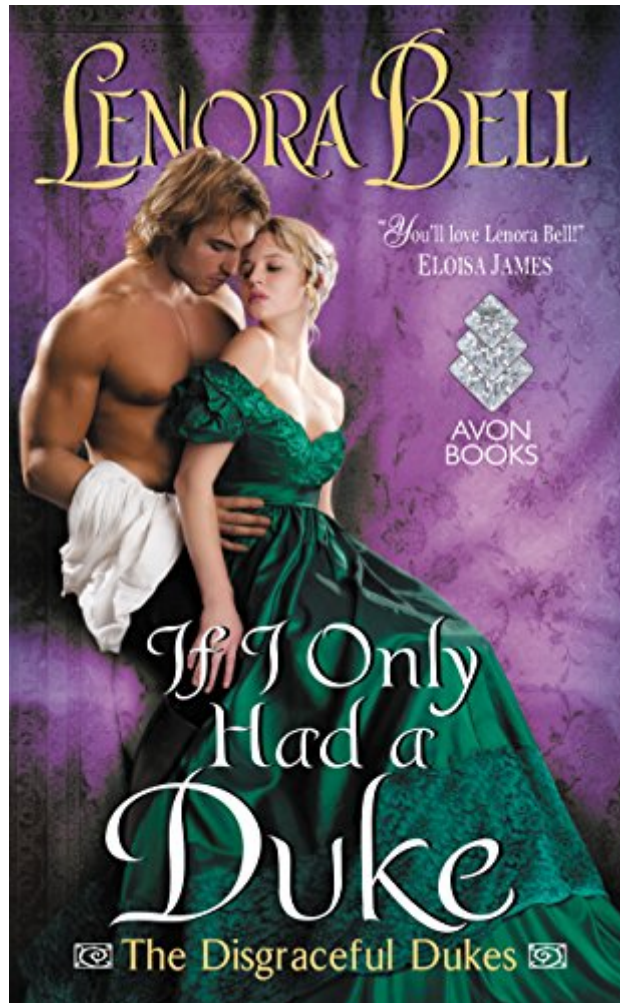


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If I Only Had A Duke: The Disgraceful Dukes



Synopsis

After three failed seasons and a disastrous jilting, Lady Dorothea Beaumont has had more than enough of her family's scheming. She won't domesticate a duke, entangle an earl, or vie for a viscount. She will quietly exit to her aunt's Irish estate for a life of blissful freedom. Until an arrogant, sinfully handsome duke singles her out for a waltz, making Thea the most popular belle of the season. The duke ruined her plans and he'll just have to fix them. Dalton, Duke of Osborne, is far too heartless for debutantes or marriage--he uses dalliances and public spectacle to distract from his real purpose: finding the man who destroyed his family. When his search leads to Ireland, the last thing he needs is the determined, achingly innocent Thea, who arrives in the dead of night demanding he escort her to her aunt. His foolish agreement may prove his undoing. The road to the Emerald Isle is fraught with unforeseen dangers, but the greatest peril of all might just be discovering that he has a heart...and he's losing it to Thea.

Book Information

File Size: 2472 KB

Print Length: 384 pages

Publisher: Avon (August 30, 2016)

Publication Date: August 30, 2016

Sold by: HarperCollins Publishers

Language: English

ASIN: B0191FVGBG

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #1,794 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #30 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Romance > Historical Romance > Regency #32 in Books > Romance > Historical > Regency #327 in Books > Literature & Fiction > United States

Customer Reviews

"Thea had made an error of epic proportions. A tall, broad-shouldered, duke-sized error." FINAL DECISION: Rollicking road trip with a man haunted by his brother's death and the woman whose plans he ruins by making her a social success. Filled with humor and great emotion, I greatly

enjoyed this book. **THE STORY:** After three disastrous seasons and an infamous jilting at the altar by the duke who ended up marrying her illegitimate half-sister, Lady Dorothea Beaumont intends to get through one last season and then retire to her aunt's estate in Ireland and freedom. Then, the Duke of Osborne decides to single her out and make her popular by waltzing with her. Dalton believed that he was avoiding Thea's desire to trap him into marriage, but his actions incense Thea who insists that he help her escape. But Dalton has secrets including his search for the man who destroyed his family. **OPINION:** For me, the highlight of this book was the witty relationship between Dalton and Thea that deepens as they two travel together and learn one another's secrets. The two begin by exchanging letters (one of my favorite devices). Amusing and revealing, the letters jump start their relationship. By the time they encounter one another in London, they each already have plans on how to deal with the other. Both Thea and Dalton have hidden scars that are not obvious in their society roles. Thea has been raised her whole life to make the perfect match. When her debut was a failure, Thea knew that her lack of perfection reduced her importance to her family. Feeling as if her only value is her marriage prospects, unable to form real relationships with others and lonely beyond belief, Thea has allowed life to happen to her.

3.5 Stars | Hot Steam After adoring Lenora Bell's dazzling debut, *How the Duke Was Won*, I couldn't wait to read *Lady Dorothea and The Duke of Osborne*'s happily ever after. Though not as spellbinding as the first novel in the *Disgraceful Dukes* series, Thea and Garrett's tale is a nicely written and pleasing afternoon diversion that's filled with madcap adventure, humor, rich romance, and toe-curling passion. The instant Garrett appeared as a disgruntled pen pal responding to Thea, the uninvited and pushy miss invading his estate's attics, I was in lust. Combative, formidable, and wildly appealing, that enraged duke was just my flavor of alpha male—complicated, tortured, gruff but honorable, and a phenom in the bedroom. He commanded and enthralled in each scene he inhabited. And, ultimately, it was his delectable character that inspired me to keep turning the pages because I found Thea's character problematic for a lot of the story. While undoubtedly smart, very sweet, and kind hearted, her excessive quirks, absurd snap decisions, and general over-the-top behavior tested my suspension of disbelief over and over. I would have preferred less Thea-driven vaudevillian escapades in exchange for more potent, intense, and emotionally raw scenes to propel the plot. My opinion of her began to shift positively however when I discovered that her impulsiveness, blind gusto, and irrepressibility in Garrett's embrace became wicked and wanton assets that were a delight to read. The radiant Thea I observed swept up in passion—exploring, experiencing, and in full bloom—was the Thea I'd yearned for. Thankfully,

as the novel progressed, her green, sheltered perspective seasons, her outlandish actions become endearing, and she emerges a sympathetic, grounded, worldly, and relatable woman.

HOW THE DUKE WAS WON was one of my favourite books this year, and it was with trepidation that I awaited IF I ONLY HAD A DUKE, so how did Lenora Bell fare? Read on. Lady Dorothea Beaumont "Thea" is hiding in Ireland after her dismal appearances in Society. Thea is a student of the arts, and has come upon paintings of inestimable value in the attic of the Irish residence of Dalton, the Duke of Osborne, her neighbour. The Duke is not amused, but Thea will not take no for an answer: she must catalogue the paintings and show them to the world. Dalton cares not a whit about art; he has dedicated his life to finding his brother's killer. Back in England, Dalton intends to turn "Disastrous Dorothea" into the most sought-after marriageable young woman, if only to be left in peace, and it works so well, that Thea must flee to avoid an ancient toad her mother wants Thea to marry. Dalton, feeling a tad responsible for Thea's woes, will help her flee her pesky admirers. IF I ONLY HAD A DUKE is the enchanting tale of Thea, who is perfect in every way: she has always done everything that was asked of her, but she's had enough, and a forced marriage is the last straw. Thea is an extremely engaging heroine: passionate, creative, and full of life. She is dying to experience her newfound freedom, and even the "Monumental Duke" is powerless to reason with her. Thea is not acting foolishly, she is not stubborn just because, but she wants to be able to do what she wants, and now she is able to. Dalton, under the guise of a rake, exists in a vacuum, consumed by revenge, but Thea brings the light he never realised was missing from his life. The chemistry between Thea and Dalton is out of the stratosphere! Together they are invincible, and their banter is delectably brilliant.

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