

*Dare and Temperance:
Childhood Sweethearts*

(A Deleted Scene from *Undressed with the Marquess*)

By
CHRISTI CALDWELL

Dare and Temperance: Childhood Sweethearts
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Dare and Temperance: Childhood Sweethearts

London, England

Years earlier

She was out for blood. Which most would find a direct contradiction for a woman named Temperance Swift. Not those who knew her. Those who knew Temperance also knew there was one thing a person didn't trifle with: her brother. And god help the blighters who did.

Fog rolled over the cobblestones. The soft white mist, the only hint of color on the otherwise inky black night. And through that thick blanket, she scoured the empty streets.

"Where were you when this happened?" she asked on a furious whisper.

When only silence met her query, she glanced over at the tow-headed figure at her side. Six years younger than her, he was a fragile slip of a boy, that weakness a product of a bout with the same typhoid fever that had claimed their mother three years earlier. "Chance?" she demanded.

Avoiding her eyes, Chance shifted back and forth on his feet. "I told you it happened 'ere."

“Here,” she automatically corrected that slip of his English.

“Yea,” he confirmed, misunderstanding the reason for her echo. “I was selling me goods.”

“Selling your goods.”

“That’s what I just said,” Temperance’s younger brother groused.

She didn’t waste time with correcting him. Chance’s increasingly frequent tendency of slipping into roughened street tones was a product of the work he did, selling wares on the streets of London. None of that mattered in this instant.

“He’s gonna kill me, isn’t he?” Chance whispered.

“No.” Though, in fairness, her answer wasn’t a lie; the truth was he was going to kill them both. The “he” in question, none other than their brute of a father, who’d never met a bottle of spirits he didn’t like. One fact remained: drunk or sober, Abaddon Swift was a miserable bastard, who’d never hesitated to use his fists on his offspring. And losing the day’s earnings was enough to merit one of those ruthless beatings.

She set her jaw. Not on this damned night.

If she were stronger, braver, and at all powerful, that vow would extend to any damned night. With a younger brother to care for, those sentiments, however, were not ones she was afforded the luxury of.

“Tell me what happened again?” she asked for the fifth time, her brother’s details still murky in her mind.

“I’d just finished up selling your kerchiefs, had cleaned up.”

“And what were you doing here?”

At the slight pause, she shifted her attention back over to her brother. He abruptly ceased his fidgeting. "Eastcheap was too crowded."

"And so, you came here?" she asked incredulously.

"Figured if they'd been shopping on New Bond Street, they'd be in the market for one of your pieces."

It was a flattering thought...that any of the fancy lords and ladies who paraded over these fine streets would ever prefer or purchase something she'd made.

Sighing, Temperance scanned the shadows.

All her senses went on alert.

And then, he stepped from the mist.

Tall. Wiry. Possessed of a dark beauty that fair screamed danger.

"That's 'im..." Chance mumbled.

Yes, that was him, indeed.

It *would* be him.

Her heart did a little somersault.

Darius "Dare" Grey. The most skilled of all London's thieves. There was nothing he could not steal...

Including a woman's heart.

And by the rumors, there'd been more than a score stolen by the scoundrel.

Chance sent an elbow into her side. "Why are you looking so strange?"

Giving her head a hard shake, Temperance cursed herself for the blasted weakness she'd always had for the man now lounging so negligently against a lamppost. The brim of his hat pulled low over his forehead.

She'd foolishly found herself in the ranks of those pitiable women. It was a state she'd never find herself in again.

Grabbing Chance hard by the arm, she steered him out. "You, there," she called, her voice echoed inordinately loud on the quiet streets.

Dare straightened, and by damn if those brownish-golden eyes didn't manage to penetrate even the London fog.

Her brother groaned. "You know you don't have to do this." There was a faintly pleading edge to that pronouncement.

"Like hell, I don't," she muttered, increasing her stride.

Chance stumbled and tripped, struggling to keep up. "You said you were never going to see him again."

She set her jaw. Yes, that vow belonged to her.

...There was a reason this time, Temperance. It won't happen again...

Temperance's throat worked. "There's always a reason, Dare. There's always something more pressing that you're out picking pockets, unwilling to change. Unwilling to be better..."

Just then, Dare raised a cheroot slow to his lips.

"Smoking," she spat. That detestable habit she'd always hated. And the rub of it was...that irritating habit was one she'd tolerated, because at the end of the day, she'd wanted him more. Flaws and all. There were some, however, that she couldn't—and wouldn't—ever forgive.

Her brother dug his heels in with a surprising strength that cost Temperance her grip upon him. Grinding her frayed soles to a halt, she spun around, and stared questioningly at her brother.

“You said you’d die before seeing—let alone talking to him.”

Yes, that had been another promise she’d made. Nor had hers been spoken in the heat of the moment melodramatics. She’d meant every last word she’d said about never again seeing Dare. “I’m willing to make an exception this one time,” she said under her breath.

And she didn’t need her brother about when she lit into Dare Grey. In fact, it was better if he weren’t around for the damned exchange. “Stay here.” Lifting her skirts, she stomped across the clean cobblestones.

As she approached, Dare, who stood alongside his partner in crime, Avery Bryant, straightened.

Touching the brim of his cap, Dare bowed his head.

Her gaze reserved on just one of those men, she flew forward, her coarse wool skirts slapping angrily against her legs.

Dare flashed a half-smile, his teeth perfectly white, perfectly even. Perfect, as he was.

It also grounded her back to the moment. She’d promised herself that she’d never again lose control where Dare was concerned. And here he stood before her, calm, coolly collected, and as affable as he’d always been. She forced her legs to slow, and then walked the rest of the way, measured with her every movement. As she approached, she studied him from under her enormous brim. How was it possible he’d grown since their last meeting? He now had to be several inches past six feet.

Last meeting? *Or the last time you’d sent him away?*

Refusing to have second doubts for the way it had ended between them.

“Miss Swift,” Bryant said, when she’d come to a stop before the pair.

“Avery,” Temperance issued that reluctant greeting between tight lips for this man who’d always been so very bad for Dare. The notorious thief of the Rookeries, who’d taken Dare under his wing years ago, supported and encouraged his thievery. Then, the apprentice had become the master, and Temperance would never forgive the bastard for being the one who’d started him on the life he lived. “I’m looking to speak with Mr. Grey.”

Dare gave his partner a look, and wordlessly, the other man faded back.

“Hullo, Temper...” he murmured.

His voice gave her pause. Smooth like honey. Crisp. He spoke in the same fancy tones of the gents whom she used to beg from outside the Covent Garden theatres.

He wasn’t the same person she remembered. How was it possible in the year since she’d seen him, he’d grown up? This same man who’d charmed her first kiss out of her. Sloppy. Wet. The only thing to recommend it had been the hint of apple on his breath, faintly sweet, crisp, and fresh. Other than that...

Her skin prickled at the feel of his gaze upon her. That impenetrable stare as if he saw her every secret, and yet kept his own close.

“It’s been a long time,” he said softly, tossing down his cheroot. He ground the heel under his boot...

His gleaming, immaculate boots. That footwear so very different than her own.

Those fancy articles a product of dishonorable means. They also brought her back to the reason she sought him out. “This isn’t a social call,” she said tightly.

“Disappointing, that.”

And as much as she expected there to be an underscoring of mockery, there were shades of regret and sadness layered within those handful of syllables.

Impossible. You’re only seeing that which you want to.

“Well?” she snapped. “What do you have to say for yourself?”

“Are you certain we aren’t picking up precisely where we left off, Temper?” Several lines creased his high-brow—a brow better suited for those born of noble ranks. But then, for all intents and purposes, Darius Grey was royalty—in these streets, anyway. “Because you did hurl those very words that night.”

She started. He remembered that? Why should he, if it hadn’t mattered?

“*Of course* I remember that.” Dare took a step closer. Nay, his weren’t mere steps. He glided when he walked, like the lords and ladies she’d envied turning circles and loops upon the Thames when it had frozen over years earlier.

She steeled her heart. “That is not why I’m here, Dare,” she clipped out each word between clenched teeth. “You, are a thief.”

The right corner of his lips quirked in the corner, and he leaned a shoulder against the streetlamp. “Yes, as I said, this all fits with our last exchange, Temper.”

“Only, there is one difference.” She jabbed him hard in the chest with her index finger and promptly winced as that digit struck solid brick. “This is the first time you’ve stolen from *me*.” That was, stolen something *other* than her heart.

Dare’s mouth moved, and she managed the seemingly impossible—she’d robbed the charmer of words.

“Do you think this is a joke, you...bounder! You would steal from my brother,” she cried.

He sputtered. “What are you on about?”

“Don’t try to feed me more of your lies, Dare.” She’d believed too many where this man was concerned. The last of which had seen her waiting out at three o’clock in the morning for her bridegroom to arrive and take her off. What a fool she’d been. Tears pricked her eyes and she damned those crystal drops of weakness. “You are and will only ever be a thief,” she spat with all the venom that had come from that most painful of betrayals. “As such I don’t expect much honor from you but taking from *Chance*?”

Even in the dark of the night, she caught the splash of color that splotched his cheeks. “Now, wait one moment—”

“Stop!”

As one, Temperance and Dare looked to the little boy hovering in the shadows.

And just like that, Temperance was forgotten.

Dare cut over to the boy and dropped to a knee. “Hello, Chance,” he greeted with such gentleness, her heart flipped over itself. This was the part of her that had never—and would never—be immune to—his warmth towards her brother.

Her brother eyed the boulder adoringly. “Hullo, Dare.” Alas, that eternal devotion had persisted with her brother.

Mayhap just like the time apart had changed him, he’d not realized the boy he’d robbed had in fact been Chance. And what was wrong with her that she desperately wanted to believe that to the alternative?

Equally annoyed with herself and by that display of Chance’s loyalty, she shoved an elbow into her brother’s side, earning a grunt. “What was that for?”

Temperance glared at him, and then redirected her ire out to the deserved recipient. “You owe me something.” She stared expectantly at Darius Grey.

And just like that, Temperance managed what she’d otherwise before this moment taken as an impossible feat—she’d silenced Dare.

Dare, with his smooth talking, and charming words, and the half-grin that dimpled his right cheek, now looked between Temperance and her troublesome sibling.

“Well?” she snapped. Sticking her palm out, she gave a wag of her fingers. “Get on with it. Give us back what is owed, and we’ll be on our way.”

“You’ve managed to tongue-tie me once more. I’ve no idea what in blazes you’re talking about.”

Tongue-tie him, indeed. He wasn’t a man to be tongued by any woman. Nay, he was one who’d have every last woman believing they were the only woman in the whole of the world.

From the corner of her eyes, she caught Chance’s downturned stare. With his unswerving loyalty, he’d never turn on Dare.

Well, her days of that like loyalty had come and gone.

Temperance dropped her hands on her hips. “You robbed my brother.”

“Never.”

“Are you calling me a liar?”

“I’d never rob from your brother.”

She snorted. “You’d rob from God himself on your way through the gates of heaven.”

“Don’t be ridiculous.” Dare curled his lips up in a smile. “I’m hardly intended for the pearly gates.”

“No, you’re correct on that score,” she muttered. That unnecessary reminder brought her back to the reason she’d been scouring the snow-covered streets of London for him. Her teeth chattering from the cold, Temperance huddled deeper within the folds of her cloak. “The fact remains, you took from Chance and I’m here to claim back that which belongs to us.”

Dare frowned. “I...” His gaze slid briefly over to her brother.

From the corner of her eye, she caught the faintly pleading look her brother shot in his direction.

“Of course,” Dare said quietly, as his attention shifted back over to her. His breath stirred a little cloud of white in the cool night air. “You’ve my apologies. I promise it shall not happen again.”

And her stomach sank.

He was lying. *Please*, let him not be lying. Because then, the alternative was that she’d come here, charging at him, leveling accusations that had been false.

“Is that what you want, Chance?” she asked quietly, turning to her brother. “For Dare to take the fall for a crime you’re guilty of?”

Her brother dampened his lips. “No.” That acknowledgement came soft and threadbare but discernable enough that her eyes slid closed as she had her confirmation.

“Damn it, Chance.”

“I don’t want to sell lady’s garments or socks or kerchiefs.” He yanked the threadbare cap from his head and waved it wildly as he spoke. “Ain’t no money in it.”

“There isn’t money in it,” she automatically corrected.

Her brother pounced. “Exactly. Look how comfortable Dare is,” He motioned over to the dashing six-foot four specimen, attired in a midnight wool cloak befitting a peer of the realm. “Do you think *he’s* gotten what he has and where he has darning *socks*?”

She winced. And God help her, she couldn’t bring forth the deserved chastisement. Despite the cool bite of wind slapping at her, heat climbed her cheeks, and she prayed that mortifying blush was mistaken for a product of the cold. For the truth remained, her brother was right in *one* thing: Darius oozed wealth and success and Temperance? Well, none would ever dare mistake her callus-stained palms or low-cost garments as anything but an impoverished East Londonite.

In the end, salvation came from where it so often had over the years. “Chance Swift.” Just two words was all it took to summon over her brother, when Temperance spent days cajoling the younger boy to compliance.

Chance yanked his hat off and tipping his head back, stared expectantly at the legend of East London.

“It’d be wrong to judge a person’s worth by how much they have. Your sister does honorable work, and you’d be far wiser to follow in her steps, and not the ones of a boulder like me.”

“But honor doesn’t fill a belly.”

As if to confirm that very point, Temperance’s stomach rumbled loudly.

Mortified, she curled her toes into the bottoms of her toe-tight boots.

“No,” Dare conceded. “It also doesn’t see a person with their neck stretched on a gibbet, either.”

Chance wrinkled his freckled nose.

Straightening, Dare ruffled the top of the little boy’s dirty blond curls.

Fisting her gloveless fingers at her side, she didn’t take her eyes from Dare Grey. “I need a moment, Chance.”

Not another word was required from the boy. He fell back several healthy paces, his slender form lost in the swirl of white.

Rubbing her palms together both in a bid for warmth and a product of the shame needling at her, she blew at the trembling digits.

“It’s all right, Temperance.”

And to add to that guilt, he’d save her the indignity of an apology? Her shame only doubled.

She wasn’t, however, too proud to offer a deserved apology. “I’m sorry. He said...” She bit the inside of her cheek, not managing to speak aloud those false charges Chance had leveled.

“It’s not a problem,” he said automatically, with more graciousness than any other man who’d been called out as a thief and liar would have. “How have you been, Temperance?”

“Fine.” How easily that lie slid off...when nothing had been fine...really ever. Things, however, had gotten worse.

As if to highlight that very point, her cheek throbbed from the last blow she’d taken to spare Chance.

“No,” Dare murmured. “How have you been?”

She bit the inside of her cheek. “I hate when you do that.” Was it the cold or emotion that caused that slight tremble? She suspected it was the latter and hated herself for her weakness.

“Do what?” He drifted a step closer, and her body tensed with that eternal awareness she’d carried for him since she’d been a girl of thirteen, and he’d been passing out coins to orphans on the street. Of course, at the time, she’d not gathered that those coins had been stolen ones. Years later, she’s not certain it would have mattered had she known the truth—he’d stolen her heart that long-ago day.

“Ask about me.” He was the only one who’d ever asked after her, never accepting the rote lie far too easy to pass out.

“Well, I don’t intend on stopping.” He reached for her too-large bonnet.

She recoiled.

He misunderstood the reason for her rejection. The broad lines of his shoulders stiffened, tightening the fabric of his pleated cloak.

“I’ve missed you, Temperance.”

She hugged her arms around her middle. “Goddamn you, Dare,” she whispered, her voice catching. Temperance scrambled back a step, desperately craving distance...the barrier she’d erected two years ago. Only to find how very flimsy that wall in fact, was. “Don’t do this.”

Not here. Not now. Not ever. Because she was afraid if he did, and she forgave that betrayal, she’d be lost all over again where Darius Grey was concerned.

Only, he was unrelenting. He took another step closer, erasing all the space she’d built on the snow-covered street.

“I want you to know, I’d intended to come.”

And this time, the requisite “fine” couldn’t even be faked. Not in this moment. For it would never be fine that he’d failed to come when he’d said. That his offer of marriage, and the promise of elopement had left her standing outside until the sun came up, and her father out, and then...

Ice danced over her spine, a chill that had nothing to do with the winter’s unforgiving hold.

“There was a reason,” he said quietly, reaching for her chin.

She jerked away before he could handle her. “There always is,” she whispered.

Reluctantly, he let his arm fall to his side. “That was the case, Temperance. Before. But things, they would be different now between us.” He spoke with such conviction she found herself almost believing him...believing she could have everything she wanted with this man.

Almost.

“That’s not why I’m here, Dare,” she said resolute in her determination. “I came...” She grimaced. “For reasons that I

know now were erroneous. I offer you my most sincere apologies. We needn't see one another again." She turned to go. Opened her mouth to call out for her brother.

With those elusive footsteps that didn't so much as crunch the gravel under his boots, Dare slid into her path. "But I want to see you again. I've missed you, Temperance."

A vise squeezed at her heart. And just like that, she found herself weakening.

Do not. Do not.

Temperance forced her eyes closed.

"I was coming for you. I never intended to break my vow to you. There was a boy, headed to the gallows, and—"

"You were all that stood between him and his end," she said softly, without inflection. After all, that desire to risk himself all to protect others had been one of the reasons she'd fallen in love with him. "As if I could ever resent you for being a hero, Darius Grey."

An endearing blush splotched his cheeks, and he coughed into a gloved fist. "I'm no hero."

Any other man would have preened and thrived off that praise. Not Dare. He'd never been one wanting or even comfortable accepting compliments for the work he did...or anything.

"That's always been your way," she said wistfully. A dark curl fell over his brow, and she reached up to brush it back, before catching her hand mid-way to that blue-tinged tress. Temperance forced her arm back to her side. "The Savior of the Seven Dials and St. Giles."

"It was never about that with you, Temper," he said. His voice washed over her, warm like the chocolate he'd

purchased her at a Rom's fair four years earlier. It brought her eyes closed. Distracting her with the memory, the dream—

He pushed back her bonnet.

Temperance's eyes flew open.

Snowflakes slapped at her cheek. Her damningly swollen cheek.

She grabbed for her bonnet, to set it back into place.

Too late.

Dare didn't move.

Nothing but a whistle of air hissed between his clenched teeth. "I'll kill him."

Because he knew just who was responsible for the purple, black, and blue bruise that circled her left eye.

Because he'd always known her and everything about her.

"You won't," she said tightly.

"I will and happily."

And by the ferocity of his ice blue eyes, she believed him.

Her father deserved murdering, but she'd not have that crime laid at the feet of anyone...especially not Dare.

"I don't need you fighting my battles, Dare. I don't want you fighting them," she clarified.

He raked an uneven hand through his hair. "Goddamn it, Temperance Swift."

And with that, she managed her first smile where Dare Grey was concerned. Mayhap there could, if not love or friendship, be peace between them, after all. "Goodbye, Dare."

Staring out at her from under long, thick, black lashes no man had a right to, Dare bowed his head.

Hurrying across the street, she started for her brother.

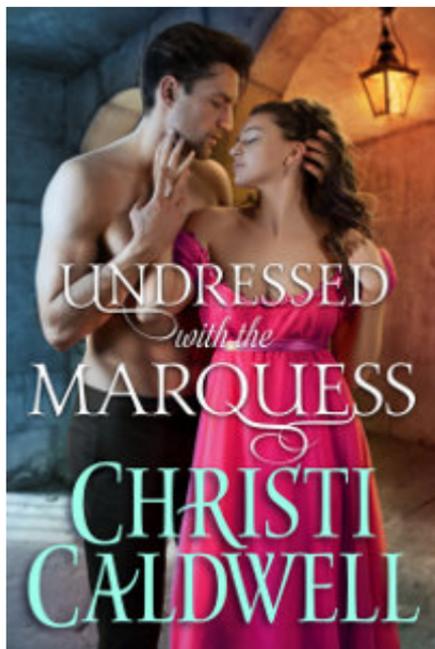
“Temperance?” Dare called, and she turned back. “This isn’t the end of us.”

And as she collected Chance’s fingers in her own, she couldn’t force back the niggling that Dare Grey was, indeed, right.

They would see one another again.

And as dangerous as he’d always been for her heart, that could never be a good thing.

Ever.



Did you enjoy this look at Dare and Temperance? Be sure and pre-order *Undressed with the Marquess*, which comes out November 17th!

[Amazon](#)

Other Books by Christi Caldwell



“A Winter Wish”



*Book 1 in “The Read Family Saga” Series by
Christi Caldwell*

Proper, respectable Lucas Holman, Viscount Grimslee, has always done what was expected of him, and that included letting go of the woman he was betrothed to. Now, filled with regrets, Lucas is living quite contentedly and scandalously...for himself. He’s enjoying his new, roguish, carefree existence, until the holidays arrive and he’s summoned home.

Miss Merry Amaryllis Read has finally completed enough training to assume the vaunted role of housekeeper to the Holman family. When her new employer decides to throw an impromptu Yuletide party, Mary is tasked with quickly readying the manor for the grand event.

She doesn’t expect that she’ll also be assigned a partner, the earl’s dissolute, suddenly-scandalous heir, Lord Grimslee. He’s unlike the stuffy gentleman she recalls from her youth, but either way—lordly prig or dissipated rascal—Merry wants nothing to do with Lucas.

Her reservations notwithstanding, she and the viscount forge an unlikely connection. With every moment they spend

together, they learn more about each other, and when passion flares, both are helpless to resist its pull. Merry and Lucas know a shared future is impossible, and yet, they can't stop wishing for more... together.



“Fighting for his Lady”



Patience Storm fell in love with her father's protégé, a young man with dreams of becoming a fighting legend. However, Godrick Gunnery wasn't what he seemed...

Betrayed and heartbroken, Patience vowed never to see him again...until...four years later, the Storm family is in financial straits and her brother needs to win the Fight of the Century purse to keep them off the streets. There's only one man who has the skills needed to train him... Now, Patience must swallow her pride and ask for Godrick's help, but she will absolutely not lose her heart to him...



“The Spinster Who Saved a Scoundrel”



*Book 5 in the “Brethren” Series by Christi
Caldwell*

The death of her father leaves Miss Francesca Cornworthy... alone, and with one last wish to fulfill—that she marry a safe, respectable gentleman. She sets herself on a course to honor

that request. That is until she crosses paths with Mr. Lathan Holman—the very opposite type of gentleman her father wished her to wed.

After one mistake earned him the title of traitor, Lathan Holman has no interest in reentering society. Then he meets a quick-witted, sharp-mouthed spinster. His dark past clouds his present and future. He'd been certain he'd never laugh or smile again... but it isn't long before he finds himself doing both with Miss Francesca Cornworthy... and wanting more.



“The Minx Who Met Her Match”



Book 4 in the “Brethren” Series by Christi Caldwell

Duncan Everleigh, barrister, widower, father. Accused murderer... Found innocent in the death of his wife, Duncan's reputation is ruined, his law practice is nearly destroyed, and his daughter hates him. He's content living for his work. Until one day he meets...

Miss Josephine Pratt... Her life is in tatters. Her oldest brother has brought them to financial ruin. Her betrothed has broken their engagement. Looking to escape, Josephine loses herself in her real passion—her other brother's law books. A chance meeting in the London streets soon finds her employed by the last man she should, the barrister who'll be opposing her brother in court.

Soon, Duncan and Josephine, two people who have vowed to never love again, find the protective walls they've each built, crumbling. When past secrets threaten to destroy their future, they'll have to decide if love is enough.



“The Rogue Who Rescued Her”



***Book 3 in the “Brethren” Series by Christi
Caldwell***

Martha Donaldson went from being a nobleman's wife, and respected young mother, to the scandal of her village. After learning the dark lie perpetrated against her by her 'husband', she knows better than to ever trust a man. Her children are her life and she'll protect them at all costs. When a stranger arrives seeking the post of stable master, everything says to turn him out. So why does she let him stay?

Lord Sheldon Graham Whitworth has lived with the constant reminders of his many failings. The third son of a duke, he's long been underestimated: that, however, proves a valuable asset as he serves the Brethren, an illustrious division in the Home Office. When Graham's first mission sees him assigned the role of guard to a young widow and her son, he wants nothing more than to finish quickly and then move on to another, more meaningful assignment.

Except, as the secrets between them begin to unravel, Martha's trust is shattered, and Graham is left with the most vital mission he'll ever face—winning Martha's heart.



“The Lady Who Loved Him”



*Book 2 in the “Brethren” Series by Christi
Caldwell*

In this passionate, emotional Regency romance by Christi Caldwell, society’s most wicked rake meets his match in the clever Lady Chloe Edgerton! And nothing will ever be the same!

She doesn’t believe in marriage...

The cruelty of men is something Lady Chloe Edgerton understands. Even in her quest to better her life and forget the past, men always seem determined to control her. Overhearing the latest plan to wed her to a proper gentleman, Chloe finally has enough... but one misstep lands her in the arms of the most notorious rake in London.

The Marquess of Tennyson doesn’t believe in love...

Leopold Dunlop is a ruthless, coldhearted rake... a reputation he has cultivated. As a member of the Brethren, a secret spy network, he’s committed his life to serving the Crown, but his rakish reputation threatens to overshadow that service. When he’s caught in a compromising position with Chloe, it could be the last nail in the coffin of his career unless he’s willing to enter into a marriage of convenience.

A necessary arrangement...

A loveless match from the start, it soon becomes something more. As Chloe and Leo endeavor to continue with the plans

for their lives prior to their marriage, Leo finds himself not so immune to his wife—or to the prospect of losing her.



“The Spy Who Seduced Her”



*Book 1 in the “Brethren” Series by Christi
Caldwell*

A widow with a past... The last thing Victoria Barrett, the Viscountess Waters, has any interest in is romance. When the only man she’s ever loved was killed, she endured an arranged marriage to a cruel man in order to survive. Now widowed, her only focus is on clearing her son’s name from the charge of murder. That is until the love of her life returns from the grave.

A leader of a once great agency... Nathaniel Archer, the Earl of Exeter head of the Crown’s elite organization, the Brethren, is back on British soil. Captured and tortured twenty years ago, he clung to memories of his first love until he could escape. Discovering she has married whilst he was captive, Nathaniel sets aside the distractions of love... until an unexpected case is thrust upon him—to solve the murder of the Viscount Waters. There is just one complication: the prime suspect’s mother is none other than Victoria, the woman he once loved with his very soul.

Secrets will be uncovered and passions rekindled. Victoria and Nathaniel must trust one another if they hope to start

anew—in love and life. But will duty destroy their last chance?



“Her Christmas Rogue”



Lady Winifred Grisham has been in love with her brother’s best friend, Lord Trent Ballantine, more years than she can remember. The only problem is, Trent is a notorious rogue who doesn’t dally with the respectable. Except, Winnie doesn’t want a dalliance—she wants his heart.

Born to a miserable family, Lord Trent has found joy and comfort in the folds of his best friend’s family. Except, over the years he’s begun to notice something. Winnie, who he’d always seen as another sister is, in fact, something more—a captivating woman. Now, loving Winnie as he does, Trent knows she deserves more than a rogue in her life. With Winnie’s mother rushing her off to try and make a match at Lady Weston’s annual Christmastide house party, Winnie has but a few days to show Trent that all she needs is his love.

Is this the Season where anything can happen?



“Rogues Rush In”



A Regency Duet by Tessa Dare & Christi Caldwell

New York Times and USA Today Bestselling authors Tessa Dare and Christi Caldwell come together in this smart, sexy, not-to-be-missed Regency Duet!

Two scandalous brides...

Two rogues who won't be denied...

His Bride for the Taking by NYT Bestselling author Tessa Dare

It's the first rule of friendship among gentlemen: Don't even think about touching your best friend's sister. But Sebastian, Lord Byrne, has never been one for rules. He's thought about touching Mary Clayton—a lot—and struggled to resist temptation. But when Mary's bridegroom leaves her waiting at the altar, only Sebastian can save her from ruin. By marrying her himself.

In eleven years, he's never laid a finger on his best friend's sister. Now he's going to take her with both hands. To have, to hold... and to love.

His Duchess for a Day by USA Today Bestseller Christi Caldwell

It was never meant to be...

That's what Elizabeth Terry has told herself while trying to forget the man she married—her once best friend. Passing herself off as a widow, Elizabeth has since built a life for herself as an instructor at a finishing school, far away from that greatest of mistakes. But the past has a way of finding

you, and now that her husband has found her, Elizabeth must face the man she's tried to forget.

It was time to right a wrong...

Crispin Ferguson, the Duke of Huntington, has spent the past years living with regret. The young woman he married left without a by-your-leave, and his hasty elopement had devastating repercussions. Despite everything, Crispin never stopped thinking about Elizabeth. Now that he's found her, he has one request—be his duchess, publicly, just for a day.

Can spending time together as husband and wife rekindle the bond they once shared? Or will a shocking discovery tear them apart... this time, forever?



“Five Days with a Duke”



***Book 5 in the “Heart of a Scandal” Series by
Christi Caldwell***

Years earlier, Connell Wordsworth, the Duke of Renaud, gave up the woman he wanted for the responsibilities thrust upon him. After loss upon loss, he heads to London for a new home with no memories, no staff, and the only thing he wants in life... to be alone. He's managing that feat quite nicely until...

Lady Constance Brandley has a secret. She and her family don't have two farthings to rub together. A spinster, long past

the age of either love or marriage, she finds herself presented with a unique opportunity that could improve her circumstances. Except, that opportunity also brings the unlikeliest of gentlemen into her life—her best friend’s former betrothed, the Duke of Renaud.

Thrown together with the notorious scoundrel, it isn’t long before Constance discovers there’s far more to Connell, the Duke of Renaud than the world sees. And soon she finds herself longing for everything she shouldn’t—the heart of a duke.



“His Duchess for a Day”



*Book 4 in the “Heart of a Scandal” Series by
Christi Caldwell*

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Can spending time together as husband and wife rekindle the bond they once shared? Or will a shocking discovery tear them apart... this time, forever?



“A Matchmaker for a Marquess”



*Book 3 in the “Heart of a Scandal” Series by
Christi Caldwell*

She lived by a strict set of rules...

Meredith Durant believes those who won't marry, should matchmake, and she's made a notable career for herself helping young women find the perfect mate. Having suffered a broken heart years before, she's quite content in her work and determined to never fall prey to love again. Her most recent job finds her working for the unlikeliest of households, never expecting her assignment would be her best friend's younger brother, Barry—who's not so little anymore. He's a grown man who leaves her breathless and wishing just maybe this time she could have a happy ending. But how can that happen when, once her job is done, she must watch him wed another?

He's decided to break her rules:

Barry Aberdeen, the future Duke of Gayle, knew his days of freedom were numbered. With his sister recently married, his mother turned her marital aspirations to him. She's even gone as far as to hire a matchmaker. Worse, the matchmaker is a childhood friend—Meredith Durant. Only the rigid, serious creature is not the carefree girl he remembered. If he's going to be saddled with a matchmaker, he's going to have fun loosening Meredith's too-tight chignon. What he doesn't expect is how entranced he'll be when those strands come falling down around her shoulders.



“A Lady’s Guide to a Gentleman’s Heart”



*Book 2 in the “Heart of a Scandal” Series by
Christi Caldwell*

Honor demands he give her up—

Heath Whitworth, Marquess of Mulgrave and heir to a dukedom, is honorable to his handsome bones. When his mother insists he spend the holidays dancing attendance on Lady Emilia Aberdeen, he has no choice but to do the gentlemanly thing. For years, Heath has harbored feelings for the lady, but he knows exactly why his best friend jilted Emilia years ago, and that secret makes a happily ever after for Heath and Emilia an impossibility.

Love demands she follow her heart—

Heartbroken after the man she loved ended their betrothal, Lady Emilia Aberdeen, is quite content to live a spinster's life

penning an anonymous column that offers guidance to young ladies. Except, the more she is thrown into Lord Mulgrave's company, the more she sees that the proper, always-alooft gentleman is also charming, clever, and inconveniently attractive. Emilia discovers maybe it is possible to love again but with secrets between them, Heath will face his greatest challenge yet: loving Emilia Aberdeen or letting her go.



“Schooling the Duke”



*Book 1 in the “Heart of a Scandal” Series by
Christi Caldwell*

A lady betrayed:

Finishing school instructor, Mrs. Rowena Bryant is hated by her students, revered by the headmistress, and absolutely determined to maintain her financial security. Deceived years ago by the only man she'd ever given her heart to, Rowena relies on no one but herself—that is the best way to keep her most scandalous secret.

A soldier turned duke:

When Graham Linford returned from war on the cusp of death, he discovered he'd been betrayed by the woman he loved. From that moment, Graham shaped himself into an unfeeling nobleman, refusing to ever suffer the agony of betrayal again. Now a duke, Graham is determined no one will ever discover the touch of madness that has haunted him since battle.

Lovers reunited:

When Graham finds himself named guardian to a young lady, the woman sent as a companion to his ward is none other than Rowena Bryant. With every moment spent together, their passion reignites, and the walls they've built to keep one another out begin to crumble. But when their dark past tests them again will true love be enough to repair their damaged hearts?



“In Need of a Knight”



*Prequel Novella in the “Heart of a Scandal” Series
by Christi Caldwell*

Years earlier, a Roma woman passed to Lady Aldora Adamson and her friends a heart pendant that promised them each the heart of a duke.

Now, a young lady, with her family facing ruin and scandal, Lady Aldora doesn't have time for mythical stories about cheap baubles. She needs to save her younger siblings and has resigned herself to marrying a titled gentleman with wealth, power, and a respectable name. She sets her bespectacled sights upon the Marquess of St. James. Until...

An Unexpected Meeting:

Turned out by his father after a tragic scandal, Lord Michael Knightly has grown into a powerful, but self-made man. With the whispers and stares that still follow him, he's been

shut out of respectable society. He would rather be anywhere but London...

Then he meets Lady Aldora, a young woman who mistakes him for his brother, the Marquess of St. James. The connection between Aldora and Michael is immediate, and as they come to know one another, Aldora's feelings for Michael grow.

Now, Aldora is left to choose between her responsibilities as a sister and her love for Michael.



“The Vixen”



*Book 2 in the “Wicked Wallflowers” Series by
Christi Caldwell*

Set apart by her ethereal beauty and fearless demeanor, Ophelia Killoran has always been a mystery to those around her—and a woman they underestimated. No one would guess that she spends her nights protecting the street urchins of St. Giles. Ophelia knows what horrors these children face. As a young girl, she faced those horrors herself, and she would have died... if not for the orphan boy who saved her life.

A notorious investigator, Connor Steele, never expected to encounter Ophelia Killoran on his latest case. It has been years since he sacrificed himself for her. Now, she hires orphans from the street to work in her brother's gaming hell. But where does she find the children... and what are her intentions?

Ophelia and Connor are at odds. After all, Connor now serves the nobility, and that is a class of people Ophelia knows firsthand not to trust. But if they can set aside their misgivings and work together, they may discover that their purposes—and their hearts—are perfectly aligned.



“The Hellion”



*Book 1 in the “Wicked Wallflowers” Series by
Christi Caldwell*

Adair Thorne has just watched his gaming-hell dream disappear into a blaze of fire and ash, and he’s certain that his competitors, the Killorans, are behind it. His fury and passion burn even hotter when he meets Cleopatra Killoran, a tart-mouthed vixen who mocks him at every turn. If she were anyone else but the enemy, she’d ignite a desire in him that would be impossible to control.

No one can make Cleopatra do anything. That said, she’ll do whatever it takes to protect her siblings—even if that means being sponsored by their rivals for a season in order to land a noble husband. But she will not allow her head to be turned by the infuriating and darkly handsome Adair Thorne.

There’s only one thing that threatens the rules of the game: Cleopatra’s secret. It could unravel the families’ tenuous truce and shatter the unpredictably sinful romance mounting between the hellion... and a scoundrel who could pass for the devil himself.



“To Hold a Lady’s Secret”



Book 16 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

Return to the breathtaking world of the HEART OF A DUKE...the USA Today bestselling series that is sure to leave you breathless and longing for more!

Lady Gillian Farendale is in trouble. Her titled father has dragged her through one London Season after another, until the sheer monotony of the marriage mart and the last vestige of Gillian’s once-independent spirit conspire to lead her into a single night of folly. When her adventure goes so very wrong, she has only one old friend to whom she can turn for help.

Colin Lockhart’s youthful friendship with Lady Gillian cost him everything, and a duke’s by-blow had little enough to start with. He’s survived years on London’s roughest streets to become a highly successful Bow Street Runner, and his dream of his own inquiry agency is almost within his grasp.

Then Gillian begs him to once again risk angering her powerful father. The ruthless logic of the street tells Colin that he dare not help Gillian, while his tender heart tempts him to once again risk.



“To Tempt a Scoundrel”



Book 15 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

Never trust a gentleman...

Once before, Lady Alice Winterbourne trusted her heart to an honorable, respectable man... only to be jilted in the scandal of the Season. Longing for an escape from all the whispers and humiliation, Alice eagerly accepts an invitation to her friend's house party. In the country, she hopes to find some peace from the embarrassment left in London... Unfortunately, she finds her former betrothed and his new bride in attendance.

Never love a lady...

Lord Rhys Brookfield has no interest in marriage. Ever. He's worked quite hard at building both his fortune and his reputation as a rogue—and intends to enjoy all that they can offer him. That is if his match-making mother will stop pairing him with prospective brides. When Rhys and Alice meet, sparks flare. But with every new encounter, their first impressions of one another are challenged and an unlikely friendship is forged.

Desperate, Rhys proposes a pretend courtship, one meant to spite Alice's former betrothed and prevent any matchmaking attempts toward Rhys. What neither expects is that a pretense can become so much more. Or that a burning passion can heal... and hurt.



“Beguiled by a Baron”



Book 14 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

A Lady with a Secret... Partially deaf, with a birthmark marring her face, Bridget Hamilton is content with her life, even if she's been cast out of her family. But her peaceful existence—expanding her mind with her study of rare books—is threatened with an ultimatum from her evil brother—steal a valuable book or give up her son. Bridget has no choice; her son is her world.

A Lord with a Purpose... Vail Basingstoke, Baron Chilton, is known throughout London as the Bastard Baron. After battling at Waterloo, he establishes himself as the foremost dealer in rare books and builds a fortune, determined to never be like the self-serving duke who sired him. He devotes his life to growing his fortune to care for his illegitimate siblings, also fathered by the duke. The chance to sell a highly coveted book for a financial windfall is his only thought.

Two Paths Collide... When Bridget masquerades as the baron's newest housekeeper, he's hopelessly intrigued by her quick wit and her skill with antique tomes. Wary from having his heart broken in the past, it should be easy enough to keep Bridget at arm's length, yet desire for her dogs his steps. As they spend time in each other's company, understanding for life grows as does love, but when Bridget's integrity is called into question, Vail's world is shattered—as is his heart again.

Now Bridget and Vail will have to overcome the horrendous secrets and lies between them to grasp a love—and life— together.



“To Enchant a Wicked Duke”



Book 13 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

A Devil in Disguise

Years ago, when Nick Tallings, the recent Duke of Huntly, watched his family destroyed at the hands of a merciless nobleman, he vowed revenge. But his efforts had been futile, as his enemy, Lord Rutland, is without weakness.

Until now...

With his rival finally happily married, Nick is able to set his ruthless scheme into motion. His plot hinges upon Lord Rutland’s innocent, empty-headed sister-in-law, Justina Barrett. Nick will ruin her, marry her, and then leave her brokenhearted.

A Lady Dreaming of Love:

From the moment Justina Barrett makes her Come Out, she is labeled a Diamond. Even with her ruthless father determined to sell her off to the highest bidder, Justina never gives up on her hope for a good, honorable gentleman who values her wit more than her looks.

A Not-So-Chance Meeting:

Nick's ploy to ensnare Justina falls neatly into place in the streets of London. With each carefully orchestrated encounter, he slips further and further inside the lady's heart, never anticipating that Justina, with her quick wit and strength, will break down his own defenses. As Nick's plans begin to unravel, he's left to determine which is more important—Justina's love or his vow for vengeance. But can Justina ever forgive the duke who deceived her?



“One Winter with a Baron”



Book 12 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

A clever spinster:

Content with her spinster lifestyle, Miss Sybil Cunning wants to prove that a future as an unmarried woman is the only life for her. As a bluestocking who values hard, empirical data, Sybil needs help with her research. Nolan Pratt, Baron Webb, one of society's most scandalous rakes, is the perfect gentleman to help her. After all, he inspires fear in proper mothers and desire within their daughters.

A notorious rake:

Society may be aware of Nolan Pratt, Baron's Webb's wicked ways, but what he has carefully hidden is his miserable handling of his family's finances. When Sybil presents him the opportunity to earn much-needed funds, he can't refuse.

A winter to remember:

However, what begins as a business arrangement becomes something more and with every meeting, Sybil slips inside his heart. Can this clever woman look beneath the veneer of a coldhearted rake to see the man Nolan truly is?



“To Redeem a Rake”



Book 11 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

He’s spent years scandalizing society.

Now, this rake must change his ways.

Society’s most infamous scoundrel, Daniel Winterbourne, the Earl of Montfort, has been promised a small fortune if he can relinquish his wayward, carousing lifestyle. And behaving means he must also help find a respectable companion for his youngest sister—someone who will guide her and whom she can emulate. However, Daniel knows no such woman. But when he encounters a childhood friend, Daniel believes she may just be the answer to all of his problems.

Having been secretly humiliated by an unscrupulous blackguard years earlier, Miss Daphne Smith dreams of finding work at Ladies of Hope, an institution that provides an education for disabled women. With her sordid past and a disfigured leg, few opportunities arise for a woman such as she. Knowing Daniel’s history, she wishes to avoid him, but working for his sister is exactly the stepping stone she needs.

Their attraction intensifies as Daniel and Daphne grow closer, preparing his sister for the London Season. But Daniel must resist his desire for a woman tarnished by scandal while Daphne is reminded of the boy she once knew. Can society's most notorious rake redeem his reputation and become the man Daphne deserves?



“To Woo a Widow”



Book 10 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

They see a brokenhearted widow.

She's far from shattered.

Lady Philippa Winston is never marrying again. After her late husband's cruelty that she kept so well hidden, she has no desire to search for love.

Years ago, Miles Brookfield, the Marquess of Guilford, made a frivolous vow he never thought would come to fruition—he promised to marry his mother's goddaughter if he was unwed by the age of thirty. Now, to his dismay, he's faced with honoring that pledge. But when he encounters the beautiful and intriguing Lady Philippa, Miles knows his true path in life. It's up to him to break down every belief Philippa carries about gentlemen, proving that not only is love real, but that he is the man deserving of her sheltered heart.

Will Philippa let down her guard and allow Miles to woo a widow in desperate need of his love?



“The Lure of a Rake”



Book 9 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

A Lady Dreaming of Love:

Lady Genevieve Farendale has a scandalous past. Jilted at the altar years earlier and exiled by her family, she’s now returned to London to prove she can be a proper lady. Even though she’s not given up on the hope of marrying for love, she’s wary of trusting again. Then she meets Cedric Falcot, the Marquess of St. Albans, whose seductive ways set her heart aflutter. But with her sordid history, Genevieve knows a rake can also easily destroy her.

An Unlikely Pairing:

What begins as a chance encounter between Cedric and Genevieve becomes something more. As they continue to meet, passions stir. But with Genevieve’s hope for true love, she fears Cedric will be unable to give up his wayward lifestyle. After all, Cedric has spent years protecting his heart and keeping everyone out. Slowly, she chips away at all the walls he’s built, but when he falters, Genevieve can’t offer him redemption. Now, it’s up to Cedric to prove to Genevieve that the love of a man is far more powerful than the lure of a rake.



“To Trust a Rogue”



Book 8 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

A rogue:

Marcus, the Viscount Wessex, has carefully crafted the image of rogue and charmer for Polite Society. Under that façade, however, dwells a man whose dreams were shattered almost eight years earlier by a young lady who captured his heart, pledged her love, and then left him, with nothing more than a curt note.

A widow:

Eight years earlier, faced with no other choice, Mrs. Eleanor Collins, fled London and the only man she ever loved, Marcus, Viscount Wessex. She has now returned to serve as a companion for her elderly aunt with a daughter in tow. Even though they're next door neighbors, there is little reason for her to move in the same circles as Marcus, just in case, she vows to avoid him, for he reminds her of all she lost when she left.

Reunited:

As their paths continue to cross, Marcus finds his desire for Eleanor just as strong, but he learned long ago she's not to be trusted. He will offer her a place in his bed, but not anything more. Only, Eleanor has no interest in this new, roguish man. The more time they spend together, the protective walls they've constructed to keep the other out, begin to break.

With all the betrayals and secrets between them, Marcus has to open his heart again. And Eleanor must decide if it's ever safe to trust a rogue.



“To Wed His Christmas Lady”



Book 7 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

She's longing to be loved:

Lady Cara Falcot has only served one purpose to her loathsome father—to increase his power through a marriage to the future Duke of Billingsley. As such, she's built protective walls about her heart and presents an icy facade to the world around her. Journeying home from her finishing school for the Christmas holidays, Cara's carriage is stranded during a winter storm. She's forced to tarry at a ramshackle inn, where she immediately antagonizes another patron—William.

He's avoiding his duty in favor of one last adventure:

William Hargrove, the Marquess of Grafton, has wanted only one thing in life—to avoid the future match his parents would have him make to a cold, duke's daughter. He's returning home from a blissful eight years of traveling the world to see to his responsibilities. But when a winter storm interrupts his trip and lands him at a falling-down inn, he's forced to share company with a commanding Lady Cara who

initially reminds him exactly of the woman he so desperately wants to avoid.

A Christmas snowstorm ushers in the spirit of the season: At the holiday time, these two people who despise each other due to first perceptions are offered renewed beginnings and fresh starts. As this gruff stranger breaks down the walls she's built about herself, Cara has to determine whether she can truly open her heart to trusting that any man is capable of good and that she herself is capable of love. And William has to set aside all previous thoughts he's carried of the polished ladies like Cara, to be the man to show her that love.



“The Heart of a Scoundrel”



Book 6 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

Ruthless, wicked, and dark, the Marquess of Rutland rouses terror in the breast of ladies and noblemen alike. All Edmund wants in life is power. After he was publically humiliated by his one love, Lady Margaret, he vowed vengeance, using Margaret's niece, as his pawn. Except, he's thwarted by another, more enticing target—Miss Phoebe Barrett.

Miss Phoebe Barrett knows precisely the shame she's been born to. Because her father is a shocking leech she's learned to form her own opinions on a person's worth. After a chance meeting with the Marquess of Rutland, she is captivated by the mysterious man. He, too, is a victim of society's scorn,

but the more encounters she has with Edmund, the more she knows there is powerful depth and emotion to the jaded marquess.

The lady wreaks havoc on Edmund's plans for revenge and he finds he wants Phoebe, at all costs. As she's drawn into the darkness of his world, Phoebe risks being destroyed by Edmund's ruthlessness. And Phoebe, who desires love at all costs, has to determine if she can ever truly trust the heart of a scoundrel.



“To Love a Lord”



Book 5 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

All she wants is security:

The last place finishing school instructor Mrs. Jane Munroe belongs, is in Polite Society. Vowing to never wed, she's been scuttled around from post to post. Now she finds herself in the Marquess of Waverly's household. She's never met a nobleman she liked, and when she meets the pompous, arrogant marquess, she remembers why. But soon, she discovers Gabriel is unlike any gentleman she's ever known.

All he wants is a companion for his sister:

What Gabriel finds himself with instead, is a fiery spirited, bespectacled woman who entices him at every corner and challenges his age-old vow to never trust his heart to a

woman. But... there is something suspicious about his sister's companion. And he is determined to find out just what it is.

All they need is each other:

As Gabriel and Jane confront the truth of their feelings, the lies and secrets between them begin to unravel. And Jane is left to decide whether or not it is ever truly safe to love a lord.



“Loved by a Duke”



Book 4 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

For ten years, Lady Daisy Meadows has been in love with Auric, the Duke of Crawford. Ever since his gallant rescue years earlier, Daisy knew she was destined to be his Duchess. Unfortunately, Auric sees her as his best friend's sister and nothing more. But perhaps, if she can manage to find the fabled heart of a duke pendant, she will win over the heart of her duke.

Auric, the Duke of Crawford, enjoys Daisy's company. The last thing he is interested in however, is pursuing a romance with a woman he's known since she was in leading strings. This season, Daisy is turning up in the oddest places and he cannot help but notice that she is no longer a girl. But Auric wouldn't do something as foolhardy as to fall in love with Daisy. He couldn't. Not with the guilt he carries over his past sins... Not when he has no right to her heart... But

perhaps, just perhaps, she can forgive the past and trust that he'd forever cherish her heart—but will she let him?



“The Love of a Rogue”



Book 3 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

Lady Imogen Moore hasn't had an easy time of it since she made her Come Out. With her betrothed, a powerful duke breaking it off to wed her sister, she's become the *tons* favorite piece of gossip. Never again wanting to experience the pain of a broken heart, she's resolved to make a match with a polite, respectable gentleman. The last thing she wants is another reckless rogue.

Lord Alex Edgerton has a problem. His brother, tired of Alex's carousing, has charged him with chaperoning their remaining, unwed sister about *ton* events. Shopping? No, thank you. Attending the theatre? He'd rather be at Forbidden Pleasures with a scantily clad beauty upon his lap. The task of *chaperone* becomes even more of a bother when his sister drags along her dearest friend, Lady Imogen, to social functions. The last thing he wants in his life is a young, innocent English miss.

Except, as Alex and Imogen are thrown together, passions flare and Alex comes to find he not only wants Imogen in his bed, but also in his heart. Yet now he must convince Imogen to risk all, on the heart of a rogue.



“More Than a Duke”



Book 2 in the “Heart of a Duke” Series by Christi Caldwell

Polite Society doesn't take Lady Anne Adamson seriously. However, Anne isn't just another pretty young miss. When she discovers her father betrayed her mother's love and her family descended into poverty, Anne comes up with a plan to marry a respectable, powerful, and honorable gentleman—a man nothing like her philandering father.

Armed with the heart of a duke pendant, fabled to land the wearer a duke's heart, she decides to enlist the aid of the notorious Harry, 6th Earl of Stanhope. A scoundrel with a scandalous past, he is the last gentleman she'd ever wed... however, his reputation marks him the perfect man to school her in the art of seduction so she might ensnare the illustrious Duke of Crawford.

Harry, the Earl of Stanhope, is a jaded, cynical rogue who lives for his own pleasures. Having been thrown over by the only woman he ever loved so she could wed a duke, he's not at all surprised when Lady Anne approaches him with her scheme to capture another duke's affection. He's come to appreciate that all women are, in fact, greedy, title-grasping, self-indulgent creatures. And with Anne's history of grating on his every last nerve, she is the last woman he'd ever agree to school in the art of seduction. Only his friendship with the lady's sister compels him to help.

What begins as a pretend courtship, born of lessons on seduction, becomes something more leaving Anne to decide if she can give her heart to a reckless rogue, and Harry must decide if he's willing to again trust in a lady's love.



“For Love of the Duke”



*First Full-Length Book in the “Heart of a Duke”
Series by Christi Caldwell*

After the tragic death of his wife, Jasper, the 8th Duke of Bainbridge, buried himself away in the dark, cold walls of his home, Castle Blackwood. When he's coaxed out of his self-imposed exile to attend the amusements of the Frost Fair, his life is irrevocably changed by his fateful meeting with Lady Katherine Adamson.

With her tight brown ringlets and silly white-ruffled gowns, Lady Katherine Adamson has found her dance card empty for two Seasons. After her father's passing, Katherine learned the unreliability of men and is determined to depend on no one except herself. Until she meets Jasper...

In a desperate bid to avoid a match arranged by her family, Katherine makes the Duke of Bainbridge a shocking proposition—one that he accepts.

Only, as Katherine begins to love Jasper, she finds the arrangement agreed upon is not enough. And Jasper is left to decide if protecting his heart is more important than fighting for Katherine's love.



“In Need of a Duke”



*A Prequel Novella to “The Heart of a Duke” Series
by Christi Caldwell*

In Need of a Duke: (Author’s Note: This is a prequel novella to “The Heart of a Duke” series by Christi Caldwell. It was originally available in “The Heart of a Duke” Collection and is now being published as an individual novella.

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It features a new prologue and epilogue.

Years earlier, a Roma woman passed to Lady Aldora Adamson and her friends a heart pendant that promised them each the heart of a duke.

Now, a young lady, with her family facing ruin and scandal, Lady Aldora doesn’t have time for mythical stories about cheap baubles. She needs to save her sisters and brother by marrying a titled gentleman with wealth and power to his name. She sets her bespectacled sights upon the Marquess of St. James.

Turned out by his father after a tragic scandal, Lord Michael Knightly has grown into a powerful, but self-made man. With the whispers and stares that still follow him, he would rather be anywhere but London...

Until he meets Lady Aldora, a young woman who mistakes him for his brother, the Marquess of St. James. The

connection between Aldora and Michael is immediate and as they come to know one another, Aldora's feelings for Michael war with her sisterly responsibilities. With her family's dire situation, a man of Michael's scandalous past will never do.

Ultimately, Aldora must choose between her responsibilities as a sister and her love for Michael.



“Once a Wallflower, At Last His Love”



Book 6 in the Scandalous Seasons Series

Responsible, practical Miss Hermione Rogers, has been crafting stories as the notorious Mr. Michael Michaelmas and selling them for a meager wage to support her siblings. The only real way to ensure her family's ruinous debts are paid, however, is to marry. Tall, thin, and plain, she has no expectation of success. In London for her first Season she seizes the chance to write the tale of a brooding duke. In her research, she finds Sebastian Fitzhugh, the 5th Duke of Mallen, who unfortunately is perfectly affable, charming, and so nicely... configured... he takes her breath away. He lacks all the character traits she needs for her story, but alas, any duke will have to do.

Sebastian Fitzhugh, the 5th Duke of Mallen, has been deceived so many times during the high-stakes game of courtship, he's lost faith in Society women. Yet, after a chance encounter with Hermione, he finds himself intrigued. Not a woman he'd normally consider beautiful, the young lady's

practical bent, her forthright nature and her tendency to turn up in the oddest places has his interests... roused. He'd like to trust her, he'd like to do a whole lot more with her too, but should he?



“A Marquess For Christmas”



Book 5 in the Scandalous Seasons Series

Lady Patrina Tidemore gave up on the ridiculous notion of true love after having her heart shattered and her trust destroyed by a black-hearted cad. Used as a pawn in a game of revenge against her brother, Patrina returns to London from a failed elopement with a tattered reputation and little hope for a respectable match. The only peace she finds is in her solitude on the cold winter days at Hyde Park. And even that is yanked from her by two little hellions who just happen to have a devastatingly handsome, but coldly aloof father, the Marquess of Beaufort. Something about the lord stirs the dreams she'd once carried for an honorable gentleman's love.

Weston Aldridge, the 4th Marquess of Beaufort, was deceived and betrayed by his late wife. In her faithlessness, he's come to view women as self-serving, indulgent creatures. Except, after a series of chance encounters with Patrina, he comes to appreciate how uniquely different she is than all women he's ever known.

At the Christmastide season, a time of hope and new beginnings, Patrina and Weston, unexpectedly learn true love

in one another. However, as Patrina's scandalous past threatens their future and the happiness of his children, they are both left to determine if love is enough.



“Always a Rogue, Forever Her Love”



Book 4 in the Scandalous Seasons Series

Miss Juliet Marshville is spitting mad. With one guardian missing, and the other singularly uninterested in her fate, she is at the mercy of her wastrel brother who loses her beloved childhood home to a man known as Sin. Determined to reclaim control of Rosecliff Cottage and her own fate, Juliet arranges a meeting with the notorious rogue and demands the return of her property.

Jonathan Tidemore, 5th Earl of Sinclair, known to the *ton* as Sin, is exceptionally lucky in life and at the gaming tables. He has just one problem. Well... four, really. His incorrigible sisters have driven off yet another governess. This time, however, his mother demands he find an appropriate replacement.

When Miss Juliet Marshville boldly demands the return of her precious cottage, he takes advantage of his sudden good fortune and puts an offer to her; turn his sisters into proper English ladies, and he'll return Rosecliff Cottage to Juliet's possession.

Jonathan comes to appreciate Juliet's spirit, courage, and clever wit, and decides to claim the fiery beauty as his

mistress. Juliet, however, will be mistress for no man. Nor could she ever love a man who callously stole her home in a game of cards. As Jonathan begins to see Juliet as more than a spirited beauty to warm his bed, he realizes she could be a lady he could love the rest of his life, if only he can convince the proud Juliet that he's worthy of her hand and heart.



“Always Proper, Suddenly Scandalous”



Book 3 in the Scandalous Seasons Series

Geoffrey Winters, Viscount Redbrooke, was not always the hard, unrelenting lord driven by propriety. After a tragic mistake, he resolved to honor his responsibility to the Redbrooke line and live a life free of scandal. Knowing his duty is to wed a proper, respectable English miss, he selects Lady Beatrice Dennington, daughter of the Duke of Somerset, the perfect woman for him. Until he meets Miss Abigail Stone...

To distance herself from a personal scandal, Abigail Stone flees America to visit her uncle, the Duke of Somerset. Determined to never trust a man again, she is helplessly intrigued by the hard, too-proper Geoffrey. With his strict appreciation for decorum and order, he is nothing like the man she's always dreamed of.

Abigail is everything Geoffrey does not need. She upends his carefully ordered world at every encounter. As they begin

to care for one another, Abigail carefully guards the secret that resulted in her journey to England.

Only, if Geoffrey learns the truth about Abigail, he must decide which he holds most dear: his place in Society or Abigail's place in his heart.



“Never Courted, Suddenly Wed”



Book 2 in the Scandalous Seasons Series

Christopher Ansley, Earl of Waxham, has constructed a perfect image for the *ton*—the ladies love him and his company is desired by all. Only two people know the truth about Waxham's secret. Unfortunately, one of them is Miss Sophie Winters.

Sophie Winters has known Christopher since she was in leading strings. As children, they delighted in tormenting each other. Now at two and twenty, she still has a tendency to find herself in scrapes, and her marital prospects are slim.

When his father threatens to expose his shame to the *ton*, unless he weds Sophie for her dowry, Christopher concocts a plan to remain a bachelor. What he didn't plan on was falling in love with the lively, impetuous Sophie. As secrets are exposed, will Christopher's love be enough when she discovers his role in his father's scheme?



“Forever Betrothed, Never the Bride”



Book 1 in the Scandalous Seasons Series

Hopeless romantic Lady Emmaline Fitzhugh is tired of sitting with the wallflowers, waiting for her betrothed to come to his senses and marry her. When Emmaline reads one too many reports of his scandalous liaisons in the gossip rags, she takes matters into her own hands.

War-torn veteran Lord Drake devotes himself to forgetting his days on the Peninsula through an endless round of meaningless associations. He no longer wants to feel anything, but Lady Emmaline is making it hard to maintain a state of numbness. With her zest for life, she awakens his passion and desire for love.

The one woman Drake has spent the better part of his life avoiding is now the only woman he needs, but he is no longer a man worthy of his Emmaline. It is up to her to show him the healing power of love.



“A Season of Hope”



A Danby Novella

Five years ago when her love, Marcus Wheatley, failed to return from fighting Napoleon’s forces, Lady Olivia Foster buried her heart. Unable to betray Marcus’s memory, Olivia has gone out of her way to run off prospective suitors. At three and twenty she considers herself firmly on the shelf. Her

father, however, disagrees and accepts an offer for Olivia's hand in marriage. Yet it's Christmas, when anything can happen...

Olivia receives a well-timed summons from her grandfather, the Duke of Danby, and eagerly embraces the reprieve from her betrothal.

Only, when Olivia arrives at Danby Castle she realizes the Christmas season represents hope, second chances, and even miracles.



“Winning a Lady’s Heart”



A Danby Novella

Author's Note: This is a novella that was originally available in *A Summons from the Castle* (The Regency Christmas Summons Collection). It is being published as an individual novella.

For Lady Alexandra, being the source of a cold, calculated wager is bad enough... but when it is waged by Nathaniel Michael Winters, 5th Earl of Pembroke, the man she's in love with, it results in a broken heart, the scandal of the season, and a summons from her grandfather—the Duke of Danby.

To escape Society's gossip, she hurries to her meeting with the duke, determined to put memories of the earl far behind. Except the duke has other plans for Alexandra... plans which include the 5th Earl of Pembroke!



“Courting Poppy Tidemore”



Book 5 in the “Lords of Honor” Series

Her name preceded her...

Lady Poppy Tidemore’s notorious family scandals assure her place in not-so-polite society. Of course, she didn’t help matters... with an infamous art lesson that left her name ruined. Now, Poppy’s only hope is to accept her sister’s invitation to live at the Paradise, the illustrious hotel owned by her brother-in-law. There she’ll be able to pursue her artistic studies without judgment. Except someone else at the Paradise knows Poppy, someone who used to occupy her girlish dreams: Lord Tristan. Thankfully, Poppy’s no longer that naïve little girl, moonstruck by the charming rogue. In fact, over the years, she and Tristan have become unlikely friends. So, there should be no problem living under the same roof... or at least, that’s what she keeps telling herself...

His reputation precluded him...

Scoundrel. Scapegrace. Soldier. That’s how he’s known... and not in that order. Tristan Poplar, now Baron Bolingbroke, has lost everything. Upon learning of his father’s dubious role in the disappearance of the rightful Maxwell heir, he’s lost not only his title and wealth, but also his respectability. He’s determined to restore his honor at all costs. However, honor proves a tricky thing—as does self-restraint—the more time he spends with alluring Poppy Tidemore. His best course of

action is to avoid her, but when Poppy presents Tristan with a legitimate offer he can't refuse, both enter with clear heads and uninvolved hearts.

Except, the more time they spend together, their arrangement blossoms into something more. And when an unexpected opportunity comes along for Tristan to restore his name, he'll have to decide which matters most: fighting for honor or fighting for Poppy's love.



“Tempted by a Lady’s Smile”



Book 4 in the “Lords of Honor” Series

Richard Jonas has loved but one woman—a woman who belongs to his brother. Refusing to suffer any longer, he evades his family in order to barricade his heart from unrequited love. While attending a friend's summer party, Richard's approach to love is changed after sharing a passionate and life-altering kiss with a vibrant and mysterious woman. Believing he was incapable of loving again, Richard finds himself tempted by a young lady determined to marry his best friend.

Gemma Reed has not been treated kindly by the *ton*. Often disregarded for her appearance and interests unlike those of a proper lady, Gemma heads to a house party to win the heart of Lord Westfield, the man she's loved for years. But her plan is set off course by the tempting and intriguing, Richard Jonas.

A chance meeting creates a new path for Richard and Gemma to forage—but can two people, scorned and shunned by those they’ve loved from afar, let down their guards to find true happiness?



“Rescued by a Lady’s Love”



Book 3 in the “Lords of Honor” Series

Destitute and determined to finally be free of any man’s shackles, Lily Benedict sets out to salvage her honor. With no choice but to commit a crime that will save her from her past, she enters the home of the recluse, Derek Winters, the new Duke of Blackthorne. But entering the “Beast of Blackthorne’s” lair proves more threatening than she ever imagined.

With half a face and a mangled leg, Derek—once rugged and charming—only exists within the confines of his home. Shunned by society, Derek is leery of the hauntingly beautiful Lily Benedict. As time passes, she slips past his defenses, reminding him how to live again. But when Lily’s sordid past comes back, threatening her life, it’s up to Derek to find the strength to become the hero he once was. Can they overcome the darkness of their sins to find a life of love and redemption?



“Captivated by a Lady’s Charm”



Book 2 in the “Lords of Honor” Series

In need of a wife...

Christian Villiers, the Marquess of St. Cyr, despises the role he's been cast into as fortune hunter but requires the funds to keep his marquisate solvent. Yet, the sins of his past cloud his future, preventing him from seeing beyond his fateful actions at the Battle of Toulouse. For he knows inevitably it will catch up with him, and everyone will remember his actions on the battlefield that cost so many so much—particularly his best friend.

In want of a husband...

Lady Prudence Tidemore's life is plagued by familial scandals, which makes her own marital prospects rather grim. Surely there is one gentleman of the ton who can look past her family and see just her and all she has to offer?

When Prudence runs into Christian on a London street, the charming, roguish gentleman immediately captures her attention. But then a chance meeting becomes a waltz, and now...

A Perfect Match...

All she must do is convince Christian to forget the cold requirements he has for his future marchioness. But the demons in his past prevent him from turning himself over to love. One thing is certain—Prudence wants the marquess and is determined to have him in her life, now and forever. It's just a matter of convincing Christian he wants the same.



“Seduced by a Lady’s Heart”



Book 1 in the “Lords of Honor” Series

You met Lieutenant Lucien Jones in “Forever Betrothed, Never the Bride” when he was a broken soldier returned from fighting Boney’s forces. This is his story of triumph and happily-ever-after!

Lieutenant Lucien Jones, son of a viscount, returned from war to find his wife and child dead. Blaming his father for the commission that sent him off to fight Boney’s forces, he was content to languish at London Hospital... until offered employment on the Marquess of Drake’s staff. Through his position, Lucien found purpose in life and is content to keep his past buried.

Lady Eloise Yardley has loved Lucien since they were children. Having long ago given up on the dream of him, she married another. Years later, she is a young, lonely widow who does not fit in with the *ton*. When Lucien’s family enlists her aid to reunite father and son, she leaps at the opportunity to not only aid her former friend, but to also escape London.

Lucien doesn’t know what scheme Eloise has concocted, but knowing her as he does, when she pays a visit to his employer, he knows she’s up to something. The last thing he wants is the temptation that this new, older, mature Eloise presents; a tantalizing reminder of happier times and peace.

Yet Eloise is determined to win Lucien’s love once and for all... if only Lucien can set aside the pain of his past and risk all on a lady’s heart.



“Only For Their Love”



Book 3 in the “The Theodosia Sword” Series

Miss Carol Cresswell bore witness to her parents’ loveless union and is determined to avoid that same miserable fate. Her mother has altogether different plans—plans that include a match between Carol and Lord Gregory Renshaw. Despite his wealth and power, Carol has no interest in marrying a pompous man who goes out of his way to ignore her. Now, with their families coming together for the Christmastide season it’s her mother’s last-ditch effort to get them together. And Carol plans to avoid Gregory at all costs.

Lord Gregory Renshaw has no intention of falling prey to his mother’s schemes to marry him off to a proper debutante she’s picked out. Over the years, he has carefully sidestepped all endeavors to be matched with any of the grasping ladies.

But a sudden Christmastide Scandal has the potential to show Carol and Gregory that they’ve spent years running from the one thing they’ve always needed.



“Only For Her Honor”



Book 2 in the “The Theodosia Sword” Series

A wounded soldier:

When Captain Lucas Rayne returned from fighting Boney’s forces, he was a shell of a man. A recluse who doesn’t leave his family’s estate, he’s content to shut himself away. Until he meets Eve...

A woman alone in the world:

Eve Ormond spent most of her life following the drum alongside her late father. When his shameful actions bring death and pain to English soldiers, Eve is forced back to England, an outcast. With no family or marital prospects she needs employment and finds it in Captain Lucas Rayne’s home. A man whose life was ruined by her father, Eve has no place inside his household. With few options available, however, Eve takes the post. What she never anticipates is how with their every meeting, this honorable, hurting soldier slips inside her heart.

The Secrets Between Them:

The more time Lucas spends with Eve, he remembers what it is to be alive and he lets the walls protecting his heart down. When the secrets between them come to light, will their love be enough? Or are they two destined for heartbreak?



“Only For His Lady”



Book 1 in the “The Theodosia Sword” Series

A curse. A sword. And the thief who stole her heart.

The Rayne family is trapped in a rut of bad luck. And now, it's up to Lady Theodosia Rayne to steal back the Theodosia sword, a gladius that was pilfered by the rival, loathed Renshaw family. Hopefully, recovering the stolen sword will break the cycle and reverse her family's fate.

Damian Renshaw, the Duke of Devlin, is feared by all—all, that is, except Lady Theodosia, the brazen spitfire who enters his home and wrestles an ancient relic from his wall. Intrigued by the vivacious woman, Devlin has no intention of relinquishing the sword to her.

As Theodosia and Damian battle for ownership, passion ignites. Now, they are torn between their age-old feud and the fire that burns between them. Can two forbidden lovers find a way to make amends before their families' war tears them apart?



“Her Duke of Secrets”



Book 2 in the “Brethren of the Lords” Series

Death was preferable...

Since his wife was killed in an accident that stole his happiness and left him injured, William Helling, the Duke of Aubrey, is a broken man. Neither strong drink and loose women nor the power he wields as leader of the Brethren of Lords can free him from the nightmares that haunt him. He prefers to be left alone, and has no desire to heal the wound

his life has become. Then one day Miss Elsie Allenby, rumored to be a skilled healer, enters his household. He should send her away and yet he's enthralled by the mysterious stranger.

Healing was her life...

But not a day passes when Elsie Allenby doesn't miss her father nor remind herself where the blame for his death lies: The Brethren of Lords. Since that betrayal, she's made a life for herself on the fringe of society, caring for wounded animals. Her peaceful life is turned upside down when her help is requested by the Brethren, and she finds herself in the presence of the last person she ever thought she would aide: William Helling, the leader of the Brethren.

With every exchange, passion grows between Elsie and William. Soon the protective walls they've built begin to crumble. But when danger threatens them both, they'll need to overcome the treachery around them. Will the past steal their passion, or will love find a way?

Non-Fiction Works by Christi Caldwell

Uninterrupted Joy: Memoir: My Journey through Infertility, Pregnancy, and Special Needs

The following journey was never intended for publication. It was written from a mother to her unborn child. The words detailed her struggle through infertility and the joy of finally being pregnant. A stunning revelation at her son's birth opened a world of both fear and discovery. This is the story of

one mother's love and hope and... her quest for
uninterrupted joy.

Biography

Christi Caldwell is the bestselling author of historical romance novels set in the Regency era. Christi blames Judith McNaught's "Whitney, My Love," for luring her into the world of historical romance. While sitting in her graduate school apartment at the University of Connecticut, Christi decided to set aside her notes and try her hand at writing romance. She believes the most perfect heroes and heroines have imperfections and rather enjoys tormenting them before crafting a well-deserved happily ever after!

When Christi isn't writing the stories of flawed heroes and heroines, she can be found in her Southern Connecticut home with her courageous son, and caring for twin princesses-in-training!

Visit www.christicaldwellauthor.com to learn more about what Christi is working on, or join her on Facebook at [Christi Caldwell Author](https://www.facebook.com/ChristiCaldwellAuthor), and Twitter [@ChristiCaldwell](https://twitter.com/ChristiCaldwell)!