



# Bound by Your Touch

*Meredith Duran*

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*Beauty is as beauty does...*

Silver-tongued Viscount Sanburne is London's favorite scapegrace. Alas, Lydia Boyce has no interest in being charmed. When his latest escapade exposes a plot to ruin her family, she vows to handle it herself, as she always has done. Certainly she requires no help from a too-handsome dilettante whose main achievement is being scandalous. But Sanburne's golden charisma masks a sharper mind and darker history than she realizes. He shocks Lydia by breaking past her prim facade to the woman beneath...and the hidden fire no man has ever recognized. But as she follows him into a world of intrigue, she will learn that the greatest danger lies within—in the shadowy, secret motives of his heart.

## Bound by Your Touch Details

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# From Reader Review Bound by Your Touch for online ebook

## Kathy says

I'm not going to put this on my made-me-weep shelf because it didn't. But almost. I got a little teary ok? I've read another book by Duran and I like her style.

I wouldn't call Sanburne a rake, really, he was just a...mess. Haunted. Party Animal. Wounded.

As for Lydia, no I-need-a-man attitude for her. Oh, no, she was smart, articulate and when you got past her hoidy-toidy exterior she was someone Sanburne could not resist.

They were both not necessarily meant for each other but they certainly did fit. And at one point towards the end there was that tearing up business. What some guys will do for the ones they love. Well, at least in historical romance land.

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## Rane says

Viscount Sanburne, James Durham lives to be a rebel, to live life on the edge but mostly to be the torn in his father's side. When he purchases a Egyptian artifact only find out it's fake, he finds it leads back to a well known expect in the Egyptian field and the expect's daughter Lydia Boyce. Lydia not only supports her father with his works and discoveries of Egypt but it a well known study of it as well, but when she finds out that someone maybe trying to tarnish her father's good name, she finds unlikely help from a silver tongued Viscount, who starts to see behind her social mask and the wall around her heart, she also sees there's more to Sanburne then meets the eye....

It was hard for me to relate to the leads in Written on Your Skin, Phin and Mina, with Bound by Your Touch it was easy to be drawn in by James and Lydia.

James comes across as very contrary, if you say right, he'd say left just to make fun of you. The first chapter in the book you find James drunk at a rowdy house party. Which only shows you how he lives his life, in a drunk, contrary state. Another part of James life is always being a thorn in his father's side. Whatever his father hates, James love etc etc Behind that devil may care persona he shows to society, hides a dark and deep storm raging on, filled with hate and rage and anger. James blames not only his father, but himself for tragedy that befell his sister. To find release from his emotions he gets drunk.

James is one of those characters that hits a deep cord inside of yourself, making you think "I felt that way" or "I know someone like that" James lived behind the rage and anger and the excuse to do good or bad because of what happen to his sister and what his father did. He needed someone to blame, even if it was himself. I felt for James deeply, but when he finally lets go of that hate and that crutch he's lived on all these years, it's through Lydia and his sister he was finally freed.

Lydia brings a sort of innocence back into James life, while James brings reality and takes off the blinders Lydia has put on her eyes after being hurt by love in the past as he lived only for her father's work. Lydia draws you in because we all have blinders on when it comes to our family and our love ones. Although cruel, Lydia sees the reality of things, places and people around her. It's difficult to read when the truth comes out about Lydia's father, but it's another life lesson that the world gives us to learn, understand and forgive one

another. The bondship between James and Lydia just deepens more because of what happens, both know the heartache when someone they love does something so wrong.

Lydia grows through this, she has James there to help her heal, while Lydia helps James forgive what his father did but mostly bring peace to himself and let the hate go.

The tension in this book could be cut with a knife between James and Lydia, even their kisses are red hot, but the sex takes a back seat for the deeper intimate romance between them. They start to pick apart each other's armor to reveal the human being underneath who is just that a human being, a person who makes mistakes, who needs to heal. James and Lydia heal each other's deep wounds with love and understanding.

There are not true villains in this book, only a people who've made mistakes, who were selfish and didn't think ahead in their actions. BBYT showed basic human flaws in people, but also showed something greater: forgiveness. James finally forgave himself for not being able to help his sister and Lydia finally understood no one is perfect no matter how much we love them.

The ending had it's HEA, but it showed something more, all wounds take time to truly heal, everything wasn't tied in a happy ever after bow with all forgiven and a wedding at the end. No, Lydia's wounds would take time, and James was still making peace with himself and his father but that's what made it so beautiful, they had each other.

Overall: a beautiful book showing human flaws in each other but also showing the greater power of forgiving oneself, understanding another's pain and just loving someone for whom they are.

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## **Ursula says**

I was not sure when I started this book, as the H was really annoying and indulged in childish and self-destructive behaviours, (hence only 4.5 stars) but as the story progressed I became deeply invested in the main characters and the outcome. Not just the H/h relationship, but also the relationships between fathers and their children were explored, and the issue of domestic violence was sensitively handled. Complex characters and Meredith Duran's usual, brilliant research and fascinating historical detail added to the layers. Loved it!

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## **Katie(babs) says**

Lydia Boyce is a spinster and firmly on the shelf at twenty-six. She loved a man once, but he married her sister instead. With Lydia's father in Egypt finding priceless artifacts, she is the matriarch of her family. She wishes she could be in Egypt with her father, but has much responsibility in England. Lydia will try to find funding for the Egypt Exploration Fund which will enable her father to continue his excavations. But things go badly when her father is accused of trading fraudulent pieces.

James Durham, the Viscount of Sanburne loves to shock people, especially his father. He loves to bet on horses, get into boxing matches and enjoys being friends with some very undesirable people. He has a new target on his list and that is Lydia. He rudely interrupts her important talk at the Archaeological Institute where he wants to show his father a priceless artifact. Lydia knows it is a fake and after that James sets his sights on her. He thinks his father and Lydia are in cahoots together to make him look bad. But then he finds

out that her father may be a fraud. Lydia cannot believe her precious papa would do such a thing. She will get to the bottom of this. And because James enjoys annoying Lydia, he will join her in her hunt for the one responsible in discrediting her father.

There is no point in Lydia trying to investigate on her own. James won't let her out of his sight. Soon these two have teamed up. James can't help but show his appreciation toward Lydia, which confuses her greatly. She won't allow herself to fall in love with James. James is the type of man who enjoys the hunt and he will try and make Lydia his willing prey because she will be his salvation

Meredith Duran has made quite the splash in the historical romance world. In *Bound by Your Touch*, she has written an intelligent and witty romance that will be one of the must read books of the year. The dialogue is crisp and lively and her characters are in a word, lovely.

James is like a naughty little boy who enjoys getting in trouble. Lydia is the complete opposite. When these two come together, it is too good for words. Talk about opposites attracting! The banter and interactions between James and Lydia brings this story alive. They both see something special with one another that no one else can see.

*Bound by Your Touch* exceeded all my expectations and more. I bow down to Meredith Duran and her expertise at writing a book that makes me want to read it all over again.

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### **Elaine says**

The book was of all over the place and hard to follow at first. Luckily I got the gist of it and I started to enjoy the story. A little to late for a 4 or 5 star rating sadly.

This is my first Meredith Duran book. While I didn't love it I also didn't hate it. I'll give her work another try and hope I'll get swept off my feet.

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### **Preeti ♥? (Romance She Reads) says**

A very highly rated book and on a few 'best' lists as well but it didn't stand out that much for me. Oh there are definitely swathes of brilliance with some really amazing prose and turn of phrase that I had to go back and read again, but there was equally tedious and meaningless meandering around some same old things.

The mcs are well etched as opposable characters – the curt 'dried-up' bluestocking and the lazily charming rake – bound for a definite showdown, but at the same time are very similarly wallowing in familial/paternal injustice.

I like the h for slyly swiping at her younger sister who had filched and married her erstwhile beau, as I prefer honesty to doormat sacrificing behavior but then she overdoes the I'm-the-only-smart-capable-one-oh-so-weighed-down-by-family-responsibilities. She's annoys with her rude and obnoxious behavior at times. One can see the vulnerability and the hurt underneath so she's not really unlikable.

*"Now there was the rustling of skirts, and it kicked up her smell, that distinctive blend of vanilla and violets, lavender and roses - an entire moving garden with a kitchen thrown in for good measure, and God save the allergic."*

The H does it by hiding it under a self-indulgent and wasteful lifestyle. The author shies away from saying it as it is but I cannot imagine those parties of his not being orgies. But he's a gentleman and protects the h despite her churlish and prickly manner.

His obsession and being bound to his sister's life left me double-minded. Of course, it's only rivaled by the h's obsession with her father and his innocence. (view spoiler)

*"The texture of him was rich and carnal, spiced like a fine dessert from a sophisticated kitchen, where sugar was considered too simple a flavor. She was so hungry for something new...Her teeth closed on his throat"*

Sex, some danger, laying open of emotional weaknesses and we have a complete role reversal. He's suddenly withdrawing emotionally and protecting himself while she's ready to show her vulnerability and embrace his pain as well. (Although her primary loyalty still remained with her father and she clung to it till the bitter end.)

*"She urged him on; he remained with her, focused, his lips now on her shoulder, now on her jaw; a courtship above, a steady invasion below - she could make any noise, do anything she liked, he would never go .."*

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## **Dina says**

AMAZING! That's the word that came to my mind when I finished this book. I'm always a bit wary when I start reading a book that's been highly praised by "everyone", as sky-high expectations can turn an otherwise excellent read into a "somewhat disappointingly good" read, so I didn't know what to expect from Bound by Your Touch when I picked it up. Well, I'm glad to say that "everyone" was right and I'm joining the chorus. I loved everything about this book: James, Lydia, the secondary characters, the story...

Lydia is the oldest daughter of Henry Boyce, an archaeologist who spends a great part of his life working in Egypt. A confirmed spinster at the advanced age of twenty-six, Lydia is her father's business manager and takes care of his trading affairs in London while he's away in Egypt. Raising funds to support her father's research is one of her responsibilities, so Lydia is more than a little annoyed when James barges into one of her fund-raising meetings with some important and rich men and interrupts her speech.

James's sole goal in life is to annoy his father, the Earl of Moreland, any way he can and, unfortunately for Lydia, his father is one of the important and rich men in attendance to her meeting and James doesn't care *where or when* he manages to achieve his goal. James and Lydia doesn't exactly make sparks fly in their first meeting, but they are intrigued - or should I say, annoyed - enough to dedicate a thought or two to each other. A few days later, the possibility of her father being involved in trading forgeries and smuggling precious gems from Egypt leads Lydia to seek James's cooperation and that's when the story really takes off.

I fell in love with Lydia right from the start. When I finished reading the Prologue, I was already rooting for her HEA. How could I care so much for her so soon? I can only "blame" Ms. Duran's writing skills for that. As I read the following chapters, I grew to love Lydia even more. On the surface, she seemed to be all prim, proper and *good*, but she nurtured a well-deserved dislike of her sister Sophie, who stole and married the man she loved. I liked the fact that Lydia wasn't "perfect". I mean, aren't we all tired of the saintly heroine who, despite everything and everyone, is always understanding and forgiving? That jealous sister of her betrayed her, and Lydia was more than welcome to harbor some resentment over it. Not that she was mean or anything, but she didn't regard her sister's betrayal as something "unimportant".

As for James, I had a hard time with him at first. He was handsome and charming, but his self-destructive behavior was, like Lydia stated at one point, childish. He was constantly drunk - or trying to get drunk - and his life was dedicated to embarrass and cause pain to his father, there was no other purpose in it. He had "everything" but did nothing useful with it. Or so it seemed. Slowly but gradually, I got to know what drove him and, even though I couldn't fully support the way he chose to deal with it, I understood him and, like Lydia, fell in love with him. To borrow her words, *"Everyone is brave in his own way. You must not blame others if they don't fit your mold."*

Lydia and James came from two very problematic families, to say the least, so it was no wonder they were dysfunctional to some extent. I like to think that it was their meeting each other that "saved" them from the dead end lives they had been living but, in the end, each dealt with his/her problem on his/her own. (view spoiler) A knight in shining armor he wasn't, and that was unusual.

The ending was bittersweet and, again, unusual. (view spoiler) I usually don't like when I'm left with "unfinished businesses" at the ending of a book, but I really didn't mind it this time around. James and Lydia had their HEA, there was no doubt about it, and everything else would work out... eventually.

This book went straight to my keepers shelf, and I can't wait to get my hands on Ms. Duran's next book.

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## **Kinga says**

Girly porn time!!

I was slightly disappointed with this one. It didn't do what I wanted it to do.

And Mariel gave it 4 stars, and she is like my Bible, so I thought I couldn't go wrong.

Anyway, it started off nicely. The premise was almost realistic and the characters acted almost like normal people. We had a bookish, no nonsense heroine who still does like a good shag (well, that's totally me), and this libertine, self-destructive hero who is not a complete idiot (just has issues with his father). I could buy that. Guys like that do exist. I have met many handsome, intelligent men who for this reason or another decide to drink themselves into stupidity and cause a scandal everywhere they go.

So you know, the chemistry is good. The sex scenes are fine. Everything is rolling nicely, and then the last 20% of the book (yes, reading that on Kindle, God forbid someone saw with that sort of book in public!) just becomes incomprehensible.

The characters seem to have some issues. I think they love each other, but love isn't enough (?), there is some stuff about respect, loyalty, and faith, and he needs to prove something to her but I am not sure why. And earlier he wouldn't help her because he loved her.. or something. I don't know. It all gets very complicated, the narrator goes on for good 20 pages explaining all these emotional nuances and I am like : "huh? I am sorry, you lost me. So what's the bottom line? Do they love each other or not? Can we just have some sex scene and wrap it up?"

I suppose this is what some men mean when they say they don't 'get' women. Although, I don't get that either and I do know many guys (sadly, even dated some) who seemed to be versed in this sort of emotional logic

and they happily explained to me my own feelings which I wasn't aware of.

To summarize, the book started off well and then landed flat on its tits. What a shame.

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### **Juliana Philippa says**

An excellent book! Not as good as *Wicked Becomes You*, which I had just finished a few days before, but still very, very good. I think this is the only historical romance that has ever actually caused tears to fall from my eyes - one or two have caused me to tear up, but the scene between James and his sister was so powerful that I was actually crying a little (to my shame, lol).

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### **Ana Maria says**

Otra relectura el mismo año. Me encanta, aunque tiene párrafos que hay que destripar. Amo a James.

Relectura: una de mis favoritas. No es fácil de leer porque hay mucha introspección, ironías, metáforas. La síntesis sería "cómo mandar al diablo a la familia y sus mandatos para vivir como uno quiera"

James, el vizconde Sanburne, efectivamente es el granuja favorito de Londres. Es apuesto, rico, simpático pero su conducta libertina y decadente tiene un solo fin: escandalizar y martirizar a su padre, el Conde Moreland. En un momento enuncia: - Tengo un solo principio, si mi padre se opone a algo, yo apoyo ese algo de todo corazón. Y viceversa, claro.

Aunque no siempre se opone a su padre, también compite. Por eso se interesa en las reliquias del Antiguo Egipto, una afición de Moreland, con el objetivo es conseguir la mejor pieza de colección para refregársela en la cara. Y eso intenta hacer asistiendo al Instituto Arqueológico en donde su padre está presenciando una conferencia.

En el afán de escandalizarlo, se presenta con señales inequívocas, en su ropa y en su andar, de haber pasado una noche en la que el alcohol y los narcóticos estuvieron presentes e interrumpe la conferencia para mostrarle su última adquisición: una estela egipcia grabada.

Pero resulta que la persona que está dictando la conferencia es nada más ni menos que nuestra protagonista, Lydia Boyce, la hija del famoso egiptólogo Henry Boyce que intenta descubrir los rastros de las paradas del pueblo hebreo durante el éxodo. El objetivo de la charla es conseguir financiación del Fondo de Exploración de Egipto para que su padre continúe con sus investigaciones dado que no es un hombre de gran fortuna.

Pero gracias a la inoportuna y escandalosa entrada de James, la conferencia es interrumpida en forma caótica. Lydia se acerca furiosa, ya que ha perdido la oportunidad de conseguir el dinero, a donde el "impresentable" se encontraba pregonando a Lord Moreland las cualidades maravillosas de su "estela" egipcia. Al escucharlos se da cuenta de que son padre e hijo y que, evidentemente, se trata de un conflicto familiar. Pero ella está furiosa, observa la estela y luego de un simple análisis exclama: - Es falsa, con lo que se inicia una discusión entre los presentes en la que James termina quedando como un idiota.

Ese es el primer encuentro de nuestra deliciosa pareja. A partir de ahí la historia sigue desarrollándose en tres



ejes. El primero es la trama propiamente dicha: el Sr Boyce financia sus investigaciones vendiendo a coleccionistas ingleses piezas legítimas que saca legalmente de Egipto. Resulta que la estela falsa que compró James parece provenir de una remesa de reliquias enviadas desde Egipto por el padre de Lydia!.

Esto produce el acercamiento de la pareja: él para recriminarle a ella, ella para convencerlo a él de que debe ser una equivocación, que su padre es un hombre honesto, a pedirle que no diga nada porque puede significar la ruina para su familia. Quiere que le venda la estela falsa para resarcirlo de la mala compra. Y él se la vende. Pero el precio es un beso... de dos minutos.

Y así comienza su relación, con el objetivo de investigar qué pasó pero todo se complica: cartas anónimas amenazantes, intentos de homicidio, fuerzas especiales del gobierno. Lo que en principio es una simple estafa con falsificaciones parece transformarse en algo mucho más complejo con implicancia internacional.

El segundo eje es la historia de James. Un aristócrata libertino y decadente. A lo largo de la novela va surgiendo que esto tiene su origen en un profundo conflicto en el que la rigidez de su padre, la violencia familiar y de género están involucradas. Y también la culpa por lo hecho y lo no hecho. Y sobre todo, por una profunda incomunicación.

Y luego la historia de Lydia. Es la mayor de tres hermanas. Es inteligente, estudiosa y la gran compañera de su padre. Lo secunda en sus investigaciones y atiende sus negocios en Londres. Pero se siente como el patito feo por la gran belleza de sus hermanas, se siente una solterona y guarda el terrible recuerdo de haberse enamorado de un hombre que creía que la cortejaba cuando en realidad se interesaba en su hermana: su actual cuñado. Y la relación con sus hermanas... puff mejor ni hablar.

Cuando ambos se juntan, los diálogos son chispeantes. Ella dándole calabazas acerca de su vida vacía y sin sentido, él burlándose de ella permanentemente. Y van surgiendo las confidencias, las sensaciones, los sentimientos. La relación se va construyendo paso a paso, sin vueltas atrás. Van tratando de aprender a vivir sin resentimientos, ayudándose mutuamente aunque no sin problemas. Y terminan ambos con un gran crecimiento personal y superando, dolorosamente, una realidad en la que nada es lo que parece.

Me gustó mucho, muy refrescante aunque no es una comedia. Esta novela, si bien es histórica, no tiene los cliché típicos no sé si por la forma de escribir de la autora o por transcurrir a fines del siglo XIX (Por Dios, no es de la Regencia!!).

Como contra diré, como ya han comentado, que en algunas partes me costó un poco su lectura, no sé si es una cuestión de la traducción o qué.

Por otra parte, uno de los personajes secundarios, Phin, el amigo de James que tiene mucha importancia en la trama, no está bien desarrollado y por momentos me resultó confuso. Claro, es el protagonista de la segunda novela de la serie "Escrito en tu piel" y ahí se cuenta bien su historia que es paralela a esta. Cuando releí "Marcado por tus caricias" después de leer "Escrito en tu piel" la disfruté mucho más.

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### **Sam (AMNReader) says**

This was so good, and in no way should the time I took reading it reflect anything. It was incredibly engaging and in many way less heavy than other MD I've read. It's not her best, certainly, but it's very easily still a five star book.

Lydia and James start out with an antagonistic relationship but quickly come to realize they respect the challenge the other presents and are fascinated. It's no easy road with underlying mystery, danger, and family drama that indeed serves to fully flesh out two lovely characters making a go of it. They are witty, funny, and loyal. And their dialogue, good gracious:

*"Even when you break the rules, you insist on reminding me of them? Really, Miss Boyce, have mercy."*

*Her voice sharpened. "But I wanted to appeal to you in person."*

*"Oh, you do."*

I have entire passages and pages highlighted, from one on family being a coincidence to the lovely ending. Both characters make grand gestures and know and respect each other. I shouldn't be surprised, but what a delight.

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### **Caz says**

I HATE the cover which implies the book is a run-of-the-mill romance/bodice-ripper, because the book is anything but. It's a very well written, well characterised romance.

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### **Mitzi says**

Lydia Boyce is a spinster. Her father is an archaeologist (always away from home) and she is in charge of relating his newest findings and securing financial support so he can continue with his projects. She considers herself smart, but not beautiful like her 2 sisters. She's already been burned once (thinking herself in love, but the man choose to marry her younger sister)and now has no desire to get involved with any man.

Viscount Sanburne (very handsome and a rebel) hates his father and is always trying to cause him embarrassment (you'll discover the reason along the way). If his father says go left, he would go right just to spite him. His father is a collector of antiquities, so Sanburne buys an artifact and brings it to the conference where he interrupts Lydia's lecture and in order for her to get some control over the discussion, she declares the artifact a fake.

Only, she finds out that this artifact supposedly came from her father and was accidentally sent to Sanburne. Now she must figure out what is going on and who is trying to ruin her family's name.

Viscount Sanburne is attracted to the spinster and they end up teaming together to find out the truth. But the truth is not always what you want it to be...is it????

I normally like my romance books a little spicier than this one, but this book is so good, that it really doesn't matter. Duran's writing style reminds me of Diana Gabaldon. She uses a lot of wonderful descriptions to enhance her story.

Here is an example of one of her witty descriptions: Lydia has little respect for Sunburne and considers him a rogue, wastrel, spoiled bum, etc. BUT he is attracted to her and so he asks her what she thinks of him (although at this point he's not sure why he cares what she thinks of him)??? She says: You're a butterfly...Aimless by nature, useless by choice and highly decorative." "Annoying, when you flap into someone's face." WHAT a great way to describe a beautiful man with no direction!!!

I gladly give this book a 5 star rating. It's a shelf-keeper IMO.

Mitzi

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### **?Karlyn P? says**

Hands down one of the best historicals I've read this year. I am a sucker for a good historical romance read, and I couldn't ask for more with this book. Wonderful writing, interesting characters, a good dose of sexual tension and steamy sex, and a captivating plot. There was some cute funny moments, but mostly it is a tender and intelligent story of two opposites finding they have more in common than they first realized. This book is much better than her debut book from last year (Duke of Shadows), which was good but not great. I can't wait to read the next one coming out in a few weeks. This author has moved to my 'auto buy' list.

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### **Fani \*loves angst\* says**

Miss Lydia Boyce acts as her father's 'man' of affairs, while he's down in Egypt, in excavations. The misplaced shipment of one of her father's crates, brings Lydia in contact with the rakish Viscount Sunburne, who ends up with one of her father's 'treasures', only to be revealed a fake. In her effort to find how this fake came into one of her father's crates, Lydia asks for his help, which he gladly offers, as he believes the search will relieve him from boredom.

Make no mistake, Sunburne is a rake. When he's first introduced to the reader, he's inebriated from a combination of drugs and alcohol, barely able to stand on his feet. He moves within a fast set of handsome trendsetters, most of them sharing the same destroying habits as he does. He also has a great enmity towards his father, whom he will go to great lengths to provoke any way he can. Slowly though, it becomes apparent that there is a reason behind all this rakish behavior. Sunburne is far from the beautiful but superficial butterfly Lydia initially believed him to be. He has depth, wit, intelligence and fierce loyalty to those he cares for.

Lydia on the other hand, is a bluestocking spinster. Prim and proper, she's the one trying to keep her sisters and her father's business in order. She knows only two things well, namely duty and dignity. She'll do anything, and I mean anything, to keep her father's name clear and protect her family, even risk her own safety. But of course, deep down she is a woman and the hero soon uncovers her passionate nature...

I guess that by the line above, most readers will realize that I didn't like Lydia. Simply put, she ruined the book for me, which actually came lower than 4 stars, more like 3 and 1/2. My main problems arose in the last 70 pages of the book, although the beginning as well, was way too slow for my liking. So, in the end, Lydia let me down. She preached Sunburne about how love and faith are both given, rather than earned as he claimed. And in the end of course, did she stand by her words? NO, she demanded PROOF. Proof that he

loved her, but also that he could and would give up his rakish habits and live a decent life. While Sunburne on the other hand, chose to love her anyway; without proof or guarantee. Because, even when she promised him to leave the matter of her father to rest and stay with him, she didn't actually. Her father meant more to her all the time, and it was only when she finally came up with the truth that she managed to overcome her infatuation with him.

To sum it up, from the whole book I loved only the middle. And it's a shame, because these pages had so much potential and emotional power. And these pages are the reason I rate this with 4 rather than 3 stars, because the slow start, the anti-climatic ending, with the hero and heroine going back and forth in their decision to be together, and the unlikable heroine would completely ruin a book for a less talented author. This does not come to par with *The Duke of Shadows* for me, but I can't say I'm completely disappointed either, while I'm still looking forward to Phin's story in *Written on Your Skin*.

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