more determinedly, I was hooked. I mean, at first, Daniel hated everything about Michael, so it was perfect when Daniel's cousin Jane forced him to "make nice" with Michael. Of course, Daniel still didn't hide his distain for Michael and was quick to remind Michael of that every chance he got. Then Michael kisses him, and well, Daniel is none too pleased! Ha!

Okay, so clearly Daniel is an asshole...or is he? Maybe he's just trying to protect his heart? Or maybe he just needs the right man to put him in his place. Either way, once Daniel finally gives in to Michael's advances...OH MY GOD! Umm, so they have A LOT of hot sex...slightly kinky hot sex, but nothing too shocking. But still!! I was surprised by the intensity.

AND THEN...Daniel totally surprises me with his determination to keep Michael and with the things he's willing to risk. sigh *So what* that Daniel kind of screws up, he totally makes up for it in the end!! Yeah, yeah, *so what* that the ending is sooooo melodramatic, it was a hard won HEA.

Reviewed for The Blogger Girls

Lena Grey says

Daniel Calhoun, in 'A Gentleman of Substance' by Julia Talbot, is very close to his family and has worked for years to build up his farm from practically nothing. He loves his life, but when he falls in love with another man Daniel is forced to choose between the two; he has to decide whether to keep what he has, or give it all up for love.

Both Michael and Daniel are delightfully crafted, each with an abundance of personality, sensuality, resourcefulness, and determination, which, of course, makes their personalities clash with fervor. Even though Michael St. James is first presented as a scoundrel, it's fascinating to watch him develop a conscience, particularly after falling in love with Daniel. I sympathized with his confusion in having to learn how to proceed as a man of conscience after living a lifetime with so little regard for others. Daniel is most likely the only person he's ever cared for more than himself and Michael doesn't want to hurt him, but doesn't have a clue how best to prevent that from happening and, consequently, makes matters even worse.

Daniel is just as stubborn and proud as Michael. He has met his match both intellectually and physically and it drives him mad. The more he tries to pull away from Michael, the closer they become. It was like watching a rubber band be stretched apart, knowing that eventually it will come smashing back together, which was precisely what happened. For love's sake, Daniel and Michael set out on an unfamiliar path, one which will test both men's resolve and have them doing a lot of soul searching.

'A Gentleman of Substance' is a passionate historical romance set in Virginia in the late 1700s – early 1800s. It's well written in a lyrical style, with engaging characters and rich descriptions of the culture in that time period. If you want a passionate historical romance with a fairy tale ending, which will put a smile on your face and a sigh on your lips, then I'd highly recommend this story. Thank you, Julia Talbot, for this entertaining trip into the past.

NOTE: This book was provided by the publisher for the purpose of a review on Rainbow Book Reviews.

A. Sanchez says

For an erotic romance, this was a very good story. Actually, the characters were developed enough that this could have been made a full-length novel. I would have liked to have seen exactly what made Michael fall for Daniel. Sometimes the dialogue was confusing, not sure who did or said what.

Jack says

I was excited to read this book because there aren't many gay historical romances. I wanted to see how the author would somehow give the heroes a happy ending.

I thought the story was very well paced. I even liked Michael St. James who is a snob, a sodomite, (god forbid) and a rake. His sarcasm and willingness to be outrageous at times to get a reaction out of others, made him a very interesting hero, and I loved him!

Michael and Daniel's relationship was so much fun to watch develop. Daniel hates Michael at first sight, so seeing him come to like Michael then become attracted to, and eventually fall in love with Michael made the dynamics between them addictive to read about.

I loved how they ended up bringing out the best in each other. Their determination to be together, made them a couple I enjoyed reading about.

Plus, the ending was pretty great, too!

Hart says

So this is Gay for You, and I would not have read it if I'd known that. Prior to meeting Michael, Daniel has sex with lots of women (although there are no m/f scenes in the book), and in fact he seeks out more sex when he begins feeling attracted to Michael. But once Daniel starts having sex with Michael, he decides that he will never marry a woman, because in his mind it would not be fair to her. He believes that he's tainted now, I guess - tainted by his attraction to one man, which does not make much sense. He never says he is still attracted to women or to other men.

I know that everyone's orientation is different, but this concept does not at all match my own experience of bisexuality. It also perpetuates harmful stereotypes of bisexual people. Much better writers than I have written on this topic, though, so I'll just leave it at saying that I don't like it.

I almost stopped listening early on, for that and other reasons, such as the many gendered slurs the characters use against the book's main villain, a cruel high-society type of woman. Did there need to be that much focus on how physically unattractive she is, especially to Michael, who is gay? But it isn't very long, and the narration is good. Also, the voice the narrator used for Daniel made me think of Worf, which entertained me.

Daniel's internalized homophobia continues throughout the book, but mostly, this book is a series of sex scenes strung together with a plot about having an m/m relationship in a rural community, in early-1800s Virginia. I'm not a history scholar and I don't read historical fiction to look for inaccuracies; however, one omission stood out to me as strange. The main characters don't have slaves, which makes sense in Michael's

case and is explained for Daniel, but still, I think slavery would've been a part of daily life at that time. Oh well.

I didn't like this very much. It is not poorly done; it's just that those few things I mentioned made it a lot less fun for me than it probably would be for other readers. The sex scenes are good, and some of them are slightly kinky.

Usagi Tsukino says

At page 16 it was already boring me, but still I continued reading it.

It wasn't that bad, taking note that I hate historical books.

Although, there really was no need for an epilogue. =/

Joyfully Jay says

A Joyfully Jay review.

4.75 stars

In many ways, this is the kind of story filled with themes of forbidden love and enemies-to-lovers that's all predictable. But... the way this tale is written, it's just charming and drags you right into the thick of things, not letting go until the last line. I loved it.

In the beginning, the characters are total opposites in personalities, and their arguing banter is one of the best aspects of the book. The sparkling wit and snappy retorts make each verbal fencing match a delight to read. Daniel insults Michael as best he can, and Michael happily smiles with a smart remark back. Delicious dialogue indeed.

What I found quite refreshing also was that despite the historical period, the two men decide to forge ahead with their relationship, regardless of being maliciously gossiped about. They refuse to let others make their decisions for them, to allow haters to change what good they have. Historical romances often show this aspect which, while realistic, is often handled in a melodramatic fashion. Here, the matter is skimmed, working in the background to show the social forces these men heroically fight against.

[Read Susan's review in its entirety here.](#)

Wollstonecrafthomegirl says

2.5 stars. I really did read this nearly a year ago. I remember it being a pretty mediocre experience with some jarring writing and a sense that the plot was rushed with little proper character development or development of the romance. That said, I read all the way through and it did divert me for a few hours. There is better m/m historical fare out there though, if that's your jam.

Bo says

Magnificent

I have not read very many MM romances which take place in Colonial America, but the ones I have read are very good indeed--but this one shoots right to the top of the charts and I cannot imagine how it's been hidden because it's magnificent.

The reason is very simple: There are no two characters more utterly unsuited for each other, nor as fated to be together, as Michael St. James and Daniel Calhoun. And though it appears at the start that we have Michael as the protagonist and key to the tale, it is Daniel Calhoun who is the story here and the hero every step of the way.

Their tale is aided and abetted by some very real and well-drawn sub characters, but the plot and the personalities of these two men will drive you crazy.

You will not be able to put this one aside, so let it be started at a time when you will have some time--it's a fast, furious, read full of angst, bitterness, hope, love, and some of the most magnificent love scenes in any historical gay-for-you novel you will encounter.

You will never forget these two, and as much as you will like and sympathize with Michael St. James, I am willing to bet you will truly love and never forget Daniel Calhoun.

SPOILER ALERT: This is the single worst cover I have ever seen. why not put the men on the cover instead of someone's cheeky idea of luring you in with an instrument that plays a minor, though somewhat hilarious, role in the story? Also, it is formatted poorly for Kindle--there are no breaks on the pages between chapters--the chapter headings follow the last paragraph of the previous chapter. And only "time left in the book" appears on the bottom left, not "time left in chapter." But it's a fast read anyway.
