



Splendor

Anna Godbersen

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New Beginnings.

Shocking Revelations.

Unexpected Endings.

As spring turns into summer, Elizabeth relishes her new roles as a young wife, while her sister, Diana, searches for adventure abroad. But when a surprising clue about their father's death comes to light, the Holland girls wonder at what cost a life of splendor comes.

Carolina Broad, society's newest darling, fans a flame from her past, oblivious to how it might burn her future. Penelope Schoonmaker is finally Manhattan royalty - but when a real prince visits the city, she covets a title that comes with a crown. Her husband, Henry, bravely went to war, only to discover that his father's rule extends well beyond New York's shores and that fighting for love may prove a losing battle.

In the dramatic conclusion to the bestselling Luxe series, New York's most dazzling socialites chase dreams, cling to promises, and tempt fate. As society watches what will become of the city's oldest families and newest fortunes, one question remains: Will its stars fade away or will they shine ever brighter?

Splendor Details

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From Reader Review Splendor for online ebook

Maren says

A total guilty pleasure book series - 1900 Gossip Girl, basically. I liked it, but I was kind of bummed out with the ending. I can see where the author was trying to go, with the Edith Wharton comparisons, but it was sad that Henry, specifically, didn't get to be happy.

Sarah says

Spoilers

Stupid, stupid ending to the series. I wasn't that invested in the series and I still managed to be dumbfounded by how poorly it ended.

The only character that ends up with a remotely happy ending is Elizabeth. I actually really enjoyed her pairing with Teddy, although their story and the resolution with Cairns was a bit too... I don't know... something. Too quick? Too predictable. I'm not sure.

I can't really deny that Lina got her just desserts, and I actually liked that she was able to come fully clean about being "nouveau riche" and accept that. Also, that she reconciled with her sister. I still wasn't satisfied with her story, though... She had so many shots at redemption. Chances to recognize the horrible things she had done and then try to atone for them. I wish the author had chosen to utilize them.

The WORST part of the book, though, was the outcome of the Henry-Diana relationship-- really, the only thing that kept me invested in the books at all. I understand that maybe the author wanted to emphasize independence, and romance is not necessarily the ultimate goal of every heroine. However, the author did not succeed in convincing me that everything that Henry and Diana had gone through had a purpose and made them better people, etc. etc. Her last few pages just basically negated EVERYTHING she had written up to that point. The absolute worst part of this, though, is Henry, who hands-down wins the shortest-end-of-the-stick award. He finally starts to grow up and come into his own, accepting his responsibilities and trying to do what's right. And how is he rewarded? He gets to spend the rest of his life miserably engaged in extra-marital affairs, together with Penelope, his equally unfaithful wife. He deserved better. Just stupid.

Virginia Mae says

SPOILERS

To explain my rating, I would give this book five stars right up until the last ten pages or so, which were horrendous.

"The Luxe" has been a beautifully crafted series, replete with gorgeous historical details and a sparkling world full of fascinating characters. At the center of this world, there were Diana and Henry, the core romance of the saga. After everything these two went through to be together, it is not just downright stupid that they would not end up together. It is also completely unrealistic and deeply uncharacteristic of both.

In some sort of sanctimonious, absurdly abrupt attempt at a feminist statement, Gobersten trashes the fate of these characters. If the reader is supposed to be happy that Diana is striking out on her own, it is an undeniable fact that by and large this will not be the case. A quick look at Amazon reveals a number of similarly shocked and disappointed reviews.

The ending, for Diana and Henry, is a total betrayal of two compelling and delightful characters, and flies in the face of ALL that either of them have done before (ie Diana cutting her hair, trying to enlist in the army, and then following Henry all over the world because she loves him that much). It is truly, profoundly terrible, and most surprisingly, an example of problematic, inconsistent, borderline bad writing on the part of an author I admire.

As for the other characters: Elizabeth is the only character who receives a completely satisfying ending. In fact, Elizabeth also has the most exciting and fun to read plotline in the book. While she has always been likable, in "Splendor" Elizabeth ceases to be merely good and kind and becomes downright badass.

Carolina receives 50% of a happy ending, which is, predictably, 50% satisfying. It's highly unlikely that Leland truly would not have forgiven her, and rather heartbreaking. On the other hand, Lina obviously did need an ego wake-up call regarding her treatment of her sister, and I am glad she and Claire ended up living together.

It would be easy to be enraged that Penelope does not receive some awful ending, but blaming Penelope for the downfall of others is fruitless. She simply is who she is, and this has allowed her to be a sympathetic villain. Where she ends up feels about right, but it was not necessary to force Henry into the same fate.

While I am still a fan of this author and will doubtless read and enjoy her next series, the ending of this book is an enormous mistake.

?LEAH? says

"A suitable ending to a pretentious tale."

This series, at its heart, is a soap opera. A tabloid-esque drama circa 1900. I believe the ending fit this series perfectly, and I really couldn't foresee it any other way.

Plot: 4.7/5 –A guilty pleasure through and through...Everything played out splendidly. I think, I always felt this is the way it should have went.

Characters: 4.5/5 –Conclusively, they all got what they deserved in the end. From the good to the bad.

The Feels: 4/5 --Not necessarily the conventional kind, more like the justification type.

Theme: 5/5 --Watch who you step on your way to the top, they just might trip you...

Flow: 4.5/5

Originality: 5/5

Book Cover: 4/5

Sex Factor: non explicit

Narration: 4.3/5 --She grew on me, I think, because I didn't have the problems with her on this book, like I have with others previous.

Ending: 5/5 --I ultimately really liked how all the stories within this series were wrapped up, and the epilogue was superbly done. Cliffhanger: No, this is the final book in the series.

Will I read more from this Author? I might

WARNING: This next paragraph is rather spoilerish...

In regards to the Henry/Diana/Penelope storyline; I know a lot of people are upset with the ending. But I feel if Henry had stepped up and been a man, when he first realized he was falling for Diana, he wouldn't have gotten into the craptastic situation he ended up in, namely married to Penelope. He seriously got what he deserved and Diana dodged a bullet, so to speak. She just realized she didn't want to live under that kind of gossip-laden spotlight. She wanted to make her own way on her own terms. It was so justifying to see Penelope get rejected, though.

Tiffany says

For six months I have waited in anxious anticipation for the conclusion of the Luxe series. Now after reading I feel that a small part of me is broken. I will never look at the series with an excitement and happiness. Instead there will always be this bite of sadness.

I understood why Anna took the characters where she did. It made sense and I can justify it in my mind. It still was bitterly sad to me and for that I just can't say I liked the book.

Diana has been my favorite character in these novels and I loved her more in this 4th novel. To see her become the person that she dreams about in novels. No longer to sit in her room and read these novels that would fill her head with dreams. She is actually living the dreams that she has had for herself. I still want another novel with Diana where she can have a complete happily ever after that her favorite novel would contain.

PurpleBootz13 says

This book was sort of disappointing. Not because it wasn't good (the plot line was great) but that for such a romantically-oriented book, I can't believe that the golden couple (Diana Holland and Henry Schoonmaker) did not end up together. I mean, I spent the whole series waiting for them to get married. I'm all for non-traditional endings and such, but I'm sorry. However, I guess it IS nice to occasionally find a book that is always perfectly fluffy and sparkly and hunky-dory at the end. Sort of like life. And yes. That was meant to be corny.

Amber says

While I am saddened that this addicting and pleasurable series is now over, I was pleased by the ending of this book. My initial assumptions about Elizabeth's new husband, Snowden Cairns, the former business partner of her father's, proved correct, as he was certainly not the knight in shining armor he seemed to be in the last book; however, his shocking treatment of a with-child Elizabeth was not quite as expected, and I am glad that the former Miss Keller found happiness elsewhere, as it was much deserved. Her younger sister, Diana, proved to be the adventurous one, and it was uplifting to watch her rove the world to find her love, Henry, and to see that she has a maturity beyond her 17 years, as she truly knows herself and what will make her happy in the long-run. I also enjoyed the continued ruination of Penelope, as that pretentious woman deserves everything that happens to her. As for Carolina Broud, the former Holland maid pretending to be a high society girl, it seems that she too can survive anything, even if it is loss bigger than any she could imagine. Godbersen's painstaking attention to historical detail and the florid way she crafts sentences makes me look forward to other books in the future.

Meghan says

I think I have a love/hate relationship with this series. Okay, maybe love is too strong a word. Yay (sort of) for Carolina, a character I never really liked and don't really care about. Yay for Penelope who is out of character when she pushes aside appearances, exposes herself to censure very much earned by her behavior, and learns a lesson in humility.... but not really because all these people don't really seem to have consequences to any of their actions. And Diana? She abandons the only thing she held aloft and it cheapens her. I think the author probably meant for the reader to think "yay for Diana for finally and so thoroughly casting off the smothering social pressures of her day and for truly being free for the first time", but I didn't feel that way at all. It seemed out of character and like I said it cheapens all her previous actions regarding Henry. And Henry? He is jolted out of being an irresponsible jerk and actually takes on some admirable qualities and this is portrayed as bad? Hmm.

The only laudable storyline throughout this whole series is that of Elizabeth, who for some reason takes a back seat to Diana's storyline. Elizabeth truly does cast off her social status, does come to know she can be happy without all the wealth, does it for something that is true, does succeed in making herself happy. What follows with the death of Will and her manipulation by Mr. Cairns are trials not of her own making and she triumphs gloriously in the end by her strength and determination to overcome. Her story is genuinely great and not encumbered by inconsistencies and outlandish endings.

Alicia says

Splendor, the fourth and final *Luxe* book, somehow managed to be more crammed full of melodramatic, underdeveloped, cliched plot devices than all of the first three books combined. We have unexpected heart attacks, brides being left at the altar, a playboy prince, a murderous wife who kills her husband by throwing him down the stairs (well, at least she didn't try to poison him?), a "free spirit" who leaves for an unconventional life in Paris (I'm sure she'll be having fun there in 14 years), and a handsome blonde man in uniform who comes back from service to save the day. The problem is that all these twists and turns are barely explained or explored before another one is thrown in, and it seems as if they are there simply to shock the reader, not to mention that many of them are completely out of character.

Lina's plot was probably the most believable, which isn't saying a whole lot. Sadly, I never really identified with her as a character, so I didn't find myself feeling happy for her when Leland proposed, nor did I feel sad or sympathetic when the marriage was cancelled. I often found myself hurriedly reading through Lina's sections, because her thoughts were so dull and repetitive. It was just "oh money, nice things, nice dresses, I'm so pretty now, nice meals, my nice new house, look at my pretty features and my pretty lichen eyes, nice parties, I can't let anyone know I used to not be able to afford these nice things, and oh, I love Leland". That was the extent of her thoughts for several hundred pages, and I found it irritating to read.

A part of me really wants to empathize with Lina and convince myself that a lot of her actions were out of desperation rather than malice, because I know it's difficult to fully understand just how insurmountable and ingrained class differences were at that time. Unfortunately, her disgusting treatment of her sister until the very end, her materialism, her scorn for everyone she viewed as being below her and her lack of gratitude for Longhorn's inheritance (all that money and she couldn't even give a tiny bit to help her sister or others down on their luck?) made it impossible to like her. Even when someone who had done much to help her was being beaten bloody, which by the way seemed extremely odd, over-reactive and out of character for Leland who had never shown so much as an ounce of violence before, all she could think about was how she looked and how all the men wanted her.

Rather than saying that Penny "got what she deserved", I prefer to think that Penny got to where she was going. Penny never would have been happy being a perfect dutiful wife to anyone - Henry, the prince, or any other man, nor do I think she ever would have been loyal to one man alone. So for her to spend the rest of her life in a surface marriage, while going through other men on the side, would have happened no matter who or when she married. And staying single or going off to Paris like Di were never options for status-hungry Penny. Di's decision to go to Paris seemed fitting, and somewhat of a relief after two books of her moping around about a guy who never deserved her in the first place, but I do wish it had been elaborated on a bit more, since it really did seem to come out of the blue.

Elizabeth's plot trajectory was actually quite creepy and horrifying, but the effect would have been much better without all the cheesy talk about angels swooping in to save her, and without the silly trope of her being possessed by Will's spirit in order to murder Snowden. Why did she have to be possessed by Will's spirit, because women aren't capable of self-defence or being strong unless they are inhabited by a masculine force? I also felt frustrated that nothing more was done to the housekeeper, who obviously knew what was going on and was essentially helping Liz's husband to drug her. Teddy rushing to her aid, was not surprising, but for them to get engaged, kiss and profess their love all on the same day that she killed her husband and before they had even spoken to her mother seemed forced and a bit unnatural, as though it was thrown in to quickly tie up loose ends so that the book could just finish already.

In fact, there were many loose ends that were not tied up, but instead left hanging rather unattractively and obviously. Lina's issues with Tristan were never really resolved. He ran away after Leland beat him, but since Lina is not with Leland anymore, what is to stop Tristan from coming back to nag her? I wanted to hear more about the Holland's family improved status - Teddy and Elizabeth just sat in the coach and never even went in to speak to her mother. I would have been interested to see Mrs. Holland's reaction to hearing of Snowden's various crimes and I wanted to hear what happened to Aunt Edith. Did Aunt Edith and Mrs Holland continue to live in the shabby old house, or did they move in with Teddy and Liz? Whatever happened to Isabelle? Did she remarry or stay a widow? What happened to Grayson and did he ever get his chance to be with Isabelle now that Di is out of the picture? Far too many characters were just brushed aside without any resolutions. *Splendor* was decidedly not a clean or well-planned ending to the tedious *Luxe* series.

Adria says

I loved The Luxe, Envy and Rumors, but this book was a huge disappointment to me. So much of the plot just seemed overdone like Elizabeth's situation with her new husband. And it seemed like no one except Lina got what they deserved. Penny got exactly what she wanted, in guessing that she really didn't want to the prince. I think she really just used him as he used her as a way to try to tell Henry she didn't need him anyway. And Henry was so cheated from the happiness he should have had because Di had a total personality change which I really didn't understand. It made no sense! How could she chase him all the way to the Caribbean to get his love, but when they can be happy and together in New York, she decides she's too tied down in New York?! And she thought she was being so selfless too! How was that selfless? Henry wanted to marry her! Of course he wouldn't be happy! Ugh Elizabeth and Teddy's ending was happy enough and predicted, although I thought it was rushed considering how it happened right after her escape. So, I was really disappointed with this. I wanted it to be a lot more than what it was.

Libby says

MAJOR SPOILERS

I have been a huge fan of the luxe series and i had to wait the longest for splendor whilst i read the others days apart. I believed the novels got better and better but i have to say splendor was an utter dissapointment. I suppose I am saying that biastedly as I was a huge fan of the romance between Dianna Holland and Henry. For me their relationship was the highlight of the books and had me finishing them in hours. I understood that Henry had to marry Penelope unwillingly as it made a good plot line but it also made them a forbidden romance. But I had high hopes for the last book as I thought the author might finally let them be happy.I was positive about the outcome towards the end as Henry was finalising the divorce ad especially when he showed up at the station. But i was left shocked and upset as the characters uncharistically said goodbye. It was unsettling as Penelope the psycho, blackmailing bitch was the one who was last to lay with Henry as he spoke the words "perhaps we deserve each other". He had been inlove with Diana for such a long time yet he let her go whilst the youngest holland daughter who was the romantic one told the love of her life he couldnt come with her when she still pined for him. Two amazing characters and a epic love tale ruined. It seriously has lessoned the whole series for me whilst I was happy about Elizabeth and Lina's ending. Sorry to sound so negative i guess I'm still recovering. Hopefully someone agrees with me.

Ms. Schneeman says

My heart is broken once again. Why do fictional characters toy with my emotions so easily?

Caroline (Words & Whispers) says

This series had been winding down since the first book ended, and this books ends where I suppose it should have. I loved The Luxe and Rumors and Envy managed to keep me hooked, but Splendor was a little too much melodramatic plot twists and forced endings. While Penny remains as evil as ever, she ends ups with what she really wanted, and Carolina, the former lowly maid Lina, who I personally was starting to forgive

and beginning to root for again, lost a lot of what she was gaining. Carolina's story wasn't tragic, but it wasn't what it should have been, in my opinion. Elizabeth, who I loved from the start, may have been a redeeming part of the conclusion to the series, and I found myself smiling at how she ended up, although the overly dramatic twists early on in the book involving her father seemed false and like empty page-filling words. Diana Holland, tsk, tsk. I've loved Diana's wild and confident spirit since book one, and she even made me laugh a few times at the beginning of Splendor, but I felt Godbersen's rushed ending left her falling short of her reputation. I felt like I'd been cheated, and Henry, faltering and picking himself up again, was cheated in my opinion too, of the ending he deserved. By the end, it seemed like Godbersen was going more for the last laugh, the surprise ending, than the real ending. I know it's just a book and all, but sometimes characters fall into a pattern that you know the ending to. This book seemed rushed and overdone on several levels.

1 star for a good first one hundred pages, and a non-recommendation. The only way I'd suggest it is if you absolutely have to know the ending. (I feel your pain. I had to know too.)

liz says

I picked up this series of books several months ago to fill my head with nonsense after Lariann died. Reading was a good distraction from the trauma of real life. I read a lot of books the months following, but these are the only ones I have decided I want in my personal collection. The Luxe, Rumors and Envy were a joy to read.

These books follow the life path of 4 young women between 1899-1900 as young New York City Socialites: Elizabeth, Diana, Penelope, and Carolina and their trials and tribulations and the rise and fall of their stars.

I fell in love with the characters and found myself rooting for them in their times of triumph and sad for them in their times of need. I was sad to discover, after reading Envy back in June that it was not in fact the last book and I had to wait until October to read Splendor. I pre-ordered the novel several months ago and have just been waiting and waiting for it to arrive.

I received Splendor in the mail on Tuesday afternoon and finished this book at 12:38 am this morning. As a whole, it took me less the 7 hours total to get through. It has been a while since I have been so involved in a book that I haven't been able to put it down. I am horribly tired today and can hardly keep my eyes open, but I made the choice to stay up and now I'll pay for it. Was staying up that late to read worth it? Probably not, but I enjoyed myself.

All of the Luxe books have been incredibly addicting and I found myself truly caring about Elizabeth, Diana, Henry, Teddy and the rest of the cast again. I found myself cheering out-loud at one point and nearly heart-breakingly sad at another. Most of the time I was reading this I had a cheesy grin upon my face because I was so immersed in the lives of the characters.

I loved LOVED the fact that not everyone got their happy endings. Books like that really get on my nerves sometimes, but this one wrapped up nicely. This book was a good ending to the series - everyone pretty much got what they deserved.

Now I find myself wanting more. I want to learn about the lives that were changed by the choices and decisions that were made, I want to know more about Teddy and oddly enough, I want to know more about Aunt Edith. I want the back story to how Elizabeth's father knew. I want more of these characters.

This is a book that would probably transition well into movie format, and I'm sure that they would be so much better than the Twilight movies, heck, you could probably cover all 4 books in a 2 hour movie. How about someone makes Luxe instead of wasting time turning The Host in to a movie.

Devon says

*****SPOILERS*****

Hey, I have to say that the first three books in this series were to die for. I mean, I read them over the course of a week- Christmas week to be exact. I mean, I went out of my way to find each book and bought the last two (rare, for me) because I couldn't wait for the library to get them to me.

But this one was good too, well- up to the last few chapters. Teddy and Diana were a couple that I very much related to, and I thought that it was downright shoddy of the author to compromise their relationship. They were both already jumping through hoops, working for their love. And after the last few pages I felt so depressed and annoyed that I wished I had never read the books at all. They deserved that reward in the end, as did the reader.

I never liked Carolina, and I knew that she had to get what was coming to her eventually. I mean, she gets rich and lets her sister continue to live in poverty! And she never gets her comeuppance for destroying Di and Henry's chance at love. But by the end, the character had shown herself and her emotions so strongly that I broke along with her when she lost her chance at love for omitting the truth. I mean, she's still practically a child. This reality was harsh indeed. And as for the object of her attraction, (his name escapes me) If he really did love her then he would get over it eventually.

Teddy and Elizabeth were a go. It was brilliant of the author to mask Snowden's evil without any foreshadowing. It definitely threw me for a heart beating, breathy loop.

Penelope got what she asked for... She really believed herself invincible. Too crafty for anything to one up her.

One thing I hated about these books though, was that the characters were constantly struggling to get to an end, and for most it was never really met. There was a lot of buildup and even empty promises to the reader from the characters. The characters would constantly do things that were against the very grain of their being because the author decided that it would be a good idea to install some morals and lessons in the book.

However, if the books were judged as one, and the last two chapters of Splendor didn't exist, then I would give this saga 93% That's an A.

Einna says

I thought the endings for each and every one of the major characters were absolutely perfect. The main issue for a lot of people unsatisfied with what happened is that Henry and Diana didn't end up together. People said since they fought so hard to be together, it was completely out of character for them to

break up. I, however, think it was completely realistic. The fact is that BECAUSE Diana went after Henry half way across the world, she came to have the desire for the kind of freedom that New York couldn't give her, and that desire rightfully became what was most important to her. Same with Henry- during his time away "at war" and then with his father's death, he gained a sense of responsibility that also became more important to him than Diana. Not to mention, the couple was always very spontaneous. The manner in which they left each other, with Diana just suddenly deciding to board the ship by herself, couldn't have been more in character. Anyway the truth is that in real life, these types of endings exist. I for one would have been extremely disappointed if the author just gave everyone an unrealistic, typical happy ending.

Angela says

I'm kind of shocked that I'm giving this book one star, since I have been in love with the series thus far. Ann Godbersen's writing is as beautiful and captivating as ever in SPLENDOR and some very satisfying things do happen in it, but the ending was so disappointing that I felt as if I'd wasted my time getting attached to her characters. Here are the things about the way this book ended that bothered me.

1. The Snowden/Elizabeth plot line didn't feel completely developed. I wanted details about the Holland father's death and how, exactly things happened before with Will dying in the train station. Yes, I know it's cliché to have villains go on about themselves before they die, but in the case of Snowden, I would have appreciated such a speech, just so I could better understand where he came from. As things were, that particular plotline seemed rushed and the romance between Cutting and Elizabeth similarly seemed rushed.
2. While I liked that all of Lina's lying and bitterness finally caught up to her, I thought it very unforgiving of Ms. Godbersen to have Leland refuse to forgive her in the end. Even though Lina's bitterness and sense of entitlement made her an unlikable character, I found I somewhat understood her and didn't hate her the way I did Penelope. She seemed to have learned from her mistakes in the end and I'm kind of sad Leland didn't come back to her after a while.
3. And this is what killed it for me. The way Ms. Godbersen ended the Diana/Henry storyline. All through the third book Diana and Henry can't live without each other . . . they're unable to move on . . . they're miserable. Every time Diana thinks about Henry she feels as if someone has stabbed her in the heart and is twisting the knife. She follows him to Cuba because she loves him so, and while Henry has been a cad, and drinks a lot, and has no backbone. He's a likable cad in that he always has good intentions.

I loved how Godbersen made him change in the end so that he was responsible and came into his own. It made him even more likable that he knew what he wanted and had a backbone. Then, all of a sudden, for no apparent reason whatsoever, Godbersen gives Diana a personality transplant. At least, that's how it read to me. Now that Henry is so respectable and because Diana feels so tied down by New York society, she will go to Paris without Henry. She will break it off with him so she can pursue her own life. Because she doesn't want Henry to sacrifice his life in New York by coming to Paris with her. I suppose, us readers are supposed to see that as a loving gesture, but the long and short of it is that Henry would have rather gone to Paris not to lose Diana than stay in New York with his responsibilities. It didn't read as loving to me even one bit, because Diana made the decision for him. She wouldn't accept him making any sort of sacrifice for her because she was no longer willing to make a sacrifice for him.

Granted, I know all people are selfish, even those of us who refuse to admit it. But I found Diana's behavior at the end of the book so profoundly selfish that I screamed at my poor husband after I finished it. There goes

Diana, adventurous, romantic Diana, off to Paris on a boat without Henry. She's happy and I'm supposed to be happy for her because she only has loving sentimental feelings in her heart for Henry.

But Henry is sitting at home in his mansion in New York, depressed and devastated, nursing his broken heart after proposing to a woman who said she loved him, who would gladly be his mistress, but refuses to marry him? What the #\$\$%&! Apparently Diana can live without Henry just fine and it doesn't feel like a knife in her heart after all. Or perhaps she's just the kind of girl who only wants what she can't have and must always pursue the unpursuable without any care for how her actions affect those around her.

Worst ending ever.

Anne Osterlund says

Everyone in Splendor is searching.

Diana in Cuba. Henry in the military. Elizabeth in the marriage she chose over abortion. Carolina who has bought her own mansion-next-door to the man she hopes will fulfill her wildest dreams. And Penelope. In the entirely foreign position of New York's DISAPPROVAL.

The ultimate lesson in the ultimate epic of Ana Godbersen's Luxe series is this. There is one person you can never escape from.

Yourself.

As EVERYONE has to learn. Eventually.

I think this was my favorite novel of the series. Not because of any character in particular. (I still find myself completely baffled by how many of them I despise). And yet, in another typically ironic twist, what I liked the most about Splendor was how all the characters stayed true to themselves. LOL!

Tracy Hope says

*****Splendor (Luxe book 4) SPOILERS*****

I just finished reading Splendor and I have to say I loved it for the majority of the book & then I felt soooooo disappointed at the end. Did anyone else feel that way? I mean, what is the point of everything Diana & Henry went through to be together for them to not be together in the end? The ending just left me saying What????

I am a sucker for happy endings & the ending just does not sit well with me. I am happy that Teddy & Elizabeth lived happily ever after & I felt Penelope got her just desserts from the Prince of Bavaria. I actually felt a little bad for Lina when everything came out right before the wedding. She had actually started to grow on me even despite her previous sins, although I do think Leland deserved to know the truth. I thought maybe he would forgive her. I am glad that Claire was able to have a better life in the end. I just wish Henry

& Diana had somehow managed to marry & then relocate to Paris together at some later date. Honestly, Henry had a lot of business he needed to wrap up. I am upset that Diana couldn't give him more time. Knowing that Henry & Penelope lived their lives together in a loveless marriage for the rest of their lives makes me ill. I wouldn't care about Penelope, but Henry really became a wonderful man through the course of the books & he deserved a better ending than that!!!!

I'd So Rather Be Reading {Nat} says

This was a great conclusion to a fantastic series. I am totally satisfied with the resolution of Elizabeth, Lina, Claire, Teddy, and Snowden's stories. The ending of Diana and Henry's stories, as well as Penelope's to some extent, left me so, so disappointed. It's been two days since I finished Splendor and I can't shake the sense of melancholy that settled on me after finishing it, all due to the bittersweet ending for Diana. It didn't make me not like the series, but I think I would have liked it even more had Diana's story ended differently.

Fans of romance, historical fiction, and fans of YA in general will enjoy the Luxe series. I highly recommend it!

Just One Gripe:

Godbersen uses several of the same phrases multiple times in Splendor. "Bee-stung lips," "a hat of magical significance," calling Central Park "verdant," these are the main offenders that spring to mind. This is a small gripe, but it was obvious enough for me to notice.

The Best Thing About This Book:

The poetic justice that befalls the "bad guys." I love it!

Appropriate for a younger audience:

Yes

Score:

Characters: 5/5

Plot: 5/5

Setting/Imagery: 5/5

Originality: 5/5

Ending: 3/5

Total Score: 23/25; 4.5 stars
