



A Most Personal Property

Darragh Glass

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In the heat of August 1900, Henry Blackwell—rich, handsome, and painfully shy—anticipates the purchase of his companion slave, that most personal of properties, with equal parts excitement and dread. There are limits to what a gentleman might do with his slave and still remain a gentleman, and what Henry craves goes far beyond what's allowed.

Martin, a slave from House Ganymede, is the most beautiful young man Henry's ever seen, and he's ready and willing to do as Henry commands, but Henry's afraid to ask him for what he really needs. A master needn't care what a slave thinks or how he feels, but Henry can't help wanting Martin to like him anyway. If Henry could be certain Martin wanted the same things he does, he might be bold enough to reveal his secrets.

Unfolding against a backdrop of progress, privilege and turn-of-the-century amusements, the four installments of the Ganymede Quartet present an erotic coming-of-age fantasy of Gilded Age New York in which young men from the richest families form intense bonds with the slaves who serve them.

A Most Personal Property Details

Date : Published September 24th 2014 by 3H Press

ISBN :

Author : Darrah Glass

Format : ebook 460 pages

Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Historical, Erotica, Bdsm, Young Adult, Lgbt

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From Reader Review A Most Personal Property for online ebook

Veronica of V's Reads says

I loved this book.

I read the FREE prequel, A SUPERIOR SLAVE, and adored Martin, the Top Boy of all the Ganymede Companion slaves up for sale in August 1900. (See my review here.) It oriented me to the alternate reality/Historical world in which these books are set.

In Martin's world, rich people buy slaves for their pubescent children to use as sex surrogates. So, a wealthy boy of sixteen would go to an auction of male Companions. He would purchase one who would become his valet, and trusted life-long Companion, meaning that sexual relations with his Companion was a socially acceptable alternative to low-class whores, unsavory working-class women, or self-polluting masturbation, well at least until he married. At that point his companion would be a personal secretary with no further sexual duties.

This story is told from the POV of Henry, a wealthy boy with a big secret. He's queer. He's always desired boys, mostly his best friend Louis's older brother James. He wishes for a Companion, not because he is anxious to have sex--as all his rich friends are--but because he doesn't wish to be different from them, left behind. His *nouveau riche* father is respected, but Henry recognizes that his social station is tenuous. And, while his friends have all been having chats with their fathers regarding slave ownership, Henry's father has made no mention of it--despite the fact of Henry's father having his own Companion.

How humiliating it would be to not have a companion slave! If Father wold not give him one, maybe he would at least allow Henry to go to a different school, some abolitionist institution where his companionless state would not be unusual or shameful.

But how would Henry get anywhere in life without a slave of his own? A man of their class without a companion might as well be no gentleman at all.

Turns out, Henry worried for naught. His father did in fact plan to purchase a Companion for him. Of course, there is that old chestnut: be careful what you wish for...

What Henry wanted out of life was to share something tender with another young man, to reveal his secret self and act out all his shameful fantasies with his precious friend, and he wanted to be able to do this without censure or reproof.

Although Henry would never be allowed to have this sort of relationship with another free boy, he could have some of what he wanted with a slave; he would be encouraged to have it, even...However there were limitations on what a gentleman could do with a slave and still remain a gentleman and everyone understood what they were. There would be no kissing, no caressing, no mutuality; such things were the province of fairies and queers, and Henry would not be allowed to become and invert.

He wasn't willing to concede he was a fairy, but he might well be queer.

Quite the conundrum when he meets Martin at the auction.

Every line of his body was taut and graceful. Again, he met Henry's eyes and gave him a shy, beguiling smile. Henry looked away to hide his blush. The boy was so beautiful he made Henry's heart ache.

Martin is won at the auction, after a furious bidding war, and Henry is at once elated and frightened.

"He belongs to you now." Father reminded him. "He'll attend you at school, of course and Timothy will want to teach him a few things. Beyond that, you may do with him as you see fit." Here, Father cleared his throat. "Within reason." Henry blushed and turned away as Father added in a low voice, "You'll remember what we've talked about. He's a handsome boy, and you're both of an age..." It was too mortifying for words and Henry hoped that Martin hadn't overheard.

Even the normal duties of Martin attending as a valet are fraught with troubles for Henry.

Martin helped him pull his shirt over his head and put it in the laundry basket with the collar and cuffs. Before Martin could put his hands on Henry's fly, Henry hurried to unbutton his own trousers and let them drop to his ankles; he did not want Martin touching his waist, his hips, his thighs. He did not trust his body to behave in proximity to Martin. He stood in his undershirt and drawers feeling miserably vulnerable and exposed.

Martin knelt at his feet, removing Henry's socks. He looked up at Henry and smiled. "Do you change your underthings with your dinner clothes, Sir?"

If he said yes, he'd have to be naked in front of Martin. "Uh, no," he said.

But none are more problematic as when Martin makes his other, more interesting, purposes plain.

"Is there anything I might do for you, Sir?" Martin asked, getting more slowly to his feet. "Anything at all?" When Henry did not immediately answer, he added, "I should be very happy to serve you. That is what I'm here for," in a low, intimate tone.

So, while Henry is totally gone for Martin, he's terrified of being found out a queer. While all Henry's friends

make hard use of their Companions, Henry is a paragon of restraint. So much so, Henry is afraid Martin suspects something is wrong with him.

"Is there anything I might do for you, Sir? You've been so generous with me, Sir. I'd be pleased to be of service." He stood before Henry, hands behind his back, shifting from one foot to the other. He looked so hopeful. He had to be wondering what was wrong with Henry. Maybe he even guessed.

Fast forward to the HEA. Because there is one. Henry, slowly, learns to manage his fears--prodded on when one of Henry's classmates assaults Mertin. In the period between, from purchase to service, Henry and Martin develop a solid rapport. Martin is Henry's intimate confidante, and his closest friend. And the passion they later share is only more sweet for all the development.

Martin, though, seemed happy with Henry's paltry compliments. He ran his hands over Henry's body, such voracious hands. "You want to be a real lover to me, don't you, Henry?"

"Yes," Henry said fervently. "Yes, I do."

"Then we'll be lovers, Sir, and no one else need know."

No mistakes, this is a scorching read. Not suitable for kiddos, but truly enjoyable for those who like historical romance, and particularly gay romance. I loved the language. I loved the setting, and the period. I loved the long wait, as Henry worked through his fears. I ached for both him and Martin--who is totally smitten with Henry and can't understand why Henry recoils from his subtle advances. I eagerly await the next book in this series.

I received a copy of this book via NetGalley. This is my honest review.

Leta Blake says

Have you ever read a book that left you walking around for weeks in a daze of daydreaming about the characters? Have you ever read a book that tempted you to write fanfiction for the universe because you just couldn't let it go? Have you read a universe so thoroughly realized that you just want to roll around in it for ages? This book (series, really) was all of that for me and more.

It hasn't been since Ginn Hale's Rifter series that I've been so taken with characters and their world. I have spent countless hours since reading an early draft of this book thinking of the completely realized side-characters, the intensely relatable main characters, and even making up little side stories in my head for their future.

I can't fathom reading this series and not falling in love with Henry and Martin, not rooting for them and their dangerous relationship. I can't fathom NOT reading this series, period, actually, because it has so impacted me and set my mind on fire with feeling and inspiration.

I'd tell you more particulars about the book, but I almost feel like every single bit of it is worth discovering for yourself. Every character, every interaction, every moment is so wonderful and intense that I don't want to take any of it away from a reader by relating it in advance. Suffice it to say, this book comes with my absolute highest recommendation.

This is just the first book in a four book series (which will also have some side stories that go along with it, but are not required for the rest of the series) and I can't wait for Book 2! This is just such a lush, wonderful, fantastic world!

Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

Warning: Only read this book if you are absolutely okay with reading LOTS of on page sex between two 16 year old boys, one of which is a personal slave to the other. If you are not cool with that, stop right now!

Woah, this book was a hot read! While I don't read any books that have underage teens having sex with of age adults, I seem to make exceptions for books where both MCs are of the same age. And while this was a slave fic, I don't think anyone reading it would call what happen between Henry and Martin anything but consensual. **However, there is some dub con and non con with side characters, just so you know.** If this book sounds like something you'd be interested in, I think you will be VERY pleased.

I don't read much AU stuff but I always seem to like it when I give it a go. This book takes place in an alternate 1900s New York, where personal slaves are commonplace. Interestingly, race has almost no part in this book. Black teens have white slaves and vice versa, whatever they choose. The slaves are all trained by professional, classy slave houses and are like polished butlers... that are also used for sex.

Ah, the sex. I guess in this AU world it is considered natural to have sex with your personal slave, but it is considered unnatural to be gay. Meaning, you can practice on your slave, but you aren't supposed to *want* it. Unfortunately for slave owner and shy teen Henry, kissing and making love to his slave is all he can think about doing.

I'm not going to lie, part of this book were 5 stars. This book is about 60% buildup and sexual tension and then 40% banging like bunnies. DAMN these guys... so hot together. Pages and pages of explicit sex. It was SO yummy and squirmalicious. I loved this book at times. It was so intense and so hot.

I also really liked the AU world. I think the author did a nice job creating something that felt complete and well thought out. I found myself getting really into the world and losing myself in the story.

However, not all was dreamy slave sex and rimming...

The main problem that I had with this book was a lack of focus with the plot. I think this book needed a good, solid editor to bring it under control. There were about 100 pages of repetition here that killed me. Eating, yearning, going to school... nothing happened! For awhile I enjoyed it, because I LOVE sexual tension, but after pages and pages of nothing, I started skimming a bit. There was so much that could have been edited out.

There was also not much to the story. There isn't a lot of plot here, folks. aside from going to school and

having sex or wishing they were having sex, nothing happens. And 460 pages of nothing happening is a LONG time of nothing happening.

Finally, the ending, which really dropped my rating down. I kept wondering how everything was going to resolve itself until I realized that it WASN'T going to! The story just... ends. It is going along and then it just stops. I'm assuming that the two guys just live happily ever after in their master/slave arrangement but I guess we'll never know. I would have liked some sort of story arc, some sort of ending that felt complete.

**Edited to add that apparently the couple's story continues on in the next three books and the MCs don't change. I still think it should have ended on something more finished feeling.*

I think that if you read this for what it is (aka hot slave fic), you'll be very pleased. I adored the majority of the story but I think I was wanting and expecting so much more.

Copy provided in exchange for an honest review

Pates says

I have read a little historical & fantasy, but nothing of this type. And let me tell you...Darrah did a fabulous job of writing about this era and these two boys. From their styles, to their personalities, and their hearts. Martin and Henry are fabulous characters. They each have their own unique "wondering" of what will happen next. Henry is unsure of how he should handle things, all the while Martin is trying to help him in all the ways he is allowed to. When they finally get into the groove they really get into the groove! The ending is sooo good! My mind is buzzing with all the things that could happen next! I can't wait to see!

Reflection says

happy sigh

This book was simply amazing and has rocketed to my favourites list. (Real life was put on hold as I lost myself in the pages of 'A Most Personal Property').

I loved the pace of the story and the slow build up, depicting the social awkwardness as the main characters develop an understanding and appreciation of each other and a growing trust. Exploring the intricacies of first love and coming of age this is a really sweet and joyful novel. At the same time is the paradox of a world in which slavery is accepted and flourishes thus deftly considering the mores of owner and owned.

The roles and expectations of slaves and their owners are explored, told in a gentle love story. Underneath the sweetness lies the struggle for conformity, acceptance and the dynamics of power and powerlessness. There is an interesting juxtaposition of owner Henry who is neither particularly ambitious nor competitive and his companion slave Martin, who is ambitious, competitive and competent but has limited opportunity other than to live to serve, and whose choices lie at the whim of his master.

The story is told in third person from owner Henry's perspective, and I relished the exploration of the dichotomy of his inner thoughts and outward approach in day to day situations. This added so much to my reading enjoyment.

By the time Henry and Martin become intimate (which is just over 60% through the book) they explore each others' bodies with passion, excitement and vigour. Whilst they affirm their mutual attraction in private I found the sex scenes joyful but surprisingly explicit in comparison to the rest of the book.

I loved how themes of acceptance and integrity were explored in this coming of age story of 16 year old Henry and his 16 year old House of Ganymede trained slave Martin, and although the theme is young adult this is definitely an adult story. For Henry and Martin, lies a happy ending that had me cheering for them, but in order to find love they must overcome societal pressures, whilst maintaining a facade of conformity. If their love is suspected they face serious repercussions of rejection and ruin. Henry and Martin need to consider whether the risk is worth the reward.

'A Very Personal Property' alludes to the harsh realities experienced by less fortunate slaves when they are poorly matched with their owners, the vagaries of chance and the utter helplessness that restricted choice can invoke. Happily the main characters have luck and love on their side (but there was an ever present undercurrent of foreboding and midway through I had to check the end to ensure all would resolve well).

This is a perfect mix for me, exploring the dynamic of slavery, passion and love with two hugely attractive lead characters who get a happy ending (or in the very least, a happy for now ending). Told with a lightness and exuberance that has left me feeling thrilled.

The story had an opportunity to explore shades of light and dark with more realism, but that would in my opinion have taken some of the delight from the book. Highly recommended.

Kevin says

This is the continuation of the story, this time told from Henry's POV. He is a shy young man with a domineering father, a sickly mother, and a much younger sister. At 16 he is about to get his own companion. He wants this merely because all of his friends will be getting one. Once he does, he is afraid of what his slave will think of him if he exposes his desires.

Henry finally relents and from then on barely leaves his room. There are some family issues and conflicts with his schoolmates. His slave Martin is insanely eager to please Henry, and Henry wants a proper lover rather than a mere servant.

Henry is pretty unremarkable other than having a rigid moral code when it comes to treatment of his slave, something learned from his father.

Sunny says

Sweet, romantic story. Different from other slave stories, but I think that's because of Henry; the other masters seem to have more typical relationships with their slaves. My favorite parts of the story involved just Henry and Martin, though. The other boys mostly made me angry with their attitudes and sense of entitlement.

There is a lot of build up and sexual tension as Henry wrestles with his desires and his fears. Poor Martin, we don't get his POV this time, but we are shown hints of his feelings by his reactions, and after reading the first story, I know he must have been very confused, and disappointed. Luckily, things work out and we get to

enjoy those results.

Even though the story isn't directed at young adults, it has a very YA feel to it due to the MCs feelings, reactions. As Leta Blake said when we talked about the story, "...even their, ahem, explorations are all steeped with adolescent feelings and emotions and angst and drama!"

And as I told Leta, I'll be reading the next stories the day they come out!

Amy Spector says

First off, the MCs? Sixteen. Sex? Oh, like constantly.

Okay, deep breath. Ignore the age, age them up, pretend it's *dog years*. Whatever gets you past it.

Perhaps just shake it off because it's only a book.

This was a great read. Just as the first book, I really loved the alternate 1900 world.

I think I might have enjoyed this more because I had read *A Superior Slave* but at the same time I might have liked it less because of it. Here is why - this story is told from Henry's prospective, and while I really liked Henry, I LOVED his slave Martin whose prospective is used in *A Superior Slave*. I missed his voice, but at the same time I can understand why this story needed to be written from Henry's view point even as I selfishly wanted it other wise.

I've hopped back and forth between 4 and 5 stars, but since my longing for more Martin is my issue alone, and really no reflection of this very well crafted book, I have settled on 5 stars.

Thank you Ms Glass, I am looking forward to the next.

Anne-Marie says

I received this story as an ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Five stars for the first book in this promising series.

The story is told from Henry's point of view. A boy of means who, when he turns 16, has reached the age to have his own companion slave. The story begins at the auction where he sets his sights on Martin, the superior slave of the elite House of Ganymede. The freebie prequel *A Superior Slave* describes Martin's journey to the auction, a must read as it will give you insight into who Martin is and what it means to be a slave in the universe. Knowing Martin's story added a layer to the reading experience. Be sure to catch it.

The story is set in America (NYC) at the turn of the 20th century, with one big difference: slavery has not been abolished, however, keep in mind that it's a different kind of slavery. Young boys are trained to be companion slaves from early childhood in proper, well esteemed schools, race is not a factor here. They will serve their young master in all ways, from getting them dressed and shaved, being proper sparring partners and seeing to their sexual needs. You can sort of see them as a personal butler with benefits.

However, homosexuality is not tolerated and the majority of the masters will engage in sex with their boy companions while they're either not gay or in the closet (not all companions are gay either, a gay-for-pay as it were). Many masters see it as a way to relieve their rampant hormones and more secret desires until they get married.

The dub-con situation that might create is only vaguely present in the background for other master/slave situations.

The slavery aspect of the story can be a dealbreaker for readers. I decided to withhold judgement and see where the author wants to take it.

Henry's father is successful at auction and is able to take Martin home. It's a match made in heaven - as unlikely as that is given the power (un)balance - as both boys end up with the one they wanted above all others. So, good times right? No. And this where the story becomes truly compelling.

Henry is gay but terrified to even acknowledge this to himself let alone to a slave. So having the most beautiful companion he could have hoped for is not a blessing but an absolute torment. He's terrified to unleash the natural desires that he's repressed so successfully, and keeps this hidden at all costs.

Cue sexy, devoted, and gay Martin who wants nothing more than to serve his handsome and kind master, especially sexually. A stalemate if ever there was one. Who will give or succeed first?

The writing style transports you effortlessly to the time period. The story is told at a leisurely pace and in precise detail of all the aspects of Henry's life. On the one hand, this aids to immerse you in his world., on the other, it's really slow going at times and tested my patience a fair bit, but do stick with it, the reward is high.

Glass has captured well how severely a boy can repress and fear his sexuality. It was heartbreakingly at times. Henry is a passionate, sensitive, giving boy who has a strong moral compass that none of his peers have. When he finally reveals to Martin who he truly is, it was such a victory over his self-denial. A powerful, exhilarating scene, my instant favourite.

Martin, I adore. He is an innocent, generous, loving soul. He is tremendously professional in his role as a companion and I was amazed by his composure every time Henry turned him away. Together, they are endearing. In a free world, they'd be a perfect match.

Henry and Martin are faced with many challenges, including peer pressure among the teenage masters. Will Henry succumb to the pressure to share Martin in the hedonistic swap parties that are common practice among masters?

And yet, a strong sense of youthful innocence prevails in the book.

There is much still to explore in the series regarding the dynamic between a master and slave, and slavery in general.

There's Martin's servitude, who almost leaves himself out of the equation, and there's fair-minded Henry, who can't make himself order Martin around or abuse his right of power as so many of his peers do.

There's the longing to be equal, to be treated as a man instead of a master, a person instead of a slave, when

none of that is acceptable in the outside world. And there's a master expected to take a wife once he's of age and a companion who can't afford to get romantic feelings.

Will Martin question his slavery? Will he fight for freedom at some point, will any of the slaves? And will this kind of slavery also be abolished?

Reading this is like wrapping yourself up in a blanket, in front of a roaring fire with a good glass of wine and getting lost in another world for a while. I'm ready for that world to continue. Bring on book 2.

Optimist ?King's Wench? & MANTIES Champion says

4.5 Hearts, Stars, Flowers, Clovers Too!

I read YA!!!

Well, what really happened was I saw the word 'slave', my pupils dilated and that's all I have to say about that. I regret nothing. This book was right up my alley. The alley labeled slavefic. Slavefic set during The Gilded Age? Yes ma'am.

One of my favorite movies (and books) of all time is Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*. I like it because it's so deliberate and meticulous in its pomp and circumstance. Everyone with any social standing had to abide by an arbitrary and confining set of rules or be outcast. It's the very definition of keeping up appearances because there are always eyes on you, which made for a whole lot of repression. *A Most Personal Property* reminded me so much of it only from a 16 yr old's perspective. I skimmed a couple other reviews and saw the word "repetitive" more than once. Yes, it is necessarily so, in my opinion. That's the day and age and Ms. Glass is reinforcing the tedium. When you're building a world this vibrant and lush and using language this evocatively I can deal with a little repetitive.

A Most Personal Property is told entirely through Henry. Henry reminds me an awful lot of a beloved protagonist of mine, George from *A Room with a View*. Henry is introverted, pensive, shy, socially awkward and oblivious to social norms. He understands he has a role to play, but he doesn't understand why these rules are in effect nor what purpose they serve. He longs to be wanted and desired like his favorite swashbuckling couple from his monthly subscription of *Pals*. The trouble is his favorite couple are master and slave and that love is forbidden. In all other respects, this time period and its values are retained aside from slavery bit, so Henry being an invert is a grievous burden. He's very handsome and wealthy, both qualities he finds superficial and meaningless. He's not a good student. He's lazy. He's hormonal, moody and possessive. Also, his parents are both a waste of space, aside from his father barking at him periodically which cows him and does nothing positive for his self-image. His parents' companions are more parental to him if that tells you anything.

All Henry wanted in the world was for a boy who had the freedom to choose anyone or anything to choose him.

The elite in this society acquire a companion slave before entering their junior year of high school, a lifelong commitment. Henry is smitten with Martin upon first sight at the auction and Martin seems taken with Henry as well. The relationship development hurt so good. They're both desperate for one another but too afraid to make a move and, therefore, miserable. Well, Martin's in no position to make any moves here, but Henry doesn't want him to submit out of duty. He's a romantic and he wants them to belong to one another, to be lovers. Oodles of angst and UST ensue and I wouldn't have it any other way. If you've ever seen *The Age of Innocence* there is a scene involving a glove and it's one of my all time favorite scenes. There are two scenes in this book that reminded me so much of that scene it made my heart pitter patter.

Two things stood out as outstanding were the level of research that clearly was put into bringing 1900 NYC to life i.e. the language, the clothing, the class distinctions, the rituals. I appreciate research and Ms. Glass obviously did hers and I applaud her for it. The second was the character development. Henry and even his friends were so real I felt as though I were tagging along with them on their trips to the park and cycling and going to the arcade. Everything about Henry felt so authentic and genuine that I was honestly surprised to discover that this author was female. Bravo.

A Most Personal Property only covers three months with no cliff for an ending, but I'm left... well, bereft for one but wondering what time span the other three books are going to cover. I'm hopeful we'll get to see Henry and Martin as adults. I'm almost positive Henry will wend up on Wall St. since he's good with numbers, but there's also a world war looming as well as the roaring 20s, both of which would make for interesting reading. Plus, I'm wondering if Henry can hang on to bachelorhood or if he'll have to take a trophy wife to perpetuate the family name.

Ms. Glass, please write faster. I need the next one so bad. *grabby hands*

Vivian says

Love unexpected.

A man of their class without a companion might as well be no gentleman at all.

This story is interesting for the premise alone, an AU Gilded Age, New York slavery tale. It is the details that make this more than a historical coming of age story. Excellent sense of time: household servants and duties, serial subscriptions with adventure tales popular at the turn of the century, amusements and concession stand offerings all nailed.

Henry and Martin are both very easy to love as protagonists. Charming, well-mannered and never wrong-footed enough to offend, they pull you into their story and make you believe. The pace is both realistic and at times, slow. There is a great deal of internal rumination, the pondering and worry Henry does begin to feel excessive. I wanted more action and less fretting.

Belaboring the point of Henry's nerves and avoidance of making unseemly demands on Martin. In fact, most

points are reiterated and expounded upon so that the story feels long. It's not that it isn't interesting, but one keeps waiting for something to happen and waits and waits.

But, if one thinks of this as a historical YA then it makes sense. The pace, the internal thinking, the angst, the obsession--it all fits. I guess I wasn't expecting that when I started the story, and it wasn't until the end that I realized it.

Don't fear because when that door of carnal opportunity opens, they're rabbits.

The conflict and tension revolves around Henry's illicit feelings and inclinations and how he tries to mask them with friends and family. Martin is the one thing that truly feels like reality, but when Henry enquires about Martin's upbringing and training jealousy arises. Fortunately, Henry does not suffer alone.

One other thing interested me and was never really explained was the societal setup of slavery other than people were once so poor that they sold their children. Reared on farms and sorted to job training according to skills and looks. Why this structure is acceptable at the turn of the twentieth century in America is unclear. The story makes a distinct point of not making it race-based with both slaves and masters of all hues. Let that go and you've got a sweet class-based love story.

Overall, all the hormones and awkwardness of adolescence revisited in costume.

Favorite quote:

And then he had a thrilling thought: if you were willing to be outcast, if you were willing to disappoint people, you could do anything you wanted; you could be happy.

~~A copy was provided to me for a No Glitter Blown review~~

~~~Reviewed for Hearts On Fire Reviews~~~

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### **Chelsea says**

This was a great read, very sweet! OK so the first half of this book is all about setting up Henry and Martin's friendship and their desire for each other, which is very evident both ways but not acted upon due to Henry's fear of being found out as a queer. Ok so honestly this was a long book and the first half had very very little sex and i know its terrible but that usually loses my interest after a while, but for some reason i couldn't stop reading, i just wanted to see what awkward or confronting moment Henry and Martin would have to endure while trying to avoid touching each other.

About 50% of the way through i started to get nervous, i had put all this time into reading about these two and their unrequited desire and i really wanted a good and sexy pay-off, unfortunately with long books i have generally found if they don't have sex in the beginning it won't be great at the end. Lucky i was VERY VERY wrong!! This book quickly become one of the sexiest books I've read recently. I loved both their eagerness and innocence and their wasn't just one great sex scene there were heaps which i think were made better because we (like Henry and Martin) had waited so long for it to happen.

I loved how their relationship developed and how they adjusted relatively easily to being lovers and

slave/master. Obviously the book stopped before any real issues arised like Henry needing to court, get married, go to college etc and while i would definitely love to read more about these two, it was nice to finish on such a happy note and to be able to continue in my happy bubble that these two somehow live happily ever after.

Oh i also recommend to read A Superior Slave before starting this book because its from Martin's POV and it made it really easy to read this book from Martin's POV as well (even though its written all by Henry).

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### **Sheziss says**

This YA series is so SWEET but it has also lots of sex. You be warned.

I loved the setting, the characters, the *pudor*, the liberation, the boldness... They go to school, to the arcade, to the park. They go with their bikes, their horses, their carriage... It's all quite mundane (in a rich man's world money IS funny) and their experiences together (firsts or not) are lovely to see. AU in New York City, 1900. Slavery is legal. Etiquette and protocol are a religion.

Henry has a comfortable life. He doesn't need anything else. It's true he misses his parents' affection but what he really wants is a slave. Every gentleman of his social circle has a companion slave since the age of 16. His parents are not very affectionate and he longs for someone to love and to be loved in return. Meanwhile, he reads the monthly chapters of his favorite story in one of the magazines for youths. A story of a hero and his slave, a story ambiguous enough to allow you dream about something really happening between master and slave. Henry dreams he can have the same thing these two heroes have. But as a slave is forced to submit, who can he be sure his Martin in truth wants him back?

Martin is Henry's new slave, and he's attentive, attractive and educated, as every companion slave should be. As soon as Henry sees him in the auction, there is no other slave for him. He's irresistible and Henry could take everything he wants from Martin and nobody would be against it. But once he gives in, will Henry be able to repress himself? Kissing, caressing and touching a slave is not gentlemanly behavior, and consequently, it's forbidden. If he surrenders to his instincts and urges, how can he be sure that Martin wants the same thing and that he won't betray his master?

So, UST. For a long while. As I said, they have a mundane existence. But in fact our lives don't really have a plot, they just go on. Here it's the same. No mystery, no murder, no apocalypses, no end of the earth, no closing date in any sense (if ever for the exams) and that's it. Their lives just flow and day after day there is something we all can recognize: routine. But this routine is exciting, because it's their cut and thrust that keeps your eyes open. Their closeness doesn't come easy, it takes time, but it's as meaningful relationships should be, above all in young people who are experiencing love for the first time. Together. But rest assured, they make up for the lost time once they fall at each other's arms. They can be very dirty boys when the occasion calls for.

The wonder these youths feel at the mysterious ways of discovery is quite enchanting and real. I loved Henry's friend, Louis, and his fixation to get to know the opposite sex. His obsession about going to a whorehouse or kissing a girl made me smile and reminded me of that Spanish TV series about the final years of Franco's dictatorship, above all that scene in which the kids try to score in the theatre when even holding hands was forbidden.

The repression is so tangible it almost suffocates you. It can be said that everything important happens in a room of four walls. In their bedroom. Out of it, everything is taboo, no looks, no holding hands, no kissing... The will power is put to the test every time they long to touch each other, which happens often. Slaves are objects, they don't deserve too much consideration and they are treated in a very polite (if not distant) way. They are vessels for their master's passion but they are not worthy of anything in return. Sex with a slave is allowed, but homosexuality in a master is not.

These all fears haunt Henry, as it's his POV the one we have available. Martin's mind reminds a mystery but the novella showing his perspective in A Superior Slave makes up for it. Also, he's quite transparent in the feelings, which are often shown on his face. If that wasn't enough, Martin is pretty released in sex, compensating Henry's shyness and modesty. They are quite opposites but they fit together. So once they dare to make the important step... it's worth the hassle.

I absolutely recommend this series.

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### **Theresa says**

4 stars for the whole series - 0.5, 1, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, 4 & 4.5. Each book was not robust enough to stand on its own nor receive an individual rating.

Coming of age slave fic set in 1900 AU. The story was told mostly through the limited view of a naive, unsocialized, emotionally neglected, over indulged, gay, 16 year old boy Henry. Important events were also depicted by Martin, Henry's personal slave. The writing style was almost in diary format. The time line was very slow in each installment and the series took place over the course of one year. The plot line was dependent upon completing the series with books 4 and 4.5 vital to wrapping it up.

After completing this series, I felt as though I had earned a merit badge. I'm glad I had the patience and tenacity to finish. The beauty of the slow pace and length was that the character and relationship development was so natural and organic. The limited world building was like blinders and forced me to look at life within Henry and Martin's adolescent and social class perspectives.

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## **Manda says**

Warning: the characters are 16 years old and there is very very descriptive sex scene in the story. If that is not a trigger for you, take my word, this story is brilliant.

4,75 stars

It would have been a five star read for me, but I was a teeny bit annoyed with the eventual sex scenes since they were really excessive towards the end. Loved the slow build up. Really interesting world building, lovely set of characters and interesting study of morality. Definitely I will be reading the rest of the series.

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