



## Scandalous

*Jenna Petersen*

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Katherine Fleming has lived her life without even a hint of indiscretion. So she is devastated to discover the nobleman she's engaged to has a secret he's kept from her: a wife! Suddenly Katherine's enmeshed in a scandal that has the ton buzzing—and forced to accept a most unconventional proposal from the notorious seducer Dominic Mallory, her faithless fiancé's brother... and precisely the sort of rake she has sworn to avoid!

Charming and dangerously sensual, Dominic has desired the stunning beauty from the first moment he spied her. Now, with Katherine's reputation in tatters, it's the ideal opportunity to bed her—though it will take wedding vows to do so. But can a rogue be reformed by the unleashed passion of a normally reserved lady? And can a marriage made for all the wrong reasons flame into the love match of the season?

## Scandalous Details

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Author : Jenna Petersen

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## From Reader Review Scandalous for online ebook

### Sharon Sherman says

I just finished reading this book and loved it. I plan to read more of her books when I can find them.

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### Desiree M ~\*~\*~ LiveReadCollect says

3.75 stars.

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### Sarah says

Kathrine and Dominic are thrown together in marriage under the pressure of scandal. Though the scandal(s) that brought them together was not a shared scandal. Kathrine has just found out that her betrothed's wife is still alive mere days before her wedding. Though Kat and seemingly her betrothed had no idea the fall from society would have been one that she would have never recovered.

On the other hand Dominic may be a Mallory by name, but his illegitimate birth from his mothers affair has haunted him since child hood. In a act of desperation Dominic strikes a deal with his brother, Kat's former betrothed, to marry Kat in exchange for a family property and handing over what was Kat's dowry.

Both Kat and Dominic have commitment issues. While Kat works to get Dominic to open up and help him she also does her best to keep him at arm's length in-spite of her growing feelings towards him. Dominic, on the other hand is desperately searching for a clue to who his real father might be add on his being ashamed not only of his past but also the deal that he struck with his brother. He worries that if he come's clean that Kat will leave him.

I really had to feel for Kat when all the secrets surrounding her marriage came out, especially when everyone but her was privy to said information. Add on her own past it's no wonder that she has trust issues. I did LOVE the ending and I wont spoil it was Very sweet!

4.5 stars!

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### Sandra R says

Loved it !

4 Stars

I was interested to read this as it was the author's first novel and I have already read several of her other later works written under the name of Jess Michaels and enjoyed them. Plus I needed to read it to find out why the

one star reviewers hated it so much.

It started a bit hesitantly, but once she got going with the story the book really improved and I loved the second half and the ending. The writing style was good - in fact lots better than heaps of other books I have read lately.

I have read almost 600 romances (both contemporary and historical) on my Kobo (and in print) in the last 18 months - and yes, I do work part time as well, so I have many other books to compare it with.

These type of books are meant to be a fantasy and with feel good moments and unbelievable plots - they are romances after all and are there to entertain us and transport us away from reality for a few hours.

I look forward to reading more from Jenna Petersen.

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### **ChloeLeeNH says**

I would have probably given this a 3 1/2. But it wasn't bad. It was the debut of the author. First I have read. There was a lot of sex at the beginning... enough to make you wonder where the substance was. I think the conflict between the h/h could have been quickly resolved but that wouldn't make a novel right!? I did like the relationship of the brother and hero. It was very understandable why there was such dislike.

I will definitely try her novels again.

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### **Carrie Olguin says**

DNF. Stopped at chapter six.

The story did not keep my attention. Hero is the black sheep of the family. He returns home during his brother's betrothal ball to ask again to purchase a piece of family property he wants for some mysterious reason. There is something there that has to do with his origins. His mother is still alive, so why he needs the property instead of asking her questions is beyond me.

The entire family knows that he is not their father's child (they call him a bastard, but that is an untruth. Technically, he's a coo-coo, not a bastard. His mother was married at the time of his birth. He can inherit property. He is not a bastard. Ugh!! But I digress.

Hero sees the heroine on the terrace and even though he is certain she is a virgin, he tries seducing her. Before it goes too far, they are interrupted (not seen by anyone) and he finds out the woman is betrothed to his older brother.

Aside: I'm getting to hate the instant attraction thing in romance novels. These speak a few words to each other and are suddenly panting and groping in the dark. They don't even know each other's names for heaven's sake!!!!

The older brother (widowed for three years) is ready to toast his coming wedding when a messenger rushes

in to tell him that his first wife is very much alive and will return to the estate in a couple of days.

To avoid scandal (yeah, like a wife coming back from the dead after three years won't be talked about), the older brother convinces the hero to marry the heroine, to protect her from ruination that the breaking scandal will cause.

They all seem to think no one will want to marry her if people find out she had to step aside because a wife returned from the dead. Yeah, but she is a wealthy heiress!! Have money; get husband.

The brother turns out to be a snake. He knew his wife wasn't dead and he manipulated the heroine into a betrothal because he needs her money and property (he seems to have a gambling problem). In exchange for handing over all of her money, property and inheritance, the hero will gain the title to the property he so desperately wants. The hero agrees without much of an argument. He has money of his own and really wants the property (that his brother will not sell to him at any price. Yeah, seems they hate each other.)

Neither of them plan to tell the heroine that she's being used by the family and by her guardians, for her money. She's been thoroughly duped by them all.

Oh, yeah. Seems the brother's wife had slipped into the hero's bed. He kissed her, but nothing more. And was caught kissing by his older brother. The wife and elder brother are a perfect match - and more interesting characters than the hero and heroine.

The hero plans to "guard his heart." The way he describes his intimate female relationships, where does he even get the idea he has a heart to guard? Whenever a mistress asks for more than the physical, he pays her off and finds another.

Okay, on to the heroine. She's twenty. She selected the hero's brother as a husband because she doesn't want to marry a man she could possibly fall passionately in love with. Guess her mother loved her father, but the feelings were not returned. Her father used her mother's love to manipulate. So the heroine decides passion and love are not for her.

Do writers even know what love is anymore????

So, I got tired of the heroine's internal thinking, why she had to keep her emotional distance from the hero (doesn't even want to like him, or get to know him, or to become friends with him. And where does she get the idea that lust is love? How does she think she can be a wife and NOT feel some type of affection? WTF!!!)

The wedding night is "recipe sex."(I explained recipe sex in another review).

Best guess as to why I lost interest: the internal dialogue of both characters hammered on the same theme for seven chapters, even after the wedding night. One would think they would be planning the rest of their lives, not obsessing about the feelings that they DON'T have for each other.

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**Aspoon says**

Out of all the books I've read Katherine and Dominic are my favorite characters. This was a wonderful

read...emotional, suspense, sexy and heartfelt. At this moment I would read any book by Jenna Petersen.

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### **Lynn says**

A really good book...loved the heroine...Katherine was a really good character and she suffered all the angst at once during the book and OMG you had to feel for her as each betrayal and lie was all unloaded..Dominic was a rakish hero with ALOT of issues and you wanted the HEA for them.

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### **Elle says**

Once again, Petersen does a brilliant job of developing readers' emotional connection with the main characters. I only wanted to see the heroine stand up for herself a bit more. She was essentially robbed by the two men who were supposed to be protecting her, and while it's implied that this is OK since she married rich, I still wanted to see her husband make some effort to restore her dowry and heritance. Still, I liked the story a lot and I'm hooked on the author.

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### **Mary23nm says**

[Not much 'historical' in this Historical Romance. I had a hard time figuring out where and when the story was taking place. After awhile, you do find out it takes place in London, but there is nothing in the character's speech or any kind of atmosphere building that would indicate that. As for the 'when', you might guess the 1800's, with the mention of mistresses, bastards and a dowry and the clothing on the cover. Other than that, the basic premise was good, but there was not eno

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### **Bekah says**

I enjoyed this book. After reading all other kinds of genres this month, it was really nice to get back to my first love: historical romance. I liked the love story, it flowed naturally I felt. I really enjoyed reading about Dominic's search for his father. It was really heartbreaking at times. I also felt like the author really expressed the feelings Dominic had with his family really well. I really felt the effects of their cruelty on Dominic, more so than other authors have been able to do for me. At the end there were some really really really sappy sweet moments, I mean that's why we read romance, but I sorta winced they were so sappy! :-)  
All in all a nice sweet read. I'm interested to see what the next book I have by her will be like.

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### **Susan says**

So happy to recently discover this one by Jenna Petersen (aka Jess Michaels) when I thought I had read all of her books. Awesome love story. I so enjoyed Dominic and Katherine. Highly recommend! ❤?

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### **Regina says**

There's very good story telling in this debut tale, which includes high emotions, passionate interludes, and characters that you love and hate. Both Dominic and Katherine have painful and traumatic childhoods though my heart ached more for him. I never understood how a heroine could be passed off from one fiance to another to save a family from scandal, and this rarely sits well with me. But it's wonderful to see the growing love between Kat and Dom and the resulting outcome with his brother, sister-in-law, and mother. 3.8 stars.

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### **Alycia says**

Great book, review to come once my stupid computer is fixed!

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### **Tammy Walton Grant says**

I feel a rant coming on. Or at the very least, a decidedly cranky review, and I'm going to call it "The Perils of Reading an Entire Backlist".

For some reason I decided that the best way to try a new author was to read the very first book she got published. I am here to tell you this is sometimes a very bad idea.

Jenna Petersen also writes under the name Jess Michaels. JM writes erotic romances. I read one last month (Everything Forbidden) and was amazed at how much I liked it. So, I thought, why not check out her Jenna Petersen books -- they are regular historical romances, they should be pretty good, right? Hmm.

I should try to be nice, as this was her first novel.

This silly book is about Katherine, who is engaged to a stuffed shirt named Cole or Colden or something. She has some tragic family background and is marrying him for companionship, as she has decided never to fall in love (overused trope #1 and #2). Dominic, black sheep bastard of the family (stereotype #3) in the throes of a serious identity crisis spies her on the balcony at a party and is instantly smitten (cliche #4).

The story begins as Katherine and Colden are having a party to announce their engagement. A message is given to Colden that cancels the announcement -- his wife, thought dead in a shipwreck, might be alive!!!! Dun dun DUN! And Dominic, the bastard brother, shows up demanding that Colden turn over the keys to Lansing Square (their mother's house) to him. Colden, a complete dick under the Milton Milquetoast exterior, immediately hatches a plan. To save Katherine from ruination after news of her now -broken engagement gets out, and to hide the fact that he has already transferred title to her holdings and spent all of her dowry AND paid off her guardians (holy heck, that's a whole lotta subterfuge!), and finally, to keep his illegitimate half-brother under his control, he tells Dominic that he can have Lansing Square if he marries Katherine. Excellent deal! thinks Dominic, and agrees immediately. Katherine is harder to persuade, but by the time I was 20% done the ebook they were married.

Now, further complicating matters is the ridiculous way Katherine approaches her relationship with Dominic. Oh, how it peeved me! First she is overcome with his appearance, her knees threaten to buckle shortly after meeting him. Then after they get married she is panting hot and heavy after him, but has decided that she can never love, or show him that she loves him (another overused plot device, and one that I can't stand!). So she is a seductress by night, and an idiot by day. The only thing missing was her sobbing after their glorious lovemaking (hey, I've read Shirlee Busbee and Kathleen Woodiwiss, I know how this works). We are also subjected to lots of words dedicated to her thought processes:

"Yet somehow, when he looked into her eyes, when he pressed his lips to hers, she forgot her doubts.

That was why she couldn't trust him. She could never forget herself with him.

Not if she wanted happiness. Not if she ever wanted peace."

By now he has christened her with the nickname Kat and is falling in love with her more every second. And why not, she's a temptress in the bedroom, a flirt in the dining room, she talks and laughs and makes him feel wonderful. She listens to him, draws him out and all the while she keeps herself completely detached. Understandable, I guess, given her "tragic history" (which she will not tell him not matter how many times he asks), but it made her completely unsympathetic.

This star-crossed couple has other problems as well. She wants to redecorate the house, he says they're not staying. The servants are afraid of him, he won't reassure them that they won't lose their jobs. She resorts to asking his best friend Adrian what's going on with him, while at the same time Adrian is talking to Dominic about whether or not he loves Katherine.

By this point in the book I'm starting to feel like I've read this before at least 100 times -- it's like the author took every goofy historical romance novel cliche, hackneyed plot device and cardboard character stereotype, threw them all into a hat and was drawing them out one by one. Except for the dead wife showing up, that was a new one for me. And what a bitch she was. More on that later.

There was the obligatory secondary romance between the Hero's spinster sister and his best friend, which was then ruined by some completely OTT remarks made by the Hero after he sees them together and freaks out: "If you cannot control yourself with my sister, I will ask you to leave. I won't have you taking advantage of her advanced years and loneliness to amuse yourself." This coming from a character who was, up to this point, charming, reasonable, and imminently likeable.

Eventually, we find out that the reason Dominic wanted the house was so that he could search for evidence of who his real father was, that Colden was a complete and utter douchebag, his wife really was alive - Colden had sent her to France so she could fuck around without being caught, then he quit sending her \$\$ and she heard he was planning to remarry. Up she popped, just a like a bad penny. They all descend on Lansing Square and the inevitable confrontation in the library occurs (another over-used device, this would be about #10, I can't keep up!). During this confrontation, the evil brother reveals Dominic's role in the plot to marry Katherine off and reveals that he is indeed born on the wrong side of the blanket, Dominic then rats out his brother about having sold Katherine's house and used her money, the evil not-dead wife throws in that Dominic and she almost had an affair years ago, Katherine finds out that her guardians were given a bonus to sell her off to Colden, and as the final straw she discovers that her good friend, Dominic's spinster sister Julia, knew all of that dirt and didn't tell her.

Oh, the perfidy!!!!

As if that wasn't enough, Dominic is still searching the attics every day to find out who his father is. Katherine, displaying lots of behaviour that looks like love, offers to go with him to talk to his mother. They go, she still won't tell Dominic anything about his father, and Dominic finally realizes that her denials have freed him -- that Katherine is his family now.

Of course, at the same time Katherine has realized that she is pregnant, and in her self-absorbed, bitchy way decided that she won't tell him about the baby because she won't have her child grow up in a home without love. OH FOR FUCK'S SAKE!!! She also then conveniently finds letters hidden in an old piano that say who Dominic's father is. She decides that the best thing for Dominic is for her to sneak away before he reads the letters, so she can leave him alone just when he needs her most. That clinched it for me -- "what a bitch you are," I thought. She so didn't deserve him.

Dominic's sister rats her out as soon as he comes home and off he goes to find her. In the meantime, Katherine has gotten as far as the inn where they spent their wedding night, and in a touching little scene with the innkeeper's wife, she is told: "Honey, if you love the man, you must find a way together. Don't throw love away over some foolishness". Of course, having heard these sage words she realizes that she does indeed love Dominic, who then conveniently shows up banging on the door to get to Katherine. Cue the big, big eyeroll.

Then there's a whole bunch of dialogue that doesn't make any sense -- they say one thing then do another, everything is resolved with a simple "I love you" from each of them. None of this rings true for me and I hate Katherine by this point. Oh yeah, and she FINALLY spills her terrible tragic family history -- her father was huge jerk who cheated on her mother constantly. Her mother still loved him and put up with all of his crap, then there was a coach-crash and they were killed. Dominic wins with his story - parents unhappily married, brother a complete asshole, mother gets drunk one night and tells him his daddy ain't his daddy but won't say any more other than she can't stand to look at him. Dominic starts asking everyone who his father is, pretend daddy and asshole brother treat him very, very badly.

Of course, Dominic and Katherine go to see his father, who is, wait for it....on his deathbed!!! There is a joyful/tearful reunion and we cut to the epilogue, where Dominic and Katherine and that baby she wasn't going to tell him about are with his spinster sister and her new husband and all of Dominic's new half-brothers and sisters and he has just gotten a note from his mother extending a peace offering.

How many cliches and tired tropes is that? Too many for me to keep counting all the way through.

That's my biggest complaint about the book. There are some glimpses of the great writing I saw in Everything Forbidden, but I'm thinking it took her a few books to get there. Oh, and the characters -- fairly two-dimensional, and they seemed to think one way and act another.

So if you've read Jess Michaels and loved her, DON'T READ THIS BOOK. You'll hate it.

If, on the other hand, you're looking for a forgettable romance with lots of sex, cardboard characters and a story jam-packed with cliches and standard plot devices, you could do worse than this one.

1 star - mostly because I detested the heroine.

Original comment July 5/11: Gonna have to start a "this sucked" shelf. I can't believe I read the whole f\*&\*ing thing.

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