



How to Impress a Marquess

Susanna Ives

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Take one Marquess, responsible, worldly, deadly dull but concealing an artist's soul.

Add one rebellious, brilliantly creative but lonely young lady who craves love, home and family.

Combine with ill-assorted guests at an ill-fated house party hosted by a dowager with a poison tongue and a penchant for scandal.

You'll be shaken, you'll be stirred, you'll laugh and you'll swoon-most of all you'll be tossed into an intriguing Victorian love story that you'll never want to leave.

How to Impress a Marquess Details

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From Reader Review How to Impress a Marquess for online ebook

Antara Nahian says

[4.5 stars. I rather liked this book. Lilith was a wonderful character, full of life and charm despite the neglect and rejection she faced from her parents as a child. My heart broke for her when we learned her story and broke even more when she revealed that she just wanted a family and somewhere to belong. She was such a kind character with her own hopes, fears and vulnerabilities that the author managed to make feel real and I just wanted her to find her happiness.

George too was

Barbara says

George is a Marquess with a lot of responsibilities and one of those is Lilith. She is one of many wards that he takes care of but somehow taking care of her is not as easy as it should be. She is loud, popular and into the artistic scene. When her living conditions change, it is George who helps her up, but then threatens her with marriage.

George also has a childhood that was not the most pleasant. Readers discover that he is really an artist and had it beaten out of him, literally. Lilith sees that young boy and wants to bring that joy and talent out, but George fights her every step of the way.

My only reservation is giving it a full 5 stars is that I thought Lilith was a bit overdone, while George clung to his persona too much. Also, the age difference is not much (I think 3-5 years), yet it is written as though it is quite a few years.

Vellum Voyages says

4 helms

Please follow me on my blog :) Review originally posted on Vellum Voyages

I'm always a bit apprehensive about trying new authors in the historical romance genre as there is no safety net of a tried and true author, just thoughts & words of other fellow readers until you make your own judgement. With Susanna Ives's "How To Impress A Marquess" I broke a few of my normal rules 1) Read a series in order (I'm a stickler for this!) 2) Read up on new authors before requesting on NetGalley. I broke both rules, as this is the third book in the "Wicked Little Lies" series & I hadn't read any of the others & I requested this title totally on a whim, without any inkling of the order of series or who the author is.

I'm so glad I did! It was unconventional right from the start as the heroine, Lilith Dahlgren is delightful &

refreshingly different. She is a new age bohemian who lives life with reckless abandon & a free spirited mind, but nurses many hurts from her past. The hero, George Marquess of Marylewick is the acting trustee of Lilith, head of the Maryle family & is part of the deep hurt & injustice done to Lilith. What ensues is a discovery of two kindred & bruised souls who can only find the solace each so desperately seeks from each other.

This seems like a lighthearted read at first, but don't be fooled. There is enough depth to the characters stop it from getting too "fluffy". I loved the feminism this book exudes as Lilith defies society's views on women & encourages others to challenge it too. Lilith in her love of George is so pure & honest, she beautifully words her feelings after they first make love: "I'm not another duty! I'm someone in your life who only wants to love you and not make demands of you. I want....I want this pure moment in all its beauty, not polluted by an unpleasant past or a future of demands". George is great hero material as he is not an alpha male, but rather a hidden sensitive who blossoms under Lilith's unconventional ways.

A beautiful romance which can be read as a stand alone, poetry from Keats & references to the impressionism movement thrown in for good measure to keep you fascinated!

*Thank-you Susanna Ives, Netgalley & Sourcebooks Casablanca for the ARC.

Carol says

Colette and the Sultan 4 ever

Debra Martin says

This is the first book I've read by Ms. Ives and I was pleasantly surprised with the story. At the beginning, it seems very lighthearted and straightforward. Lilith is quite a flaky character and George is super straight-laced and is always getting her out of scrapes, but both of these characters had so much more depth to them that was slowly revealed as the story unfolded.

I really enjoyed the "Colette and the Sultan" chapters that paralleled the hero and heroine's story. That was a clever way for Lilith to vent her frustrations about George's heavy handedness with her trust money. Of course, there was lots of drama and as the Colette novel unfolds, Ms. Ives pulls the reader into the overall story of George and Lilith.

I received a copy of this book in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Gaele says

I'm liking the Victorian era more and more – a time of great change in the UK, and many of the heroes and heroines tend to reflect their reactions to all these progressions. In *How to Impress a Marquess*, what starts as a fairly typical and lighthearted story soon develops into much more: with hints of feminist ideology, a romance, plenty of growth and a wonderful ending.

Lilith is a bohemian in training – she’s got all of the ideology, she wants desperately to ‘make a splash’, but she’s still got a bit of conventional marriage, family, romance streak. She is, however, a handful: often heedless to the wishes and feelings of others and far more naïve than she is willing to believe of herself.

George is the head of the family, and also Lilith’s guardian. He’s spent years being told of his responsibilities, and he’s actually rather stilted by the constant focus on duty and appearances. He’s not unkind, just unused to thinking for himself in terms of his own happiness. When he starts to discover the hidden layers and hurts that lie beneath his ward’s seeming devil-may-care approach to what others think of her, he’s genuinely confused.

Slowly the two start to reveal themselves, the deep recesses that no one is allowed to see. While Lilith truly sees the good in George, and wants him to show his love in her often immature visions, the two are growing closer. George is attracted and concerned about that attraction, worried of what people will think, and unsure about what these new feelings are. A lovely light story that conceals hidden depths, bringing the heroine’s youth and inexperience into play as she schools the hero in many aspects, not the least of which is happiness.

I received an eArc copy of the title from the publisher via NetGalley for purpose of honest review. I was not compensated for this review: all conclusions are my own responsibility.
This review was originally posted on I am, Indeed

Billie says

This historical romance is the third book in the Wicked Little Secrets series. It can be read as a standalone but is best to read in order. The story starts out in London in 1879. This is the story of Lileth Dahlgren and George, Marquess of Marylewick. The marquess is proper and dependable. Lileth is unruly and noisy but secretly yearns for a true love and family. A very enjoyable book! I received a copy of this book compliments of Goodreads Giveaways and was not required to write a positive review.

Caz says

One of the things I’ve appreciated most about the books I’ve read by Susanna Ives has been her ability to create relatable, multi-layered characters and storylines which are just a little different to those normally found in an historical romance. In her latest book, *How to Impress a Marquess*, however, she has opted to follow a fairly well-trod-path; the stuffy-hero-loosened-up-by-free-spirited-heroine one – and while the central characters are reasonably engaging and are eventually shown to have more depth than it at first seems, I couldn’t rid myself of that “been here, done that” feeling. Added to this, the heroine drove me bonkers for a large chunk of the first half of the book, and the hero, while supposedly very upstanding and mindful of propriety, does and says a number of things (such as uttering the word “fuck” within the heroine’s hearing) that are not only anachronistic, but which completely contradict the personality the author has given him. The second half of the book is much stronger than the first, as that’s where we are given insight into what is driving these two people and why they are the way they are, but had I not been reading it for review, I’m not sure I’d have been able to put up with the heroine’s antics for long enough to get to the good stuff.

Lilith Dahlgren has been pushed from pillar to post for almost her entire life. When her widowed mother remarried into the wealthy and influential Maryle family, Lilith was not welcome at the family home and

was sent away to school. Her feelings of abandonment manifested in her becoming increasingly rebellious, leading to her having to change schools frequently. When her education was finished, and after the death of her mother, Lilith was taken in by a couple of distant cousins, who encouraged her unconventionality and her interest in the arts. Now aged twenty-three and enjoying her Bohemian lifestyle, she chafes under the guardianship of George, Marquess of Marylewick, who controls her purse-strings until she comes of age, and who is determined to find her a suitable husband. Lilith and George are chalk and cheese; at thirty-one, he is the head of his family, responsible for overseeing their numerous estates, looking out for his siblings and tenants, carrying out his Parliamentary duties and a million-and-one other things that take up almost all of his time. His one self-indulgence is found within the pages of McAllister's Magazine, which is currently serialising a story entitled *Colette and the Sultan*, in which the virtuous heroine has been kidnapped by – you guessed it – an evil Sultan. It's not a salacious story, but George is rather smitten with the loving, true and compassionate Colette and has no idea whatsoever that his rebellious ward is the author and has used him as the inspiration for the evil Sultan.

[On a side note, the 'heroine-as-secret-author' trope seems to be flavour of the month in historicals at the moment; I've read a lot of them lately.]

Their opposing natures naturally mean that George and Lilith butt-heads often, yet even as everything about George drives Lilith to distraction, she also enjoys baiting him and can't help noticing that he's gorgeous. And while George wants to be rid of the millstone around his neck that is Lilith, he can't quash his inconvenient physical attraction to her, making it even more imperative that he find her a husband as soon as possible.

The author does a good job of mixing the light and darker elements of the story, and once she started to show exactly why Lilith behaves as she does, I found the character easier to warm to. She is unconventional, kind and insightful, yet while there's no denying she has good reason to feel the way she does, I was irritated by her inability to put herself in someone else's place and her continual need to push a situation to its very limits.

George is an attractive enough hero, but he's a bit of a stereotype – the heir with an artistic soul whose father thought his interests weren't masculine enough and beat them out of him. The scene in which Lilith shows him his youthful drawings is quite moving and I enjoyed seeing him finally achieve a balance in his life; but he's a little bland overall.

I've already mentioned that I had problems with the heroine in the story, but that's not the only thing preventing me from rating the book more highly. For one thing, the central relationship is built on what is quite possibly the most "insta" case of insta-lust I've ever read in an historical, and the romance isn't particularly well developed. I also didn't like that Lilith used her writing to vent her frustration over what she perceives as George's poor treatment of her. Her conversations with her Muse are sometimes amusing, but mostly this element seems present so that Lilith can daydream about George, and then provide some conflict late in the story, because of course, these secret-identity-things never turn out well. I can't say much without spoilers, but what happens after it becomes known that the evil Sultan is based upon George is quite ridiculous.

Ultimately, **How to Impress a Marquess** is a bit of a mixed bag. On the positive side, the writing is generally good and the secondary characters are well drawn – although the monstrous Lady Marylewick is more of a caricature than a character; and the author makes some very good points about the need to be true to oneself and about the lasting effects of bullying and social pressure. Even given my reservations about Lilith's character, I did appreciate her for her desire to belong, to love and be loved for who and what she

was; and I enjoyed George's gradual rediscovery of his *true* self and his big romantic gesture towards the end. But there are too many negatives – the serial-as-plot-device, the absence of a strong sense of time and place, Lilith's unrealistic and often selfish behaviour, the lack of chemistry between the leads, and too many anachronisms, Americanisms and downright odd uses of language (no British person would talk about the need to "*get quids*", for example) – for me to feel able to give the book a recommendation.

C says

I AM FURIOUS.

FURIOUS WITH ALL OF YOU.

USELESS THE WHOLE LOT.

HOW DARE YOU! HOW DARE YOU NOT TELL ME ABOUT THIS BOOK.

I FEEL PERSONALLY VICTIMIZED. IT HAS BEEN OUT FOR OVER A YEAR—WHO HID THIS FROM ME I WANT TO KNOW I DO.

I'M SHAKING AND I'M OVERSET AND I CAN HARDLY TYPE. PLEASE DO YOURSELF A FAVOR AND READ THIS DELIGHTFUL BOOK IT IS EVERYTHING YOU ARE LOOKING FOR I PROMISE.

Vikki Vaught says

3.5 Stars

This is the first book that I recall reading by Susanna Ives. I received an invitation from the publisher via Net-Galley to read it in exchange for an honest review. Book description appealed to me, so I decided to accept, even though Victorian romances are not my first choice. Fortunately, I enjoyed that aspect of the story.

How to Impress a Marquess has a great ending. I struggled with the first half or more of the book, but I kept reading because I truly liked George, Marquess of Marylewick. Part of the problem was the length of the paragraphs and the same with some of the sentences. This slowed the pacing down and added extra words which made this book longer than it needed to be in my humble estimation.

George is a likable hero. He's dedicated to his family and takes his responsibilities very seriously. It's nice to have a hero that is not a rake. This man had the patience of a saint to put up with the antics of Lilith. Not really sure why he fell in love with her.

I found Lilith's character a trial from the start. She behaved like a bratty teenager for most of the book. She was way too flighty and contrary for my tastes. Ultimately, she does redeem herself toward the end of the story. Her determination to bring out the creative side of George helped turn the tide a bit.

If you like a story with some humor and are looking for one with an intriguing hero, then you may enjoy How to Impress a Marquess. While this book is the third in the Wicked Little Secrets series, it can be read as

a standalone. Happy reading!

Hannah says

ARC REVIEW

How to Impress a Marquess is book three in the Wicked Little Secrets series. It is just fine as a standalone I haven't read any of the previous books but was not lost at all. It was, in the end, a very cute and fun book. However Lilith I didn't really care for; for most of the book she was flaky, immature, whiny, and selfish. She does change she sees that not everything was as she perceived it to be and that it was not only her feelings and emotions being messed with as a child. I do like that she was a free spirit and artistically inclined and also that she knew how to act she just refused to conform to society's rules unless she has too. George of course is a brooding straightlaced Marquess. George doesn't even realize that he has been in love with Lilith the whole time and he has been doing everything to keep her in his life. Even Lilith doesn't see it she just sees him as the oppressive villain of her story. Which of course is what she does. Lilith is the author of a very popular story being printed by a London magazine she has loosely based the characters on George as the bad guy and herself as the heroine. George loves the story and wishes he can find a woman like the heroine of the story.

Lilith hates the side of her family her mother married into. She has felt unloved and unwanted since she was a teen, she has been ridiculed and made to feel like a lesser of a person just because her birth father was not of society breeding. George is the head of the family and was left in charge of Lilith's inheritance and every month she must beg for her money. Lilith has shown to be irresponsible and flighty when it comes to her money, and her cousins from her father's side have used her for it and after living together for several years they have abandoned her with a past due rent of seven months even though she has given her rent money to them every month. Homeless and betrayed only George is there to help her and she hates him for it. An old school acquaintance of George's has fallen for Lilith and manipulated George into bringing her to George's annual house party. The house party is where all the excitement happens including a spiteful and hateful mother, a forgotten half sister, and an attic of forgotten secrets and locked away artist talent.

Overall this was a fun and enjoyable read, I really liked it. And every time George said "My God, Lilith!" he did so in Frasier Crane's voice.

Debbie Glenn Brown says

How to Impress a Marquess has George, Marquess of Marylewick acting as the guardian for Lilith Dahlgren and has no intention of making his life easy. Lilith's grandfather left George in charge of her finances until she marries and he the relinquish responsibility a husband he approves for Lilith. George takes his responsibilities very seriously and Lilith has tried his patience and good will with Lilith's character being a trial from the start. George feels her cousins are trying to take advantage of Lilith and she resents his intrusion into her life. Lilith secretly writes to supplements her allowance with a serialized story that has become quite the rage and very popular especially with George for there is more than one gentleman in love with the fictitious heroine Colette. But what George does not realize is that Lilith has based her character the Sultan, the villain of the ongoing saga on him. Their first kiss comes completely out of nowhere and feels

completely wrong and out of place after all she is his ward and she is vulnerable young woman under his care. The two are attracted to each other and continue to fight these feeling. An interesting read with a different plot line to it.

I received a free ARC copy from NetGalley in exchange for my honest review.

Erica Chilson says

I received a copy of this title to read and review for Wicked Reads

3 Stars.

How to Impress a Marquess is the 3rd installment in the Wicked Little Secrets series, so I suggest reading the series in order for maximum enjoyment. However, I'm sure it could be read as a standalone without any major confusion.

I feel the need to point out how the blurb gives no hint of the premise whatsoever.

The novel features some of historical romance's favorite tropes. The guardian and the ward falling in love. The stuffy alpha male who lives a life by the rules vs the independent-minded, untamed damsel. Reluctant, guilt-inducing lust. Scandal bringing about marriage, where the guardian finds his ward too intriguing to let her go. The ward refusing to abide by any rules.

All these tropes are angst-filled and yummy deliciousness. The issue for me, is that combining all those above was a bit too much to handle. In my case, it was an issue of finding Lilith immature rather than independent, silly rather than mature. I had a difficult time falling into the story and finding entertainment when the heroine annoyed me with her behavior.

I enjoyed George for the most part, but I found it impossible that George and Lilith could be meant for each other with the wide gap of maturity level, with her behavior and antics (which I'm sure some readers will find refreshing, spitfire, or humor-inducing) of that of a wife.

This is on me, with my too serious personality, because once you find one of the main characters frustrating to read, the entertainment value of the novel itself fades. While I enjoyed George, how well this installment fit into the series, and some of the tropes used, I had a difficult time suffering through Lilith's character.

Recommended to fans of Historical Romance, Susanna Ives, and the Wicked Little Secrets series.

Susan Gorman says

I love a fabulous house party romance! It's interesting to read what develops when people are in close company—sharing meals, playing charades, listening to music or picnicking on the lawn. Susanna Ives has written a fabulous opposites attract romance between George, the Marquess of Marylewick and his ward Lilith Dahlgren.

George and Lilith are polar opposites. George takes his role in Parliament and his estate duties very

seriously. He's very structured and a bit boring until his unconventional ward moves in with him. Lilith is an engaging woman, she's artistic and a bit of a free spirit. She is frustrated with how George treats her and manages her money. Lilith, using a pen name, authors the popular Collette and the Sultan series which George reads faithfully. He has no idea that Lilith has based the domineering Sultan on him.

Lilith discovers that George was an artist when he was younger and why he abandoned his artwork. During the house party, she begins to understand that George is responsible for caring for many people and understands why he is so dedicated to his job. This understanding causes her to regret her portrayal of George aka the Sultan in her stories. Self-discovery is important to several characters in the novel and the author does a wonderful job transforming Lilith from a spoiled heiress to a compassionate woman.

Susanna Ives is a new-to-me author. I enjoyed this Victorian romance, the fabulous banter between the two main characters and the house party setting. I am glad the author wrote a hero who was an honest, hardworking man, not the typical rake, spy or Duke character. There is a villain in disguise and a few surprises as the story reaches its conclusion which added to my enjoyment of the book. I adored the ending!

Wendy says

I began reading this book expecting great things, especially with a foreword by Eloisa James telling us that the characters reminded her of Julia Quinn's, whose stories and characters I love. The writing is good and there are some interesting characters in the story, but they didn't resonate with me and given the story touches on some fairly serious issues, there was the potential for more layers and depth to be added. Instead there is so much inconsequential dialogue that I could hardly concentrate on what was important, and the overall effect is one I can only describe as trite.

George, Marquess of Marylewick has the unenviable task of keeping his ward, Lilith Dahlgren, in order and that young lady has no intention of making his life easy. He controls the fortune left to her by her grandfather and would be happy to relinquish responsibility of Lilith to a husband of whom he approves. The thing is, Lilith is an self-confessed Bohemian and supporter of artists on whom she generously but naively spends her limited funds. George can see that she is being taken advantage of by her late father's unscrupulous cousins and their artistic cohorts, and therefore keeps her on a fairly tight rein; Lilith resents his intrusion and control in her life.

George - on the surface - is a rather stuffy, unbending, aristocrat who takes his many responsibilities to extremes. He is everyone's rock, his mother's, his sister's, his tenants and albeit, unwillingly, Lilith's. He especially takes his loyalty to Disraeli, the prime minister to extremes and what he sees as his duty to his country - very seriously. As a result, George's sensitive, artistic nature has been tamped down, although we do get glimpses of his sensitivity through a series of flashbacks to his youth. And Lilith, with her perceptiveness and love of the arts, soon uncovers George's well buried secret and when she does is determined to free him from the confines of duty.

Lilith was pretty much abandoned as a child when her father was killed in a duel and her mother re-married George's Uncle. When their new young family started arriving she was sent off to boarding school and forever after felt unwanted and unloved by George's family. Lilith supplements her allowance by secretly writing a serialised story under an assumed name which is published in a magazine, a story that has become very popular. In fact Colette, the heroine, has become something of an icon and more than one gentleman is in love with the fictitious character, including the staid and starchy George. He is unaware that the writer bases the Sultan - the villain of the ongoing saga - on him. Each time he does something which she considers

high-handed Lilith further denigrates him in her writing and society hates the Sultan even more. I found this fictitious storyline running parallel with Lilith's and George's own lives to be irritating and slightly ridiculous; are we really expected to swallow the fact that intelligent men and women slavishly follow or are in love with Colette and hate the despised Sultan to the point where it is openly discussed? We only need a pantomime audience to be catcalling to complete the silliness!

I never felt George's attraction to Lilith, even though I did feel sorry for the way he had been treated and bullied as a child. I kept hoping that I would feel some real empathy for him, but it never happened. Lilith, abandoned and apparently unloved, should have evoked some sympathy but I just found her attention-seeking and down right annoying - rather like a spoilt child. As to the supposed growing attraction between Lilith and George; it comes over more as a bad case of growing lust, especially on George's part, as we are constantly told how a certain part of his anatomy is behaving when he sees Lilith. The first kiss takes place very early on, comes completely out of nowhere and feels completely wrong and out of place. There are also far too many Americanisms and modern terms for my liking. Maybe there are some who might enjoy Ms. Ives' writing style and find it amusing but **How to Impress a Marquess** is not a book that I will retain for my keeper shelf.
