



Lions and Lace

Meagan McKinney

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The gaslight's glow lit Alana Van Alen's golden hair. Born to luxury, she belonged with the Astors and the Vanderbilts at cotillions and soirees. But she shivered with fear and something more as she faced the handsome, ruthless Trevor Sheridan. He had bankrupted her fortune and would expose her family's scandalous secret unless she accepted his outrageous offer, his emotional blackmail ... his heart-stopping kiss.

HE BROKE THEM ALL

Born Irish, brought up in the streets, Trevor "the Predator" Sheridan learned early how to get the wealth and the women he wanted. An expert at games of power, he played one that would destroy every famous family who had snubbed him. Tricking the beautiful Alana was his trump card. But he never intended to want her ... until her beauty and her resolve stole his breath away.

NOW THEIR DESIRES SWEPT THEM TOWARD RAPTURE ... OR RUIN

Lions and Lace Details

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From Reader Review Lions and Lace for online ebook

Dee says

I finished this book in about a day. It was a good read but I had to give it 3 stars because...

- 1) Trevor and Alana didn't get along for pretty much the entire book which was frustrating.
- 2) I wanted Didier to suffer (maybe in the next book about Christal, he will?)
- 3) After the hero and heroine argued for pretty much the entire book, the payoff just wasn't big enough at the end. I didn't consider the note and the little declaration Trevor made to Alana to be sufficient.

I did like this book, but it could have been better.

Jenny says

I loved this story. What an insecure and vulnerable hero. Trevor is a true alpha male. He loves his wife but he feels inferior to her. I liked how he was both physically and emotionally crippled. Alana on the other hand belongs to the high society. She can't help falling in love with her brooding husband. I love a good marriage of convenience story. The angst broke my heart. Great characters and great plot. What a romance! Cute epilogue with pregnant heroine. Wish it was more steamy.

Summer says

Lions and Lace is a dark and emotional romance novel. It has it all.. innocence, betrayal, love, confusion and lust. Trevor Sheridan, the Hero is a dark brooding and unforgivable character bent upon seeking revenge for his sister Mara. Nothing and no-one will stand in his way. When he meets the New York socialite Alana Van Alen, he blackmails her and uses her to take revenge on the Knickerbockers of the NY elite. Alana is a sweet and vulnerable character and the way Trevor uses her is difficult and emotional to read. You find yourself rooting for Alana and wishing closure on the pain. However it is through their hurt and mutual pain that they grow closer together and Alana falls in love with Trevor. On the other hand Trevor is the last to admit his feeling for Alana which is really frustrating.

This book is an emotional roller coaster and not a light hearted sweet romance. For me the 'sizzle-factor' between the two was missing and that's mainly because Trevor is a really cold character. However Meagan McKinney is such an accomplished author that she did a great job portraying all.. innocence, betrayal, love, confusion and lust.

Ivy H says

This was my first foray into a Knickerbocker historical romance. It was fabulous ! I LOVE Trevor Sheridan. He is awesome ! He is so sexy that even his slight limp makes him more attractive in a weird way. His personality (not his looks !) sort of reminds me of Victor Newman from The Young & The Restless but he is not a horn dog man whore. Trevor's the ultimate alpha male business tycoon romantic hero. I love how he

is proud of his Irish heritage and doesn't care a F about the snobbish bitches like Mrs. Astor but understands that his little teenage sister Mara wants their acceptance. That's a hard pill for a proud man like Trevor to swallow but he loves his sister and will do whatever he can to make her happy. He decides to hold a coming out ball for Mara and invites all the members of the New York Knickerbocker society. The heroine Alana is the only one who was dressed and going to attend until her evil uncle locks her in her room. Nobody turns up to the ball and poor Mara is destroyed. It was so sad.

Trevor decides to use his financial acumen to destroy as many of the invitees who failed to attend. The heroine loses all her money because she's one of them. The story then moves to a marriage of convenience between Trevor and Alana, because it will be the one way to ensure Mara's acceptance into the society. Trevor was at first very cold and uncaring to Alana but as time went by he soon grew to care for her a lot. They had such great chemistry once they started getting to know each other. Alana was the perfect lady and the ideal counterpart for a man like Trevor. They're perfect for each other. The side story line about her sister was developed into the second novel in this series.

The best comeuppance that Mrs. Astor and the Knickerbocker's get for their treatment of Mara happens when a visiting English duke proposes marriage to Mara. That was great ! There was also the side story line between Trevor's rakish younger brother who saves a new migrant Irish maid that's pregnant. I enjoyed seeing all three Sheridan siblings find true love and from what I can remember in the next novel in the series, Trevor and Alana end up having 2 sons.

This novel was just as good the second time around. Definitely a perfect re-read !

KatieV says

Do you like those Harlequin Presents novels with the fabulously wealthy, older hero who is out to avenge a wrong done to his sister and happens to blackmail the innocent heroine into marriage as part of his revenge plot? Well, you'll love this. This is all that and more. Plus it is set in an interesting historical setting (late 1800's New York) and with much more depth and emotion than can be achieved in a ~200 page Hqn.

The H's poor sister, Mara. I cried for her. I can imagine what it would be like to be 16 and crushed the way she was by snooty NY society. Her brother setup an elaborate coming out ball for her and she was so excited and adorable. But, NO ONE showed because they were Irish. I was feeling angry and vengeful too. If someone hurt one of my nieces in that way, I'd be out for blood. That scene was so sad.

Of course, the H picks the one woman who actually was going to attend the ball to take his vengeance out on. Actually he financially ruins all the families who didn't attend, but he forces Alana to marry him because he thinks she'll give him enough social acceptance to secure a good marriage for Mara. And he was right. This was one shallow society with nothing better to do than care about people's "pedigree". Alana tried to tell him she was going to attend the ball if it weren't for her evil uncle locking her up to keep her from causing a scandal. He didn't believe her, because in his own way he was as big a snob as the Knickerbockers. The guy had a HUGE chip on his shoulder and he was so frustrating at times always saying the worst thing at the worst possible moment. Part of me would like to remove 1/2 a star for his drawn out BS at the end. But, hey, nothing is perfect and this was a great angsty read with a great heroine who was strong, sensible, and not TSTL.

Very much recommended.

Nenia ? Queen of Literary Trash, Protector of Out-of-Print Gems, Khaleesi of Bodice Rippers, Mother of Smut, the Unrepentant, Breaker of Convention ? Campbell says

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This was an **unholy** amount of fun. Not only is the hero a sexy, icy, bad-ass father-mucker with an Irish accent that will make your pants burst into flame, the plot is filled with enough angst and drama to make a *shoujo* anime burst into hysterical tears. I tore through this in the span of two days, and when I wasn't reading it, I was actively thinking about it, wondering, *needing*, to know what happened next.

Set in New York during the gilded age, *LIONS AND LACE* is about the "romance" between two very different people. Trevor Sheridan is basically the 19th century "Wolf of Wall Street," only people call him "The Predator." He grew up destitute and through a series of events that basically personify the Horatio Alger myth, he became as rich as Croesus with a gold-studded chip on his shoulder big enough - and heavy enough - to crush all of New York's high society. Which it *does*, because despite their wealth, the very fact of their being Irish closes all the doors to them. It's only when the rich snobs go after his sixteen-year-old sister, by pointedly snubbing her debut, that he decides to get revenge with terrifying ruthlessness.

Alana Van Alen is a part of this wealthy set, and while privileged AF, tragedy has tempered some of her aspirations. She's the only member of the society that actually intended to go to Mara Sheridan's debut ball, but her abusive uncle beats her and then locks her in her room so she can't. When Trevor ruins Alana, her uncle, and all of their friends, her uncle binds her and leaves her trussed up like a roast on Trevor's doorstep, leaving her at his mercy. Obviously, Trevor doesn't believe her when she insists that she, unlike everyone else, meant his sister no harm, and he decides to punish her by blackmailing her into marriage. Using her name and her status, he'll be granted the acceptance of the society that previously refused him and his sister, and Alana won't be free of him until Mara is wed.

It's like Meagan McKinney had a crystal ball to see inside my head and pull out all of my favorite tropes. I love angst, emotional melodrama when it's done well. There was a summer about seven years ago where I binged through the entire *Hana Yori Dango* series; reading *LIONS AND LACE* left me with a similar emotional hangover. Enemies-to-lovers, forced marriage, dark and tragic histories, elitist snobs, icy and cruel heroes, cheeky heroines, hate-fueled bedroom romps, groveling hero - oh yes, this was a nonstop party of smutty, glorious trash, and everyone was dressed to the nines. The writing is also excellent and reminded me a lot of Laura Kinsale's, so if you enjoy her work - particularly *SHADOWHEART* or *UNCERTAIN MAGIC* - I think you will enjoy Meagan McKinney's style, as well. The secondary and tertiary romances are also super cute and provide some much-needed comic relief amid the agonizingly torturous suffering of the main couple.

I could sit here and yammer at you about how much I loved this book, but it's probably better that you read it yourself instead of me browbeating you into doing it (although I will do so, gladly). My only qualm is that the sequel is far too much money (\$6.99 for an ebook?? Noooo, whyyy?) and there are still way too many loose ends left hanging. A certain someone is in desperate need of punishment, and I won't be satisfied until I see them fall. *eyes gleam with blood-lust* Until then, I'll just sit here, nursing this emotional angstover while trying not to fall into Book Slumplandia.

4.5 stars

MBR says

My search for romances that feature ruthless heroes is an endless one. A time consuming one at that too. Some might call these heroes the uber alpha heroes. Or some just call them anti-heroes; you love them and hate them in equal doses. And some call them gamma heroes too because they go beyond the boundaries that define who an alpha hero is.

Authors of today who write such heroes have become far and few in between. Anne Stuart is my go to author for such heroes. Sandra Brown and Linda Howard are authors who have pushed that boundary time and yet again in some of their novels. For the most part, these type of heroes aren't well received by almost half of the romance reading population today. With the change of times, with the feminist movement rising above, readers no longer like the heroes who are tad on the wild side, those who don't conform to their definition of what a hero should constitute of and if you ask me, its such a damn shame.

So a whole lot of boredom and a whole lot of internet searches later, I came across a website that had a list of books that features ruthless heroes. Now mind you, some readers define a hero as ruthless a tad differently to how I tend to define them. Luckily, this reader tended to veer towards my tastes and alas, I found myself with a couple of books I haven't already read, that feature the heroes of the variety that I deem as ruthless but those with just that hint of redeemable quality that makes me fall like a ton of bricks for them every single time.

Lions and Lace features such a hero. Trevor Byrne Sheridan, the Wall Street wonder who rose to the top with basically nothing to his name, is Irish, and persona non grata where society is concerned. A chip on his shoulder a mountain wide, Trevor remembers the slights, the mockery and the laughter behind his back though he is equally revered by the men for the power and wealth he amasses day in and day out. The tipping point comes when society refuses to turn up at his younger sister Mara's debut. People say that hell hath no fury like a woman scorned, well let me tell you, they haven't had their dose of Trevor just yet.

Alice Diana Van Alen lives under the thumb of her uncle, her finances tied up under his name after the tragic death of her parents. Alice holds the secret of her younger sister close to her heart, a secret she is determined to carry to her grave. Alice lands under Trevor's radar as one from the society who slighted his sister. His vengeance on her is swift, the revenge he takes on her forcing her hand into marrying him one that should have brought satisfaction to his heart. However, Trevor becomes a victim to his own plan, falling for a woman of the society, something he scorns with his very being.

Lions and Lace is a novel that provides a ton of angst. Trevor is ruthless in his revenge and seemingly

doesn't care much about the pain he causes along the way. I think the fact that the author didn't provide much in the story from Trevor's point of view seemed to double the angst factor which I absolutely loved. Instead, the reader has to look for clues of his torment from his actions, the way his facial expressions tended to change and of course the volatile desire that courses through Trevor whenever his wife comes into the picture. He hates the very thing that his wife represents, his bitterness about his past refusing to let him move beyond that and see his wife for who she really is, and yet he can't help but want to possess her for himself in every single way.

Alice turned out to be a heroine who got on my nerves in the first half of the story and later on redeemed herself through her actions. From the firm grip Alice seemed to have on her emotions and what she wanted for her life, I thought that Alice would prove to be a worthy opponent where Trevor was concerned. But every time Trevor said something cruel, all Alice could seem to do was wring her hands in despair and run off crying. I wanted her to buck up and deal, to make Trevor realize the error of his ways and practically storm through his heart leaving nothing to chance. And eventually, Alice does get there and that is where I decided to forgive her and consider her worthy of the fall that Trevor would take from his pedestal.

There was a thread of a secondary romance inserted in the story, in the middle of nowhere I would have to say, and I didn't overly care much for it. I wanted Trevor and Alice's relationship to be the core aspect of the story. Trevor's control was one I wanted to be shattered so badly that when it did come, it did deliver on the fronts that I wanted it to. And ladies, prepare yourselves for one of the best declarations of love by a hero of this type; it did make tears spring to my eyes and that rarely happens.

If you like your heroes ruthless and I mean really ruthless, Lions and Lace is a story worth digging into. I would recommend it if you can get past the first couple of chapters where the heroine could get on your nerves, but in the end gives in beautifully.

Rating = 4/5

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Olga says

No había leído nada de esa autora y gracias a mi sis, me anime y la verdad es que me ha gustado tanto la historia como los personajes (aunque la historia de eagan me ha parecido demasiado forzada y rápida)... La historia es muy bonita , llena de inseguridades y malos entendidos por parte de los dos pero he sentido la angustia de ella y la inseguridad y las ganas de proteger a su familia de el...

Lo mejor es que nos deja con los dientes largos por saber de cristabel en el segundo libro .

Jennifer Leighton says

I struggled with how to rate this book, but I've finally settled between 3 1/2 and 4 stars.

It's very well written, it kept my interest, and it made me FEEL, but oh the pain and hurt and misunderstandings just didn't let up. My heart was twisted into knots the entire time.

I love angst, but I'm discovering I love it most when balanced with a bit of happiness. In *Lions and Lace* there were no happy moments for the H/h until the VERY end of the book, followed by the short epilogue. I didn't like how the hero (view spoiler)

I did enjoy the secondary romance story very much...so sweet, and a breath of fresh air after the constant turmoil. And I did love the unique setting and time period as well.

Bubu says

Lions and Lace was one of the first HR's I read over 20 (!) years ago. This was long before Connie Brockway, Lisa Kleypas and Loretta Chase started setting a new tone in the romance genre, or at least long before they got the recognition they deserved. Although not literally a bodice ripper, I'd still label it as such, purely on the grounds that it shows very similar characteristics to bodice ripper characters. Mainly, a constantly scowling, frowning, huffing and puffing hero, a damsels in distress, and lots and lots and lots of miscommunication, or rather non-communication.

Reading it again was like meeting an old friend I hadn't seen in years. Familiar, and yet strangely awkward as in 'Did we really use to spend so much time together? We are so different', only to realise that I'd simply changed a lot. However, I settled in quickly and just enjoyed the ride. A blast from the past. That being said, it's funny how the change of perspective made for a completely different journey.

This book should be read from two different angles. One is the romance, the other the historical background. To simply call it historical background, however, would be unfair and belittle the love and care the author poured into the details she provided. The setting, the Gilded Age, acts almost like a secondary character here. The elaborate descriptions of ball rooms, gowns, houses that usually bore the hell out of me after a while (yep, I'm a skimmer!) create an atmosphere that is vital to the story. It's difficult to explain but I'll try. The main characters, Alana and Trevor, are very much products of their time, their biographies firmly created by the society they grew up and live in, and as such the details mirror their personalities. All these grand houses, gowns, the Knickerbockers etc. are part of who, or rather what they are. And, like the icing on the cake, we also get a glimpse into the lives of the Captains of Industry, those who marked the days of Industrial Revolution and Capitalism, and into the lives of those who were born on the wrong side of the track, here the Irish immigrants. All in all, the author created a vivid picture of a time that changed the social order forever and which, in comparison, I find much more interesting than the constantly re-occurring Regency period.

Now to the romance. This is as much a marriage-of-convenience story as it is a from-enemies-to-lovers story, and the conflict can be boiled down to non-communication and constant distrust. I'll try to keep this as spoiler free as possible.

Oh the drama, the angst, the misunderstandings. It's all in there. There's a moment that illustrates them perfectly:

They both seemed to fear words. Words were always the villain between them. They said too much, then not enough.

Alana and Trevor have an incredibly antagonistic relationship with each other, and I must admit, I found myself annoyed enough to almost huff and puff like the H. Most of the resentment this couple nurtures, is created by Trevor's inability to listen to Alana. On the other side, we have Alana who swings from being an Ice Princess to Crying Mess and back to Ice Princess with a speed that nearly gave me a whiplash. Funny

thing is, when they first meet, she could have probably stopped everything by revealing her true motivation. Seeing how devoted Trevor is to his own sister, hearing her sister's plight might have just melted his heart long enough to let her off the hook. But that's only my assumption. It might or might not have happened. Obviously, it would have made for a whole different story. Looking at them, I know their romance could not be written like this today. And for a good reason, it's simply too much.

On the other side though, if I go back to the brilliant setup of the Era and its restrictions, I can see where both Trevor and Alana are coming from. Trevor, an Irish immigrant, who had to watch his mother turn to prostitution to support her family and then die in child birth, has put all this rage into the single-minded pursuit of becoming rich - close to the concept of *Pursuit of Happiness* that is associated with the Immigration history of the U.S. – and succeeded. The only thing missing? The entrée into the highest echelons of society, the *Knickerbockers*, the *Four Hundred*. He isn't too fussed about them, in fact, he despises them, but they are everything to his sixteen-year-old sister Mara, and for Mara he is willing to endure them. Alana, the crown jewel of the Knickerbockers, symbolises everything he hates about these people. That Alana doesn't act like them, doesn't want to be part of them, is something Trevor has to learn over the time. Problem is, I understand why he is so full of rage, but I don't like the fact that he takes it out on Alana.

Alana...Ah, Alana. She's a bit of a martyr and much harder to grasp in her personality. But then, how much wriggle room did a woman of her time in her situation really have. Nowadays, we would read about heroines who easily flaunt Society's regulations and we would have a strong-willed, independent Alana. We would also have a more understanding H who would gradually accept her. But how accurate is it really? How much of these concepts cater towards our 21st Century delicate gender expectations? Could we nowadays accept the following situation where Trevor demands his marital rights and says:

“You’re my wife, Alana, my legal wife, wed in the Catholic Church. I’ve rights. Go into my room, or I’ll get a policeman off the avenue to drag you in there.”

That's what a marriage was, in a nutshell. The wife was her husband's property. See the dilemma? Whilst part of me appreciates the author's attempts at historical accuracy, the feminist in me is howling in protest.

Now that I have expressed my conflicting feelings in regards to Alana and Trevor, I can also point out that they do have tender moments. Alas, it's one step forward, two steps back with them. The ending, though, oh the ending! Full on drama with a letter that had me in tears when I was a teenager, and still made me smile 20 years later. This book is well worth reading, but don't expect anything fluffy, nor an understanding H or a pro-active heroine. What you will get is a book rich in atmosphere.

On a side note, this book is 417 pages long and is in comparison to the current HRs 100 pages longer. I'd love them to be a little longer and take their time building up an atmosphere according to the historical background used. What a difference it makes can be read in *Lions and Lace*.
