



## Abduction

*Charlotte Lamb*

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## **Abduction** Charlotte Lamb

She needed time--and that was running out

After two years' separation from Gabriel, her husband, Marisa still didn't think she was ready to cope with being his wife. His wealthy life-style had intimidated her. His snobbish friends had made her feel like a poor little nobody.

But some things had changed in two years. Marisa had had to raise Jamie, their baby, by herself, and that had given her new confidence and shown her the meaning of true love.

Then Jamie was abducted, and she thought she would die. Especially since it brought Gabriel back into her life....

## **Abduction Details**

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## From Reader Review Abduction for online ebook

### Saintlyjuliet says

There are two categories of romance novels that all readers do not wish to stumble across. One: when the hero is so arrogant, mean, conceited and controlling that you just want to bash his head in (usually because he is paired with a tsst heroine) - and two: when the heroine is so arrogant, mean, dumb, stubborn or whatever else (there's a much bigger range than for the hero) that you just want to bash her head into a wall repeatedly!

Abduction falls into the second category. Usually these books are a pain to the hero as well as to the reader. Thankfully I've not read much for this second category because somehow I cannot handle them!

The heroine Marisa with the "unique" name and the "unique" eyes and the "unique" (read mentally unstable) personality attracts the hero on first sight. She gets married to him very quickly (as she constantly reminds us in her long and dull narrative) and regrets it. One day they have a bitter fight (one of many) where the hero slaps her hard and goes off and is next seen partying with another woman. Marisa sees this and "draws her own conclusions from that" I S2G and runs off leaving all her gifts from the hero behind.

Then she finds out she is pregnant and like a typical Harlequin bimbo who only cares for herself, does not tell the hero she is. Then one day while this symbol of beauty and calm (my foot!) is out shopping, she simply walks into a shop leaving her one-year-old Jamie outside the shop in his stroller...you know...out in the weather...unattended...simply outside on the pavement...not even INSIDE the shop??? Then when she comes back much to nobody's surprise but her own, she finds her son to be missing. Then she proceeds to act like a crazy person running around and finding a cop and telling him what happened. The cop, much to my surprise, is all okay about the fact that this "unique" eyed psycho just left her baby outside a shop while she was inside smiling and cheerful with the shopkeeper like your typical Harlequin heroine who seems to be able to smile at every man except the hero!

Anyway, then the policewoman naturally, because she is investigating things, asks about the father and how to contact him and this idiot keeps mum about the father. I mean why cooperate with the police trying to find your child, right? Much rather stick to your stupid silly excuses you made up to justify your leaving your husband without a word and then taking his child! Then Marisa gets all offended when the police thinks she's hiding something...gee Marisa, did you ever have a brain??

Next we find out that the police have spread the news about Marisa's missing baby in the press and Gabriel...the hero...puts in an appearance. After so much of dealing with Marisa alone I was happy to see Gabriel.

Then we get chapter after chapter of Marisa thinking everyone around her is somehow bad...the Dudleys, Gabriel himself, everyone she ever met...somehow all these people have some fatal flaw but she is the paragon of purity and niceness!! Even Jamie is portrayed as some kind of hard-nosed, stubborn-tempered spoiled brat. I think CL worked overtime trying to make Marisa look good to the readers but I could find nothing good about her after the initial few chapters - even though the entire book was in her long-winded and boring POV.

I promised myself I would read this book but every minute I spent over it was so painful that finally I compromised and breezed through by only focusing on the dialogues. But even then I found gems like Marisa telling Gabriel she can flirt with whoever she wants and he has no right to say anything...he is your

HUSBAND?? You LEFT him and didn't tell him about his baby because you saw a photograph of him dancing with some other woman (never brought this topic back BTW...I was waiting for it to be explained away in typical Harlequin fashion but nope...we readers need to draw our own conclusions also it seems).

Marisa also was so worried about being treated like a possession by Gabriel (something I am not convinced he did) that she kept pushing him away because of that. She kept trying to set terms and order him around and for most of the book he did that.

Gabriel explains in one part that he thought Marisa was in great depression but instead of realizing that, he only thought of his own need to marry her and pushed her into a relationship despite knowing that she is also 15 years younger.

Gabriel also has his flaws but the way the heroine puts it, he is some devil whose only wish is to possess her and wipe away her identity...which she finally acquired after having Jamie and spending all her love and devotion on him? What kind of identity is that??

Basically, pardon the long rant but this book sucks. Avoid it if you can, please! This book made me think that the hero loves the heroine...but he shouldn't for his own mental peace. I mean we are even told that Jamie dislikes the hero! It also made me feel that the heroine was a complete moron who only cares about herself and her feelings to honestly bother about her HUSBAND or her son. She doesn't understand the concept of partnership, sharing, communication, trust, anything at all...and instead of blaming everyone around her she should blame herself for the way she is...and the way her relationships are handled by her!

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### **FeliciaKaren says**

I wish the hero would have left heroine and take his son with him.

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### **Booklover says**

This was an intense emotional read, the issues were handled well but what spoiled the book for me was Gabriel slapped Marisa (never apologised for it), called her Bitch number of times. Marisa what do i say , i disliked her cause she is one selfish confused woman, when she was not yet ready why she entered the marriage, never did she spoke how she felt just kept quiet and only cause she feared Gabriel would stop loving her she ran away and never did she even let Gabriel know he was a father again kept his child for 2 years hidden from him and when Jamie is kidnapped yet again she puts her feelings first, she didn't give Gabriel's name to the police kept stalling it

it was an okay read for me

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### **3meg says**

this was a very good read but very dated. I can give it a better rating simply because she was so young and passive. Even at the end I did not feel like she grew up enough....

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### **Chantal ♥? says**

Well I would have given it more but it just ended!? What??? I was so confused. What resolution? What about everything do they stay together does she love him? What about her emotional immaturity? Come on this book needs a part two or at least one more chapter. What with that her just leaving like that? Is she just stupid or what?!

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### **Melanie♥ says**

4.5 stars. Old school HP classic.

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### **Eva Harlowe says**

I have never come across a heroine in a contemporary romance novel so broken and weak that I don't want her to end up with anyone at all. That the only happy ending I want for her is a safe place in a high-walled, gated institution where there will be well-paid, caring people watching over her, guiding her, and counseling her until she is well enough to stand on her own two feet. She could learn how to paint there or make ceramics while meeting like-minded people going through the same pain and heartaches as she is. She could learn to love and trust other human beings. This is the type of help that Marisa Radley needs in the beginning of the novel and what she obviously frickin' needs throughout the novel, but doesn't ever receive. Our hero, Gabriel Radley, while a little overbearing and maybe a tad bit intense, is not a horrible guy, but he is so besotted and obsessed with Marisa that he doesn't see that she needs more help than he's capable of giving. I hate to say this because I'm obsessed with HEAs and must have HEAs in my romance novels, but this is one Harlequin Presents that would have ended better had the hero and heroine parted ways at the end, with the hero getting custody of the baby while the heroine gets well in a serene oceanside mental facility far, far away. Maybe, six months down the road, they can try again and Marisa will be more emotionally and mentally prepared to accept Gabriel's brand of intensive love, but as she is at the start of the novel... well, let me explain.

**The Plot:** Marisa has been separated from her husband Gabriel for two years, ever since she left him with a hastily scrambled note and only the clothes she has on. She left because she was overwhelmed by Gabriel's wealth and position in society and she never felt she belonged. Not to Gabriel's world and not to Gabriel, either. To Marisa, Gabriel is larger than life---powerful, rich, extremely handsome, sophisticated. She never understood what he wanted from her, but what she does know is that Gabriel sees her as a possession, just another thing he acquired with his loads of money. And she couldn't live that way.

Marisa was pregnant when she left Gabriel, though she doesn't find out until she's on her own. For the last two years, she has only been living for her baby Jamie. She has a job and a tiny place to live and for once in

her life, she feels she has a family. When baby Jamie is abducted, Marisa is forced to accept help from her wealthy, powerful husband... the man she has been hiding from for the last two years, the man who knew nothing about their baby.

**Your Heroine:** Marisa is an introverted, severely insecure, emotionally stunted nineteen-year-old (!) girl whose parents have just died in an accident. Though she grieves for their loss, she has said goodbye to them in her heart long ago. An only child, she is neglected by parents who are so absorbed with each other that they have no room in their lives for her. Sometimes, Marisa is convinced that they forgot she existed. She has always felt like she was on the outside looking in, unwilling to join other people for fear they will only hurt and abandon her.

She is living in London in a bedsit and working as junior typist for a large company when she meets Gabriel Radley, owner and CEO of the company she works for. Marisa has never really thought of Gabriel as a living, breathing person. To her, he was just the subject of hushed gossip in the secretary pool, where the women speculate about his life and most intriguingly, his love life. She is running late for work one day when she literally bumps into Gabriel Radley, who puts his hands on her arms to steady her and tells her to be more careful.

After that day, Gabriel---a very busy man who is never in the office---is suddenly everywhere that Marisa happens to look. As she's walking home, a limousine pulls over to the curb next to her and Gabriel tells her to get in. He takes her home and asks her a bunch of questions, most pointedly if she has a boyfriend. The next day, he summons her to his office and tells her he hasn't been able to stop thinking about her since she bumped into him in the lobby and he's been going nuts. He asks her out to dinner and Marisa finds herself saying yes before she can really even think about it. At dinner, they have nothing to talk about and it's a little awkward, but there seems to be a special connection between them that makes Marisa feel they are the only people in the world. They go on a few more dates and share kisses that excite but scare Marisa, who's never really been held or kissed before. Gabriel, who is fifteen years her senior, tells her he needs to have her in his life and has to have her or he'd go bananas. He asks her to marry him. Overwhelmed, afraid, unable to think of what to say, confused, intimidated, thrilled, shocked, nineteen-years-old: Marisa says yes.

When Baby Jamie disappears---HOLD UP, time out. Do you know how the poor mite gets kidnapped? Marisa, having some kind of Mary Tyler Moore moment without the hat toss but with the "You're gonna make it, after all," stops at a bakery to buy her landlady a cake, LEAVES BABY JAMIE IN THE STROLLER OUTSIDE because she'll only be "just a minute," and of course returns to find him gone. Obviously! Oh great Jupiter, this stupid stupid girl. It's not like she's in some picturesque little village straight out of a Jane Austen novel, this poor naive child is smack-dab in the middle of London during rush hour, when people are zooming past a hundred miles an hour just trying to get home. What happened to her much vaunted sense of preservation, eh? Baby Jamie is not a dog. You don't frickin' leave him outside just for a minute just so you can dash into Sprinkles and get a Mint Chocolate Cupcake with Coconut Buttercream Frosting. What the hell is the matter with you?!?

Of course when the cops come, they're suspicious of her because they've seen that episode of "Law and Order: SVU," too, and they start asking stuff like, "are you sure you had Baby Jamie with you?" and "You're a stressed out little mother and you said Jamie was being cross. You admitted to being cross yourself. Maybe you hit him a little harder than you thought and really hurt him?" and "Seriously, what kind of idiot would leave her baby in a sidewalk outside of a store, even if you're going to be gone 'for just a minute'? Where the hell do you think we are, Mayberry??? Dumbass."

When the cops demand she tell them the name of the father because in these cases, it's usually a custodial

thing and nine times out of ten, the baby is with the daddy, she refuses to give them Gabriel's name. Gabriel is super-rich and probably has access to helicopters and millions of euros and search dogs and an elite unit of super ninjas who can rescue little Jamie, and she says, "NO, I won't tell you who he is." The cops are scratching their heads at this point and thinking this chick has to be nuts. "Lady, you won't tell us the name of your kid's father even if it'll help us find your kid?" But Marisa is stone-cold adamant. Hell, I'd be on the side of the cop who thinks she accidentally killed the baby and buried him somewhere, too. SHE is really acting weird and squirrelly. For someone desperate to find her baby, she sure is being uncooperative. But don't worry, they tell her, they've put out a plea on the radio and splashed baby Jamie's face all over the newspapers, so someone who knows something is bound to come forward. AND she's like, "YOU DID WHAT?!?" Seriously, lady, I thought you were trying to find your kid? Of course, this brings about the all mighty, all powerful Gabriel who descends upon the police station with self-righteous fury and passion burning in his chest and he's like, "What the hell, bitch? You ran away two years ago and you were pregnant with my kid? What the fuu---" So Marisa chooses this moment to pass out.

Back in Gabriel's mansion, Marisa has reverted to feeling like a doll in a dollhouse when the first thing Gabriel does the second they step past the threshold is yell at her to change into a nightgown, go to her room, and have a rest because she's obviously hysterical. Marisa yells back that he can't tell her what to do, he doesn't own her, this is why she left him... lather, rinse, repeat. YOU HAVE A MISSING CHILD. ARGUE ABOUT THIS SHIT LATER.

Thankfully, Marisa has the presence of mind to compartmentalize and tell herself she can worry about Gabriel and the future later after she finds Baby Jamie who wouldn't have gotten kidnapped if she hadn't left him in his stroller on a busy London sidewalk while she dashed inside a bakery to buy a goddamn cupcake. I'm actually amazed that Marisa doesn't blame herself at all for this. Any other person would have been like, "Oh my God, this is all my fault. If I hadn't left him in his stroller outside the shop while I bought cupcakes, he wouldn't have been taken by some strange, crazy person. You're so stupid, Marisa. Stupid! Stupid! Stupid!" while slapping herself across the face with her own hand. But I don't think that even occurs to her. Do you think it's because she's a remarkably self-possessed young woman who realizes that blaming herself wouldn't solve anything so she doesn't? Haha, just joking.

Marisa in a nutshell: neglected by parents, bullied into marriage by a domineering man, desperate for someone to love and someone to love her back.

**Your Hero:** You'd think being fifteen years older and the head of a successful investment banking firm would ensure that Gabriel would be more mature, or the sane one, at the very least, but this is not the case. The moment Gabriel sets eyes on Marisa, he loses his damn mind. He's a rich, sophisticated, well-rounded guy, and by all accounts, only dates the creme de la creme of the society ladies. He is seemingly even-keeled, well-respected by his colleagues and friends, and probably reasonably intelligent, too (I could be expecting too much).

But when it comes to Marisa, he might as well have a turnip for a brain. He's suddenly reduced to want want want want want, must have must have must have must have, and mine mine mine mine mine. Hell, Gabe is a rich guy. He is used to getting whatever he wants, if he threw enough money at it, and he really really really wants this 19-year-old girl. Much to his consternation, she seems bewildered by his generosity, doesn't have the voice to ask for anything, doesn't complain, and appears to be petrified by his amorous intentions. But damn it, he must have this delicate-looking, big-eyed girl... after all, he is nearing forty and might never come across a "dream girl" like her again.

**A little more background on Gabriel:** when he was in his early twenties, he was married to a beautiful

woman who was vivacious and of course, unfaithful. Anyway, they have a kid that the wife doesn't really want, but she insists on returning to her home in South America with the child. Gabriel is supposed to join them from London, but before he could, the traveling caravan carrying his wife and child are ambushed by guerrillas and they are killed. Sad trombone! :(

**Question:** On the day Marisa runs away, she sees a blurb in the society pages of the newspaper that Gabriel has been seen around town with his former long-time girlfriend, looking cozy. This is never again brought up in the novel, but it is one of the factors that precipitates Marisa's running away (remaining factors: gaping hole where self-esteem should be, fear that Gabriel is getting sick of her, and oh, the night before, she and Gabe have a horrible row and Gabe smacks the shit out of her before leaving her crying on the floor). Did Gabe cheat on Marisa with his ex-girlfriend? I must know.

**What-the-Fuckery:** The two of them actually sit down to talk and discuss the shit that caused Marisa to run away in the middle of the book instead of the last two pages (what a novel idea... shit, I know, right? I was shocked). And this, kiddies, is where it really goes south. This is where I actually said out loud: "Stop it. Stop this foolishness. You two just need to stay away from each other!"

It turns out that Marisa was horribly depressed after the death of her parents (no, really, you think?) and was just basically dragging herself around like a chained-up wraith in order to have a day to day existence.

Apparently, this must have made her super attractive to Gabe because he was probably imagining himself as Heathcliff to Marisa's tragic, delicate, untouchable Catherine. He actually tells her something to this effect as the reason why he fell in love with her instantly. Sick bastard. Marisa tells him that her parents never expected to have her and didn't really want her around, so they ignored her most of the time and often forgot she existed. She thinks it's why she developed an inferiority complex and why she can't trust people to really mean it when they say they love her. She confesses to Gabe that she was aware of his obsession with her, and that he thinks he loves her, but she herself decided that she wouldn't be able to survive it when Gabe got tired of her and kicked her out, so she left him first.

You can imagine how well Gabe reacted to this. How about something to the tune of: "You stupid bitch, you left me without telling me any of this when we could have hashed this shit out in fifteen minutes? Instead you left me to suffer for two years? I should kill you!" and "In those two years, you couldn't have dropped me a note to tell me you're alive? Plus you hid my son---MY SON from me. Do you not have a soul?" and "Jesus, Marisa, while you were gone, I cursed your name to hell and back every damn minute, but I never thought I'd dislike you like this. You know what? I really don't like you very much right now."

But he does tell her that instead of bullying her to marry him, he should have been dragging her to the nearest psychiatrist. Progress.

And okay, fine, **spoiler alert:** Baby Jamie is alive and Gabriel finds himself jealous of his own son because the infant is a rival for his wife's attention and affection.

The book ends abruptly and nothing really gets resolved. Gabe doesn't apologize for slapping her (well, he kind of does in a weird "you made me do it because you're always pushing me away when you know I love you so so so much" way). We never find out if he cheated on Marisa with his ex-girlfriend (but probably not, since he's obsessed with Marisa). Marisa's nervousness and reluctance to make love with Gabe doesn't really go away (when they first got married, Marisa felt that Gabe was a tsunami of passion and lust and she had no chance but to get swept away). To his credit, Gabe does attempt and mostly succeeds to leash his love-jones for a few days while Marisa sorts out her thoughts and feelings (sometimes he gets all mopey from sexual frustration like Bud in "Splendor in the Grass"). To the book's credit, no one actually says the words "I love

you" together in that order and the closest Marisa gets to admitting her feelings for Gabe is by grudgingly telling him "I want you" and that's because Gabe is practically twisting her arm behind her back. I joke, I joke. Maybe.

I stand by my earlier assertion that what Marisa needs is true psychiatric help. I think she might have also suffered from some post-partum stuff because she gets attached to Baby Jamie like Smeagol to the Ring. What she definitely doesn't need right now is an overly possessive husband with a save-the-princess-in-the-tower complex. Chick is going to break like Joan Crawford in "Straitjacket" and just start attacking everyone with an axe.

P.S. Haters gonna hate, but I really loved Gabriel. He's just so dominant and ever present and... kind of nuts. I know, I'm sure sick, I need help.

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### **Naksed says**

What I learned from Charlotte Lamb's *Abduction*:

- 1) In 1981, it was considered perfectly okay to park your baby in his stroller OUTSIDE the store where you were going to do your shopping.
- 2) A husband who begs you to marry him, can't get enough of you, and showers you with presents is a big fat jerk that you must run away from at all cost.
- 3) If there is a picture of your husband standing next to an old flame at a nightclub, do NOT investigate. Pack up and leave without any doubt about your perfectly drawn conclusion.
- 4) While your husband is not allowed to be photographed standing next to another woman at a nightclub, it is perfectly allowed for you to flirt with whomever you want because you are not your husband's possession.
- 5) Handsome, wealthy tycoons are bored by supermodels and sexy actresses and only fall desperately in love with mousy secretaries.
- 6) Refusing to mingle with any of your husband's friends and family because they are all stuffy, boring, and mean is perfectly reasonable and a good compromise to continue with your marriage.
- 7) It is perfect timing to have your husband call you a bitch in front of your eighteen months old baby since that is about the time he is picking up on and repeating words.
- 8) When you find your wife again after she ran out on you two years ago, and simultaneously realize you have a son AND he has been kidnapped, your most urgent concern is to show said wife the box containing all her jewelry and ask her why she left them all behind when she ran away.
- 9) Everyone can be a successful armchair psychologist and diagnose/resolve your mental health issue that has plagued you for a lifetime and ruined your marriage in a jiffy.
- 10) It is not okay for your husband to be obsessed, possessive and controlling over you but it is very healthy

to be obsessed, possessive and controlling over your son, the only being you have ever loved and who has loved you. I smell a sequel with the heroine becoming, in her old age, the Mother in Law from hell to some hapless future heroine being forcibly seduced by her entitled son!

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### **April Brookshire says**

The heroine was kind of an idiot. Who leaves their baby on the sidewalk parked in his stroller while they go into shops? He isn't a dog! And I'm surprised the wealthy hero couldn't find the heroine for 2 years. The issue of him hangin' with his former girlfriend was never addressed and the ending was abrupt.

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

As the blurb tells us she runs away from her husband, as she is unable to cope and then has a secret baby. The son gets abducted and so that's how the H finds her again. It's not an easy reconciliation as the reasons/problems that make her run away in the first place are so obscure and bewildering -to the H, to the reader, and to the h herself I felt. She was a shy quiet typist in his office and he falls for her like a ton of bricks and more. She is 19 to his 35. There were times I wondered why was the H so besotted with her. I would have preferred that he kicked her out on her cold mean uncaring ass.

She was saying 'bitter stinging words ' to him during their marriage and nothing much seems to have changed there. Why on earth she married him I fail to understand. She never felt anything remotely like love, liking, lust or even respect for him while he was quite clearly completely obsessed with her.

After they meet again he speaks of his love often but she just keeps a grumpy silence and speaks only how she never belonged anywhere or how she needs time. It is suggested that now after living on her own and raising a child, she is more mature and strong but I hardly saw any evidence of that, rather she kept up with her childish sullen selfishness. As he once says *'I'm beginning to think that instead of marrying you, I should have taken you to see a psychiatrist!'*. Yes mate, now you are talking!

She is the first h to my knowledge who doesn't utter the three magic words at any time in the book! The ending was so abrupt that I was left bemused and wondering if I had misplaced the last chapter.

There is a slap scene too in their first go, after which he leaves for New York and she walks out. He btw is free with verbal abuse too, bitch being his favorite word. After the first shock, I was quite amused really. So it is 'you stupid little bitch', 'you tormenting bitch' or even 'poor bitch' and even an amused indulgent kind of 'bitch!'.  

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### **JG says**

Pathetic heroine. Doormat heroines never bother me before, actually i prefer them than the usual spitfire ones who annoys the hell out of me by getting mad for no reason whatsoever. But seriously, no amount of the usual Charlotte Lamb flare will ever save this book for me.

The heroine is so weak, so pathetic and fragile. Her emotions are all over the place and she is just as dumb as

a bag of stones. Her fear of rejection and all made her selfish and petty.

Oh and the ending was rushed- she didn't even say 'i love you'.

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### **Kim says**

this was ok and was a fast read

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### **Julz says**

So. Well. There was an abduction in this story. Before that, the hero falls for a totally inappropriate, severely insecure heroine and decides he can't live without her and pushes her to marry him. She was sharp enough to realize this was none too smart on his behalf and suffers a great deal of anxiety and grief about being with him. Their relationship is tumultuous with lots of arguing. They had a fight, he smacks her and apparently takes off to NY with his exgirlfriend so she takes off with the shirt on her back. Guess what?!? She was pregnant! I know. You're surprised.

The baby was the abductee, of course, and is the catalyst for the reunion. Then the rest of the story is her being more outgoing and him still trying to get her to commit to the relationship.

Oh, and the trip with the OW? Never brought up. Did he leave with her? Was it a coincidence? It would definitely be important to the decision as to whether she should have anything to do with him again. But alas, we'll never know.

As a huge fan of Charlotte Lamb, it pains me to say that this one left a lot to be desired. It was too improbable, with regard to their being a match, and I'm very very unhappy with important issues being left unresolved. It's not a bad story, just save it for when you have nothing else to read...or you really want to find out if there were unresolved OW issues. I know that might stir me ;D

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### **StMargarets says**

Reviewer's math:

5 star for the intensity + 1 star for the romance for an average of 3 stars

CL really writes crazy well. When the hero says that he should have gotten the heroine a psychiatrist instead of marrying her, I thought now we're getting somewhere. But alas, he went back to being an obsessive stalker and she went back to her passive aggressive nonsense.

\*sigh\*

I didn't like this story the first time I read it, and I liked it even less this time. The heroine is self-absorbed and morbidly obsessed with her child. The hero is self-absorbed and morbidly obsessed with the h. They are a matched set.

Still, this one is worth reading because it is so intense and you'll feel smug knowing that although you might have issues, you'll never have to live in that heroine's mind.

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### **Poonam says**

There was no love between the H and the h. They kept on fighting till the end. The h was really cold and weird. Giving it 2 stars as this book is by charlotte lamb otherwise this is a 1 star.

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