



## Desperately Seeking Suzanna

*Elizabeth Michels*

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**Desperately Seeking Suzanna** Elizabeth Michels

*Her Cinderella Moment*

Sue Green just wanted one night to be the pretty one. But a few glasses of champagne and one wild disguise later, she's in some serious trouble. Who knew the devastatingly handsome face of Lord Holden Ellis would get in the way of her foot? And how exactly did all that high-kick dancing start in the first place? At least she blamed it all on her new persona—Suzanna. So Society's most eligible bachelor will never find out the truth.

All Holden wants is the truth. Who was that vixen who seduced him so thoroughly, then disappeared? The only one who seems to have any answers about Suzanna is Miss Sue Green. She's promised to help him find his mystery woman, but in truth she's not being all that helpful. And in truth, the more time Holden spends with Sue—witty, pretty, and disarmingly honest—the more he realizes he may have found exactly what he's been looking for all along...

## Desperately Seeking Suzanna Details

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Author : Elizabeth Michels

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## From Reader Review Desperately Seeking Suzanna for online ebook

### Daidase says

It all started with hero doesn't recognize heroine; even though he shared some intimacy with her and should've known at least how she smells. No one has that burnished gold hair, as he defined it or her figure, as well as I could find. not even after he'd touched her, her dress, think about the lace covering her neckline and still he did not recognise her after literally two minutes.. And what made him realised it was her, was beyond ridiculous, cheesy and lame.. really, there was nothing left, to make up something a little more mature?

Second, I did not understand his sudden dislike for his mother, out of the blue. he was trying to help her or at least indulge her.. what's happened? There was no point in him talking while she slept. we already knew what he was thinking and she was asleep.. why then, there was an unnecessary passage about it.

Speaking of unnecessary scenes, there was an instance when she came across with thornwood at the apothecary. He didn't know who she was so he did not do anything while he understood she had bought poison. And they have never met again so it was all for vain.

It was beyond stupid for Holden to run to his father at the end because he thinks sue was in danger.. then run to her directly you idiot! on top of that he suspects nothing from his already guilty mother and tried to give the poisonous tea to sue.. can you become more stupid.. he should thank heavens that the author had decided to finish the book without further embarrassment.

Again, there is this issue, that they couldn't get a hold of that one old woman.. she died of course, on her own, just like that, like a joke. They just continued to do what they've been doing while she'd choked to death :D it was hilarious, now that I've thought about it.

ugh. but I'm getting more frustrated by the minute, as a try to write down all the things that irritated me. nothing like the first book in the series. After their encounter, it seriously went down the hill faster than it had mounted. snapped in the middle somewhere. why did I continue, I don't know. But there is something I can't quite put my finger on. I like something about them, they were a little naive, both of them. Near the end though they made me feel as if they've been acting all along. It doesn't make sense I know, it doesn't have the density in order to accomplish it. But whatever that may be, it has kept me going and that is the reason behind 2 stars.

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### Lillie says

Reluctantly finished.

I didn't **like** it but I didn't **hate** it either. I was disappointed I didn't like it more because the premise sounded rather interesting. A cinderella type of thing going on. But even though it had its funny and lovable moments, in the end it was simply "ok".

There was nothing overly memorable about the book and the characters felt very campy; the constant over the top actions and dramatizations done by the characters was too much sometimes. The things they did were something that really just took me out of the story tbh. You had to suspend your belief for a lot of the actions done in the book, actions that wouldn't have gone down so well in that time period. And honestly, it made me not like a lot of the characters. **THEY TOOK NOTHING SERIOUSLY.** Bracelets flying into people's faces, shoes smacking people in the nose, etc.

I mean, I'm not asking for complete historical accuracy but when it feels like the characters are just **ROLE PLAYING** like they're in 1800s England, i feel like you should just reign it in a bit.

Everything felt like a joke and there was no real gravity to the story. It was just **too light hearted for me.** And normally I'm all one for a nice light hearted read but there wasn't even any: "oh no will they end up together" moment. There was no suspense or worry on my (the reader's) part about whether they'd get their HEA and frankly I didn't really care about the characters enough to worry in the first place.

And to make matters worse there wasn't any real "chemistry" between the two H and h. No steamy scenes or sexual/romantic tension. Which is sad cause they don't even "end up" together until **THE LAST FEW PAGES.**

Overall, ok book, characters and their actions i didnt like so much and i wish things had been taken a bit more seriously during certain points of the novel.

Its a great intro book for new readers of the historical romance genre but by no means will a die hard historical romance reader come scrambling to read this book any time soon.

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### **Shauni says**

Originally reviewed for Bodice Rippers, Femme Fatales and Fantasy.

Elizabeth Michels returns us to Recency England. A world where you must look a certain way, act a certain way, dress a certain way... A place where conformity is demanded and originality? If you can pull it off, you become the queen of the ton...if not? Well plan on a life of dismal loneliness.

In book two of her Tricks of the Ton, Ms. Michaels' gives us a wonderfully unique heroine who just doesn't fit in. And a hero who looks like he has all the answers.

Sue Green has been pushed into the background by a horribly dominating mother and an insipid but beautiful sister. For five years Sue has tried to catch a husband but season after season she is ignored. When her cousins convince her to sneak into a neighbor's masked ball, Sue decides that she is going to have fun.

Tonight she is Susanna! Catching the eye if the most eligible bachelor there. Susanna was fabulous but plain old Sue was once again ignored.

Lord Holden Ellis, take about town has no intentions of being caught by any female but there is just something special about Susanna. She intrigues him and when she disappears before the unmasking Holden is at a loss. He searches throughout the ton for her, never finding her. Always finding Sue Green instead. Fortunately for both of them he is constantly drawn to Miss Green. But there is no chance of anything permanent, seems Holden has mother problems of his own.

It isn't enough that Sue and Holden are at cross purposes, Sue's mother, her awful, horrible, mother has decided that Holden is the perfect mate for her perfect daughter. Who isn't Sue. Everytime the two connect mommy dearest is there to mess things up. Blind to Sue's loveliness and Holden's attraction, she constantly brow beats poor Sue.. Honestly, this character makes a strong argument for matricide. I kept thanking my mom for NOT being like that throughout the book.

While Sue and Holden are stumbling into love we get to revisit, Lily and Devon from Must Love Dukes. The stories run simultaneously and if you were paying attention, you saw both Sue and Holden in book one as well. We also meet the intriguing Katie Moore and Andrew Clifton, the stars of book Three, How to Lose A Lord in Ten Days (scheduled to be released July 1, 2014. My review will post on June 26, 2014). Tying the three books together wonderfully.

I really enjoyed this book, even the awful mother, her I could accept as part of the story because I wasn't SUPPOSED to like her. The rest of the book showed that if you fight hard enough, if you are willing to walk your own path and be true to yourself, love will find you.

Be sure and check this book out.

Shauni

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### **Laura says**

What a wonderful follow-up to "Must Love Dukes". Sue Green is tired of being a wallflower. Her mother has told her that this is her last season and she is going to go out with a bang. She encounters Lord Holden Ellis and the steam begins.

This book gave us more strong characters in Sue and Holden. Again, there was a wonderful cast of supporting characters that you loved or loved to hate. The novel was fast paced and hard to put down. A thoroughly enjoyable read (again)!

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### **Sophia says**

I love fairy tale retellings of all sorts so I eagerly grabbed up this one that tells the story of a Regency era Cinderella and her secretive Prince Charming. This was a first time with the author for me too.

While this is the second book in the Tricks of the Ton series, it can be read out of order because it is more of

a parallel story to the first one.

Holden Ellis, Lord Steelings, has recently returned to England and he seeks out his Uncle, Aunt and cousins to enjoy being home from abroad and being with family. They are a warm, rowdy bunch and he is pleased to escort them to the social functions of the Season. They are the closest thing to family he has nowadays since he and his father don't speak, his brother is dead and his mother is hidden, locked away and thought to be dead so none will know that she is mad. He reluctantly agrees to attend their country house masquerade ball where maybe he can get up an intrigue with a willing beauty who isn't interested in snaring a husband.

Sue Green, plain and nearly on the shelf, lets her vivacious younger sister and twin cousins talk her into a new caper. They all dress in costumes and sneak into the neighbor's masquerade ball. They further coerce her into imbibing copious amounts of champagne and letting them alter her conservative costume to one that smacks of the demimonde. This leads to that moment when her high kicking dance move on the stairs nearly breaks the nose of one of the Ton's most handsome and eligible bachelors. Her sister and cousins run leaving her to apologize and help Lord Steelings to his room. After a brief time of pain, Lord Steelings is enchanted by her and she by him. During their playful, flirtatious encounter from behind the protection of her mask, she tells him she is Suzanna and for one night becomes that enchanting creature she has made up. They share a passionate unforgettable moment then return to the ball to share a dance before she is discovered and restored to her original appearance by her mother while Holden is fetching drinks and whisked away from the ball. Unfortunately her dreamy night is brought to a sad close when Holden encounters her outside her costume and pushes her aside not even recognizing her in his search for a woman who doesn't even exist. Her furious mother lays down Sue's grim future. She has the rest of the Season to find a husband or get shipped off to Scotland to become a crotchety old aunt's companion. It doesn't help to know that her lovely and slightly spoiled sister and mother's pet, Evangeline, is mother's choice for Lord Steelings.

Holden is determined to find Suzanna. He has never felt like this before for a woman and it all has the added allure of mystery because nobody will tell him much about her even her sneaky twin cousins that he tracks down. They promise him that she will be at a certain ball. Yet all he encounters there is a brush with prickly and plain Sue Green who as a slight resemblance to Suzanna. She too knows Suzanna, but won't do more than indicate where Suzanna will be. In the meantime, his mad mother has escaped and has come to him. He doesn't see her as very dangerous and takes pity on her by allowing her to stay with him. He does go in fear that she will make the family secrets known in the upper circles of society and cause a family scandal so he begs her to stay in his house. He'll put her in another place eventually, but for now he just wants to get to know her.

Sue is both repelled and attracted to Holden. It hurts terribly that he doesn't recognize her as Suzanna and yet she looks forward to each new encounter with him. She feels a little sorry for him to see her mother fawning over him and pushing her reluctant sister at him. Holden avoids the obvious matchmaking traps and she is slightly confused that he has started seeking her out in her own right. It's probably because he appreciates talking to her about art since he has bought most of her paintings though he thinks they're by Suzanna. She resists her attraction to him and knows she must tell him the truth, but fears his disgust and withdrawal.

Things come to a head with some interesting turns and a dangerous moment leaving everything in the balance. Secrets are blown into the open and everyone is left in shock and not just a little hurt in some cases. Love just might not be enough.

This one started out being a light, comedic romp that cleverly captured the Cinderella story while weaving in the author's own characters, dialogue, plotting, and tones. The mother made me laugh because she is over the top in her efforts to pursue Holden for Evangeline and fit in with Society. She's very cutting with her words

to Sue, but she's just so ridiculous that it's hard to take her seriously. Evangeline is not really the cruel, selfish sister of the fairytale. She is young, worried about her debut season and cowed by their mother. She lets Sue take the blame for stuff and won't stand up to their mother, but she is not deliberately mean. The twins are just a scream. I cracked up over their escapades and the way they led poor Holden on such a merry chase. Holden's family particularly his younger girl cousins were a hoot too. Suzanna was a worthy heroine to root for and made a great underdog. She's plain, chatty, sensible, artistic, compassionate, and has a sense of adventure that shows when she leaps out and does out of character things.

Holden was a hero that, while I can sympathize with some of his plight, I wasn't completely into him. I wasn't too upset that he didn't recognize Sue because I'm not sure I would have either. A drunken carefree demeanor covered in make-up in a scandalous costume in a candlelit room is not the same as a plain miss scrubbed of cosmetics in a conservative gown. And I also understood his need for secrecy, but it was the way he eventually pursued Sue and then just seemed to want to dabble with her that disappointed me. Granted, he finally got with it and pursued in earnest which redeemed him a bit.

While the story started out light, I found that plot line of the mad, homicidal mother really ripped a jarring tear through the whole fabric of the story. Unfortunately, this darker, serious issue and the seeming callousness of the family toward this woman was hard for me to marry with the other lighter romantic story line. It was like the story descended into gothic farce at one point. I wish it hadn't been included to speak truth since the story would have held together without this.

All in all, I was pleased to read it and I definitely want to go back for the first book since I kept getting tantalizing glimpses of their story as it crossed over with this one. Holden and Sue's exchanges were a bright and strong draw to this book. I think those who enjoy lighter Historical Romance should seek this one out.

My thanks to Sourcebooks and Netgalley for the opportunity to read this one in exchange for my honest review thoughts.

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### **Farrah says**

A sweet, fun romance, *Desperately Seeking Suzanna* was a fantastic read. I really enjoyed reading it. I absolutely loved this book!

Sue was a lovely heroine. Her family is very critical of her, but she refused to let them keep her down. She was strong and, as the book went on, learned to live for herself. And she was a truly kind character, even in the face of extreme obliviousness (I'm looking at you, Holden). I really liked her. She was a wonderful character.

Holden was amazing. He was a bit blind to what was right in front of him, but he was clever enough to figure it out once he actually stopped to take a second look. He was very sweet and charming and determined to protect those he loved. I adored him. I thought he was great.

The romance was lovely. Sue and Holden were very sweet together. Even during the identity confusion, it was always obvious that they had feelings for each other. These two were a mostly sweet couple, but there was definitely some spice there as well. The attraction between them was sizzling from the moment they met.

The plot was fast paced and I was hooked the entire way through. There were some thrills along the way,

courtesy of Holden's....troubled mother. I really enjoyed the story and I thought the ending was lovely. With the first two books in this series having turned out so well, I can't wait to read more from it.

Desperately Seeking Suzanna was a brilliant historical romance. I totally loved this book. It was a truly enjoyable read. Romance lovers, you definitely need to read this book.

\*I received a free copy from the publisher in exchange for an honest review

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## ? Kimberly says

Desperately Seeking Suzanna is the second book in the Tricks of the Ton by Elizabeth Michels. If you will remember I adored Must Love Dukes her debut novel and the first in this series. Guess What? I have a new favorite author to add to the historical romance genre. Michels not only delivered a romantic tale that held me spellbound she did something quite clever. Mini review: Fun, romantic, hot, and sweet. Humor made this tale delightful.

For one night at a masquerade party, Sue Green feels pretty and bold as she takes on the persona of Suzanne. A mishap and some champagne have her sharing a kiss with Lord Holden Ellis before getting caught and sent home. Lord Holden is determined to find the little masked vixen who invades his waking thoughts and dreams. The only one who seems to have answers is Sue Green and the tale that unfolds was delightful entertaining.

Michels uses a few tropes with her character Sue Green. She is both the Ugly Duckling and Cinderella. I adored Sue from the beginning. She is entering her fifth season and is constantly reminded by her mother of her short comings. Yet, Sue remains sweet, kind and generous. She is an artist, a dreamer and her thoughts, comments and actions were pure, humorous and made me laugh. We see her transform throughout the novel from shy and unsure to strong and confident. Lord Holden Ellis is dealing with a slew of issues, but he is completely swoon-worthy and despite some blunders I fell for him. As Michels peeled back his layers, we saw the damage inflicted on him, and I wanted to hold him. The interaction between Holden and Suzanna was heated and at times hilarious. The dialogue between Holden and Sue was equally funny, and I laughed aloud at their banter. Sue's mother is dreadful and how she bore someone as sweet as Sue is beyond me. Many times I wanted to climb in a carriage and run the woman over, and then navigate the horses around and do it again! A woman from Holden's childhood returns and eek gads this was interesting storyline froth with danger.

Desperately Seeking Suzanna was such a fun romp from the tropes at play to the mischief and mayhem. It was such a delight to watch Holden stumble and see Sue grow. I was desperate for my happily ever after, and the twists and turns to get there were suspenseful and entertaining. Michels delivered just enough tension to make it exciting without overdoing it. Sue's mannerism and directness with Holden were charming and humorous, and it was such fun seeing Holden taken aback by it all. Now the clever part. Do you remember in my review of Must Love Dukes when I mentioned Sue and Holden. I said something curious was going on with them? It was..THEIR story, THIS story is/was simultaneously happening. So we see a few of the same scenes where they interacted and it was so cool. The pacing was well done as it built towards the climax and ending. Once again, Michels left me spent and satisfied.

## **SyaSya Syed Nasir says**

Thoughts:

I've always love Cinderella story since I was a kid. To be able to read any Disney retelling is something I really appreciated a lot. Didn't expect this story to be quite similar to Cinderella, but of course there's a little bit different scenario. Oh yes, if you scared to be spoiled, better avoid this review since I did spoiled certain parts from the book ?

Pros:

Characters: I fall in love with our main female and male characters, Sue and Holden since the beginning. There are something in the way they act and talks to each other that makes me feels like "oh, you guys savage!" They are the main reason why I had to make sure I'm finishing it by today itself (just started reading it yesterday evening). Besides, the other characters did played an important role for them to be able to be together.

Plot: Should I mentioned again how I love this book? Every chapter makes me curious to know when will they finally realized they're the person they've been looking for all this time. The way Sue show her anger at Holden is worth to watch ? especially the beginning. I guess, if I'm in Sue's shoes, I would be doing the exact thing she did, hide. There's just too many 'what if' gonna happen if she revealed who she is. But, congrats to the author coz she's able to make me feel like I'm the main character herself, whose trying to find my own prince charming. ?

Writing: There's absolutely nothing wrong with her writing. She wrote everything in detail, especially to how the characters feel. Like I said, I've been imagining myself in Sue's shoes. How her mother treat is unacceptable. It boiled my blood, but I know I would be following what my mom's wanted from me if I was in her shoes. But thank God, she finally realized it isn't worth it. Thank you, dear lovely author.

Cons:

Ending: The only problem I have with this book is the ending. It was like... Cliff hanging? Not very sure how to put it but...I wonder what will happen to them as in their decision to go to Paris together and not to mentioned that Sue's mother doesn't want her to go and she also doesn't want Sue with Holden coz of course she wants Holden for her second daughter ? but...what happen to the mother?? ?

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## **Dottiebears says**

I don't recommend reading this right after the first book in the series. They start out remarkably similar. I did like the way this book incorporated a lot from the first book in the series however, it was nicely done.

The ending was very abrupt. I would have liked to have some of the loose ends (like the obnoxious mother) tied up. the ending felt like the author had reached her word quota so she ended it right there.

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## **Amy Alvis says**

Originally reviewed for: Historical Romance Lover blog

This is book 2 in the Tricks of the Ton series.

Sue Green sneaks into a country masquerade party with her sister and cousins. Her cousins decide to give this wallflower a make-over before entering the ball. Trying to get the courage to enter the ball with her new look, Sue over indulges with champagne.

Sue decides she needs a new name to go with her new look and chooses Suzanna, a lady with no inhibitions. Making their way to the ball, "Suzanna" decides to high-kick her way down the stairs. Unfortunately, she kicks Lord Holden Ellis breaking his nose. Even with a broken nose, Holden is smitten with "Suzanna" and talks her into helping him into his bedroom to clean up.

Things heat up, but "Suzanna" and Holden are interrupted. They make their way to the ball and enjoy a lovely dance. Holden leaves to get some refreshments. Unfortunately, Sue's mother finds her and makes her take off her "Suzanna" enhancements. She makes it back to meet Holden, but he doesn't recognize her. Heartbroken, she fleas back to her cousins' home.

Holden is upset with losing "Suzanna", but find out she will be in London soon. He travels back to London much sooner than he had planned. He must find his "Suzanna."

At the first ball back in London, Sue is shocked when she sees Holden. Her shock soon turns to disappointment when Holden asks for her help in find his "Suzanna."

Will Holden ever see that his "Suzanna" is his friend Sue that he finds himself being more and more intrigued with at every meeting?

I give an A++ to Elizabeth Michels for the second book in the Tricks of the Ton series. While reading the first book in the series, Must Love Dukes, I had already grown to love the character of Holden.

I loved the interaction that Holden had with Sue. I always love a feisty heroine, and Michels didn't disappoint. Michels has a way of bringing you into the story and making you feel like the characters are your best friends. My heart broke right along with Sue's every time Holden didn't see what was right there before him and it was in my throat when Holden thought that Sue was in danger.

Elizabeth Michels is an author that will be at the top of this genre and and can't wait to see what else she has in store for us!

Thanks go to NetGalley and Sourcebooks Casablanca for a copy of the book in exchange of an honest review.

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## **Blodeuedd Finland says**

I do confess that most of the time this premise does annoy me. Boy meets girl, girl wears a mask, there is

kissing and she disappears. When they do meet again, and talk he does not know it's her. I would think at least the voice would do it. Oh well it does bring the drama...

Sue is invisible and with the worst mother ever. Trust me, I want to strangle her mother. What a wicked old cow! I am still angry at her and I just want to see Sue walk up to her and give her the finger. Ok ok, moving on. Sue was so sweet, nice, she wanted to do things, wanted to paint, but if you have someone holding you down it's hard.

Holden is a rake. And he becomes obsessed with Suzanna after what they have shared. There is a secret in his life that I can't tell, but it does bring some danger.

When they meet again they find each other amusing..sort of. She argues with him. But he does one thing later on that made me want to kick him. Bad Holden. Still it all ended happily, of course ;)

Oh and there was an intriguing character in it that I hope is in the next book.

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### **Jaclyn says**

*Desperately Seeking Suzanna* is the second in Michels's *Tricks of the Ton* series. I have not read the first book; however, *Suzanna* can be read as a standalone for the most part.

Sue Green is living in the shadow of her beautiful younger sister. Sue is unassuming and not beautiful in the conventional way. Instead she's a painter, and a painter of some note as the hero collects her art. Because of her meddling younger cousins, Sue is coerced into attending a masquerade ball, and this gives Sue the freedom to adopt a new persona, Suzanna. Suzanna is everything that Sue is not: confident, beautiful, compelling, arresting. The hero, Holden Ellis, Lord Steelings, is immediately drawn to Suzanna and after she mysteriously disappears, he vows to find her. The problem is he has no idea that Sue is actually Suzanna, which irks Sue to no end. And, I'll be honest, this bothered me as well. I really can't imagine that these Sue and Suzanna are so visibly different that Holden cannot tell the difference. But if it worked for Superman, I suppose that it could work for Sue. Personally, I found it hard to suspend my belief enough for this plot device to work.

Holden Ellis (our hero) has just returned to society from abroad, and while Suzanna throws him for a loop, he's got bigger problems on the horizon. Most importantly is his institutionalized mother who has escaped and taken up residence at Holden's home. But does Holden take care of this situation despite the fact that his mother clearly needs help? No. Instead he enables a situation where someone who is known to be violent, to have the ability to act out more violence. This set up did bother me because it was very clear that Holden was completely aware of his mother's history, and he's quite terrified for Sue when they finally meet. But again, does he do anything about this potentially dangerous situation? No. And guess who pays the price? That's right. Sue.

There was some dubious reasoning in *Desperately Seeking Suzanna*, and it did put me off. I couldn't get past Holden's choices; they just didn't make sense to me. Throw in the fact that it takes him forever to recognize that Sue and Suzanna were one in the same, and I was left struggling to get through the book. But, what really put the final nail in the coffin were Holden's actions once he *finally* realizes that Sue and Suzanna are the same person. Naturally, he offers her a position as his mistress. How tempting... Thank goodness, Sue had enough sense to refuse this outrageous offer. I didn't even really understand Holden's reasoning for

avoiding marriage, and when it was explained, it felt a little too late for it to make an impact. From there, I found the ending to be very rushed and I'm just not sold on the happily ever after between Holden and Sue.

Overall, I wasn't in love with this book and I didn't find it overly romantic. Perhaps I would have felt differently had the relationship progressed a little more quickly, but it simply didn't grab me from the get-go. That said, I did enjoy the writing style and I liked the character of Sue (she definitely carried the book, in my opinion), who was quite witty in comparison to Holden. In the end, it was the plot that I didn't like, which means that I will be coming back to the author, as I'm not ready to discount a series based on one book. There was some great lines in this one, so I'd like to see what else the author can do.

\*Review can also be viewed on my blog; the copy was provided by the publisher via NetGalley.

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### **Mieko F says**

The thing that sets this book apart from other books is how the author develops the friendship between Sue and Holden. The dialogue between the two characters really sparkles. To all the naysayers who claim the plot isn't believable - do you really want your romances to be totally realistic? I certainly don't (where's the fun in that?!). Suspend your disbelief and enjoy the ride.

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### **Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says**

**A laughable Regency retelling of Cinderella that's as absurd as they come.** Exaggerated. Secondhand-embarrassment bad. It plays up every trope in the original with astoundingly poor effects...considering this is not a fairy tale.

Not to mention the hard-sell of the original concept.

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For a superior, heartbreaking, much more realistic retelling, read Julia Quinn's most excellent *An Offer From a Gentleman*.

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### **Tracy Emro says**

3.5 stars - might be Spoilerish!!!

Since I read the first book in the series and got glimpses of this book - I was really looking forward to this book.

It started out great. I liked Sue/Suzanna and Holden. They were both likable and the story was fun. I did find it a little unbelievable that he didn't recognize Sue without the mask. But whatever, it wouldn't have been much of a story if he figured it out right in the first chapter - right?

Everything is moving right along at a nice clip, secrets are revealed to the reader and Holden finally figures out the mystery of Sue/Suzanna. This is when the story got a bit confusing to me. Little things began to niggle my brain. This might be Spoilerish - you have been warned!

Ok, these are my qualms - and since I haven't seen them mentioned in the other reviews - let's assume that it must be me.

1- Why exactly can't Holden marry? Because of his crazy mother? She is locked up and assumed dead - so why? Never explained.

2 - Why does Holden keep running away? His father doesn't seem like he is interfering in his life. He makes it seem like he was away for 11 years - but so many people (and by people I mean women) know him - so apparently he leaves and comes back and then leaves again - why? Never explained.

3 - He decides to set Sue up as his mistress - Really? He cares about her - but "can't" marry her. So instead set her up as your mistress and ruin her. What a guy!

4 - His mother goes totally loco and kills herself. And now he can marry? WTF? She was locked up and everyone thought she was dead - so what difference does this make??

It must be me - I think the story was great until about 3/4 way through and then it just fell apart. I spent the last quarter of the book shaking my head and feeling like I entered the twilight zone. It was bizarre - the whole last scene with his mother was just unbelievable - It took me almost as much time to read the final 1/4 as it did to read the first 3/4 because I kept having to put the book down.

Was the writing bad? Not at all - it was really well written with very few typos. Was the story bad? Nope - it was really good until it got really weird and even then it wasn't bad.

Maybe I just didn't connect the dots correctly and all my confusion was my own fault. Read the book and decide for yourself. I will definitely read the last book in the series - Ms Michels is a good writer and I am hoping the third time's a charm :)

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