

Her Ladyship's Companion by Evangeline Collins

Contributed by Lindy
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Title: Her Ladyship's Companion
Author: Evangeline Collins
Publisher: Berkley Sensation
Genre: Historical Romance
Publication date: May 2009
ISBN: 9780425228203
Pages: 330
Series: N/A
Reviewer: Lindy
Heat Level: hot but not over the top
Rating:

When Lady Isabella Riley's brother catches her in a foolish youthful indiscretion in the stable with a groom, his hope that she'll make a good match that will save the family financially is as ruined as she is. He tells her she will wed Lord Stirling, and she feels remorse, mostly because she sees the disappointment in her brother's eyes. Stuck in a loveless and abusive marriage to an absentee husband, Bella's cousin Esmé tells her she needs a flirtation to brighten her spirits. She protests, saying she couldn't possibly get involved with someone locally, so Esmé says she'll hire someone for her. Bella is reluctant because she promised herself she would deny those carnal cravings, and be the lady her brother wants her to be. She tells Esmé no, but her cousin hires a man anyway. Gideon Rosedale arrives, and Bella discovers he's been hired to stay a fortnight. So what happens when the fortnight ends and she discovers she has fallen in love? Bella is a wonderful heroine, with an icy exterior that belies her insatiable sexuality. Her passionate desperation for Gideon is clear, borne of years of frustrating neglect of her intensely sensual nature. But she's not made for a strictly physical fling without engaging her emotions, and those emotions are razor sharp. She knows the realities of the affair; after all, he's a prostitute. Happily ever after isn't an option. Is it?

Her Ladyship's Companion grabs your heart and gives it a relentless twist that you won't soon forget. Evangeline Collins writes with a fresh voice, and I especially appreciated that the hero is not titled. Everything about this book was a welcome change of pace. It was very well-written, with excellent chemistry, great characters, lots of heartfelt emotion and just the right amount of angst. The pace and plot suck you right in and you'll forego eating and sleeping just to keep turning the pages. This was without a doubt one of the best historical romances I have read in a very long time. I'm looking forward to reading more of Ms. Collins' work.