



La ventaja de la heredera

Courtney Milan

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La señorita Jane Fairfield no podía hacer nada bien. Cuando estaba en compañía, siempre decía lo que no debía... y lo decía mucho. Por muy caros que fueran sus vestidos, siempre estaban en el lado contrario del buen gusto. Ni siquiera su inmensa dote podía salvarla de ser objeto de mofa.

Y eso era precisamente lo que ella quería. Estaba dispuesta a todo, hasta a ser humillada, con tal de seguir soltera y proteger a su hermana.

El señor Oliver Marshall tenía que hacerlo todo bien. Era hijo bastardo de un duque, criado en circunstancias humildes, y pretendía dar voz y poder a la gente humilde. Si daba un paso en falso, nunca tendría la oportunidad de hacer nada. No le ayudaría acudir al rescate de la mujer equivocada. Y mucho menos le ayudaría enamorarse de ella. Pero la valiente y encantadora Jane tenía algo a lo que él no se podía resistir... aunque eso pudiera implicar el desastre para los dos.

La ventaja de la heredera Details

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From Reader Review La ventaja de la heredera for online ebook

Susanne says

Historical Romance - 4 stars!

Courtney Milan is a wonderful author and the Brother Sinister series is a wonderful series. **This was by far the funniest romance I've read in a while and CM's funniest to date!**

Jane needs to stay unmarried until her sister turns 21 and can escape from her guardian. And she will do anything to stay unmarried.

"You", he said with a small gesture of his hand, "are an anti-chameleon."

"I am an ant-eating what?"

"And anti-chameleon. The opposite of a chameleon," he explained. "You change colors, yes. But when you are in sand, you fashion yourself a bright blue so that the sand knows that you are not part of it. When you are in water, you turn red so that everyone knows you are no liquid. Instead of blending in, you change so you stand out."

Jane swallowed hard.

"Well, Sebastian," Marshall said, turning back to his friend, "what think you of that sort of adaption? What kind of creature tries to stand out from it's surroundings?"

Mr. Malheur frowned and rubbed his forehead as he considered the question. "Poisons ones," he finally said.

Jane has good reason for her charade. She is naturally loud and socially awkward. Her sister has fits, like a mild form of epilepsy, and her guardian never lets her out and brings charlatans to experiment on her.

Marshall is the first one to see beyond Jane's bright feathers. He was the problem for me in this book. I wasn't very fond of him. He is too insecure and he lets other dictates his life. He is neither good or bad, but he couldn't make me fall in love with him.

On the upside, the side plot was divine. Without spoiling too much, I will say that her sister manages to sneak out and have an adventure of her own!

She would walk and smile, and nobody would know that she'd escaped the dreadful clutches of...of...

Not pirates. Not whalers. Not the czar of Russia.

"I've escaped the evil clutches of a nap", she announced to the road.

As a last note, this book can be read as a standalone, but as the other books are stronger IMHO I would really recommend that you start from the beginning.

My biggest thanks to Courtney Milan and Netgalley for providing me with an ARC. Always a pleasure!

Hero 3 ♥ Heroine 4 ♥ Romance 3 ♥ Humor 4 ♥ Hotness 2

Navessa says

There are a lot of wonderful reviews for this book.

There's a reason.

A while back I wrote a review for a different historical romance that was pretty much a how-to for writers wanting to break into the game. Courtney Milan's reaction to it would probably be something like this:

I've read...a lot of HRs. What can I say? It's my go-to genre for rainy days. Whenever I'm feeling blue or have had a shitty week at work I know I can pick one up and have my frown turned upside down by witty banter, silly miscommunications, some steamy sex and a HEA.

As much as I love these books, I can't read them one after another because there are so many recurring themes and overused tropes that they all start to blend together until I can't remember if it was the Duke with the shadowed past that had been the one to sweep the virginal Mary Sue off her feet and make her forget about her qualms concerning premarital sex...or if it had been the Earl.

I was beginning to think that I'd never come across a book that would stand out from the rest of the pack in almost every single way. And then Courtney Milan pulled up outside my house and said

Ignoring everything I've ever learned about stranger danger, I got in. And I'm so, *so* happy I did. This book was decidedly free of the tropes you'd expect from an HR. Not only that, but it tackled tough issues like labor rights and racism and medical malpractice. I know what you're thinking; the front door, shut it. Well it's shutted.

I really can't say enough about *The Heiress Effect* or how much I enjoyed reading about a female from this time period that knew what she wanted and wasn't willing to dim her brilliance for the sake of a man. Nor can I say enough about how brilliantly this all came together in the end.

To be honest, this book felt more like historical fiction than romance and that was largely due to the prevalence of the period accurate issues addressed within it. But really, HR, HF, who cares? The book is good peeps, go read it.

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Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

Actual rating: 4.5

Recommended for HR fans who want to read about believable, flawed, mature characters. There is no

pettiness here, there are no fits, no tantrums, no spitefulness, no determination to avoid a relationship for the sake of not wanting a commitment and a fear of love. Courtney Milan always writes exceptional characters, and this book follows that very satisfying formula. Unlike the first book in this series, I found the characters to be interesting, the plot, while partially politically-oriented, to be far more tolerable. Overall, a very good book with wonderfully sympathetic characters.

*One note of complaint. Can we have an accurate cover once in awhile? None of this generic pretty-girl-in-a-pretty-dress shit. The heroine is unapologetically fat, with a 37-inch waistline. She prefers disgustingly bright, garish clothing, deliberately so. I understand not wanting our heroine to wear a yellow-and-purple polka-dotted and lined with plaid, underscored with 3 different types of lace on the cover but at least let her **look like she's remotely plump, pretty please?**

Miss Jane Fairfield is an heiress worth 100,000 pounds. There's just one thing keeping her from making a very advantageous marriage, herself. She deliberately dresses in atrocious fashions, befriend the wrong sort of backhanded, bitchy women who will compliment her to her face and laugh at her behind her back. She deliberately makes outrageous and fluffy conversation. She is, without a doubt, the joke of the Ton. She likes it that way. Jane is not looking for marriage, she is counting. Counting every single day until her half sister Emily comes of age so that they can move out together and be free of their stuffy, backwards, controlling guardian. And her plan is working fantastically, despite her ridiculously large dowry, she cannot get a husband. The gentlemen of the town avoid her at all cost, to them, she is the "Feather Heiress."

"Imagine someone starts beating you with a feather. Imagine that they never stop, until one day, the constant annoyance of goose feathers pushes you over the edge. In a fury you strangle the person who has been beating you. Then you hang for murder. You, my friend, have been beaten to death by feathers.'

Oliver snorted. 'Nobody is that bad.'

Whitting put his hand to his head and rubbed at the furrows on his brow. 'She's worse.'"

Mr. Oliver Marshall is as straight-laced as they come. He wasn't always so. He was born the bastard son of a duke, and it has been ingrained in him that he is always unworthy, always lower, always worth *less* than his entitled and titled peers. He seeks a political career, he wants to change--if not the world--then at least some of its policies. Oliver needs to be respected, to be admired. He does not need someone like Jane. He does not want her money, for with it will come along the rumor that he married her only for her money. He does not need Jane herself, because of her intention of making herself an unmarriageable laughingstock.

Oliver is such a flawed character. No, there's none of the tortured soul, of the I will never fall in love because I am worthy of no one stock. His anger comes from within. He may disguise it well in public, but internally he rages against the injustice of the social order into which he was born, and into which he has been dismissed, because of what he could not control--his status as a duke's bastard. His political status has been hard-fought, as he grits his teeth and bows down to the peers who mock him in the upper echelons of society. *Oliver outwardly bends to their will, inwardly he seeks revenge.*

He first meets Jane and attracts her attention due to his kindness, due to his perspicacity in seeing through her disguise; his unwonted kindness towards her shakes Jane's resolve.

"'You,' he said, with a small gesture of his hand, 'are an anti-chameleon.'

'I am an ant-eating what?'

'An anti-chameleon. The opposite of a chameleon,' he explained. 'You change your colors, yes. But when you are in sand, you fashion yourself a bright blue so that the sand knows you are not a part of it. When you are in water, you turn red so that everyone knows you are not liquid. Instead of blending in, you change so that you stand out.'"

They learn from each other, they draw strength from each other. They help each other conquer and break the mold that society sees of them. They have an undeniable attraction and love for each other, but there are barriers that seems insurmountable. Namely, her need to protect her sister, and his political aspirations. She cannot leave her ill sister to their guardian, and he needs a proper wife. The proper wife fits into a mold, and as much as Oliver loves Jane, he realizes that it would be selfish to force her into that mold.

""You saw what they were like tonight. The women who marry politicians. Part of me wants to ask you to become one of them, but how could I? Ask you to mute the best of you? To make yourself into a drab little wren, when you've become a phoenix? I could never forgive myself if I asked you to extinguish your fire.""

Do I really need to tell you how this book ends? It's not so predictable, is it? The journey of how they got there is so enjoyable, and despite the lack of a major, compelling plotline, this book was just so enjoyable because of the characters and how they developed. This was such a sweet, lovely story, and Oliver is a dream.

(view spoiler)

UniquelyMoi ~ BlithelyBookish says

Kindle Deal - temporarily \$0.99 - A STEAL!!

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00D...> via @amazon

Another Brilliant *Brothers Sinister* Story!!

Without fail, Courtney Milan writes the most amazing historical romance novels. They're stories that draw you in with characters who come to life and make you wish to be part of their world. The stories have so much truth to them, such depth, and yet, because of the characters, there's much humor and passion as well.

The Heiress Effect is the second book in the *Brothers Sinister* series, and is Oliver Marshall's story. Oliver, you might recall, is the "bastard" son we first learned of in *The Governess Affair*, a short, thoroughly delightful introduction to the series. I do recommend reading these in order because though each storyline is different, the relationships, the family dynamics, etc., all build upon one another and play a big part in why these "brothers" do the things they do.

From the Cover:

Miss Jane Fairfield can't do anything right. When she's in company, she always says the wrong thing—and rather too much of it. No matter how costly they are, her gowns fall on the unfortunate side of fashion. Even her immense dowry can't save her from being an object of derision.

And that's precisely what she wants. She'll do anything, even risk humiliation, if it means she can stay unmarried and keep her sister safe.

Mr. Oliver Marshall has to do everything right. He's the bastard son of a duke, raised in humble circumstances—and he intends to give voice and power to the common people. If he

makes one false step, he'll never get the chance to accomplish anything. He doesn't need to come to the rescue of the wrong woman. He certainly doesn't need to fall in love with her. But there's something about the lovely, courageous Jane that he can't resist...even though it could mean the ruin of them both.

In case I haven't yet made it clear, I love this story! Oliver is such a great character. He's honorable, smart, caring, sexy... everything a romance novel hero should be. But he's also troubled, and that makes him even more appealing. The decisions he faced, the choices he made – he's definitely an imperfect man, trying to become “someone” in a world that demands perfection. But it's his imperfections that make him perfect for the outrageously improper Miss Jane Fairfield.

Jane is one of the most awesome heroines I've read in a very long time. Her devotion to friends and family, her quirky way of taking on the world and her willingness to be the mockery of “proper society” all made me absolutely adore her!

The Bottom Line: Honestly, Ms. Milan is one of the best storytellers in the genre, and if you haven't yet read her writing, you're missing out on some fabulous reading! Fans of amazing historical romance authors such as Pamela Clare, Lisa Kleypas, Eloisa James, and Sarah MacLean, you really *must* give Courtney Milan a try. You will *not* be disappointed!

My sincerest thanks to Ms. Milan for offering me a copy of this delightful, poignant, sexy story in exchange for an honest review.

Carol *Young at Heart Oldie* says

I have nothing but praise for Courtney Milan's books. Her stories are beautifully written, original and thought-provoking, her characters are compelling and her historical research is meticulous.

Jane is such a wonderful heroine with her selfless love for her sister and her overwhelming desire to protect Emily even when it means exposing herself to ridicule. I love her self-awareness. She knows how awful she is but uses it to her advantage. Beneath those garish dresses is a smart, determined woman. Talking of dresses, Ms Milan's descriptions conjured up the most vivid images. I could just picture Jane in that ghastly creation with the yards of multi-coloured lace. The scene where she politely insults everyone is so funny.

She asked Whitting about his studies, and when he made a wry comment about preferring to concentrate his efforts on the study of liquids, she stared at him.

“How surprising.” Her eyes were very round. “I had not thought you to have the capacity of intellect to read physics!”

Sometimes the façade would slip to reveal a lonely woman with dreams and seeing this vulnerable side made me adore Jane even more.

I love Ms Milan's analogy between the broken little cactus and Jane...

“Can you save it?” Jane asked.

“It's a cactus,” the other woman replied absently. “They grow in deserts. They've evolved to withstand sun and slicing sandstorms.” She sounded proud. “You can kill a cactus, but it takes a sustained effort—consistent overwatering and the like. This piece of vandalism?” She shrugged. “This is just an act of propagation.”

While still remaining true to herself, I love how Jane reshapes her life, channeling all her money and energies in something very close to her heart.

Oliver isn't the perfect hero; he has flaws and that, to my mind, makes him far more interesting and all too human. In his determined pursuit of his political ambitions, he has lost sight of who he really is. Once radical and outspoken, along the way he has come to the realisation "*that the only way forward was to keep quiet until he grew so tall they could no longer shove him down*". Now, although he doesn't realise it, he has become a prisoner of his own silence and his journey to finding himself again isn't an easy one; he stumbles and falls along the way but finally...

...with a great effort—with the effort of a man uprooting everything he had made of himself—Oliver put one foot outside into the warm May sunshine.

I knew that Jane and Oliver would reach their HEA but it is the journey they have to take and the obstacles they have to overcome that made the romance so satisfying. Ms Milan has a way of drawing you into the hearts and minds of her characters so that you experience every twist and turn of their journey. It's one filled with tenderness, passion, heartbreak and humour and I'm sharing some of my favourite moments. They also provide a showcase for Ms Milan's brilliant writing.

She felt a sense of pure awareness. A frisson. She felt a real live frisson just from looking into his eyes.

~~~~~

*"I fear it may be contagious," he continued. "It is setting all my preternatural urges on edge, whispering that the color must be catching. I feel an uncontrollable urge to run swiftly as far as I can in the other direction, lest my waistcoat fall prey next."*

~~~~~

He couldn't change her past. He refused to let go of his future. That left only the present: the warmth of her kiss, that sweet taste of something that might have been...and the bitterness of a love that would not be.

~~~~~

*It was as if their bodies held a conversation that whispered along every nerve ending. All thought vanished. What remained was pure light, engulfing her.*

~~~~~

"I don't need that quiet wife. I need you. Someone bold. Someone who won't let me stand back from myself, and who will tell me in no uncertain terms when I've erred."

~~~~~

You are probably asking yourself what on earth is a pink (or should I say fuchsine) waistcoat doing in the middle of my review. Well, all I will tell you is that it relates to my favourite moment in the whole book.

There are other intriguing threads woven throughout the story. There is a sweet secondary romance between Jane's sister, Emily and a young Indian barrister and we meet Free, Oliver's youngest sister, a staunch

advocate of women's suffrage ( *The Suffragette Scandal* ). If you have read *The Governess Affair* or *The Duchess War* , you will remember Oliver's cousin Sebastian Malheur, a renowned scientist and his friend Violet Waterfield, the widowed Countess of Cambury. I must confess that Sebastian's outburst towards the end of the book certainly makes me want to read *The Countess Conspiracy* .

I had to leave Oliver's elderly, acrophobic Aunt Freddy until last because her story is so moving. When the secret she has been keeping is revealed, it brought tears to my eyes.

If you are a lover of Epilogues like me, Ms Milan delivers a thoroughly heart-warming one and I loved the reference to the little collection of cactus.

**My Verdict: I can only think of one word to describe this book – SUPERB!**

**REVIEW RATING: STELLAR 5 STAR**

*The Brothers Sinister series to date (click on the link below for more details):*

<https://www.goodreads.com/series/7472...>

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**Anna (Bobs Her Hair) says**

**4.5stars (or A grade) ... A Witty Historical Romance**

*The sly implication that Oliver didn't belong, the even slyer one that he'd been subsumed into Bradenton's goals instead of being a person in his own right...Bradenton reminded him of an old farmer, walking the perimeter of his property every day, testing the fences and peering suspiciously at this neighbors, making sure that his side and their side were clearly delineated.*

Mr. Oliver Marshall has a loving family. His parents have sacrificed so their children may prosper and be happy. He strides toward giving the 'common' man the right to vote. The circumstances of his birth give him connections and continuous reminders about his proper place. His ambitions are noble. Then a despicable demand is made, a demand that could change hundreds of thousands lives for the better, but at a steep price. Miss Jane Fairfield must learn her proper place, and who better to deliver that lesson than a man with so much in common with 'Feather Heiress.'

This is the type of story that gives me deep feelings of dread. **Characters with cruel intention make me twitchy. It's not about whether there will be a happy ending. It's about *how* the hero will redeem himself in my eyes? How will he win my love? !!!** Can he win *my* affection back if commits his cruel act? Also, the heroine needs a steel-spine or a strong sense of self-worth or this book will bomb, bomb, *bomb!* Don't make it easy. Make it smart. Please! And please let there be more to the story than will he or won't he. The answers? No gruesome spattering of ereader parts. Phew! Plus lots of twisted emotions that led to a highly rewarding and clever romance! (Oh, I cried and cried throughout this book!)

This book contains witty conversations. There's an compelling intercultural romance with historical references to the East Indian Company and the Sepoy Rebellion. This book's hero and heroine had a rewarding amount of depth that I found lacking in *The Duchess War*. Oliver was so tormented with the will to do the right thing and the temptation to change the world and claim victory. Jane is his match until the very end. There are good and bad tears. It's all very good, including the emotional revisit of a secondary character from *The Governess Affair*. **This comment is said a lot, but I didn't want to put this book down!** I started reading around midnight and read until sunrise. I've the dark circles to prove it! For those who felt disenchanted with *The Duchess War* please give *The Heiress Effect* a chance. It revived my appreciation of Courtney Milan's writing, which was exuberantly earned in the prequel. The epilogue at the end of this book was deeply appreciated, too. I love a good epilogue that shows the characters years later.

### **Spoiler Quote but so, so good!**

(view spoiler)

And the conversation didn't end there! A heroine to love! (hide spoiler)]

(Btw, I may or may not bump the rating to 5 stars later. I also feel like I forgot to add something. Please forgive updates. The thingamajiggie about not adding to my update feed ignores my requests.)

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### **Pepa says**

3.5

Reseña completa: <http://masromance.blogspot.com.es/201...>

Otra novela entretenida con personajes con fuerza y algo "inusuales"

Empieza con mucha fuerza aunque luego pierde algo de originalidad, me ha resultado muy entretenida.

Está claro que esta mujer gusta de protagonistas femeninas que rompen con los cánones de la época, quizás no cuide en exceso la ambientación, pero aún así disfruto de sus lecturas.

Seguramente son rápidamente olvidables, pero mientras las lees pasas un rato muy agradable con algunos buenos diálogos.

Creo que en esta novela es lo mejor, las salidas de esta atípica y estrambótica protagonista con esas conversaciones con el serie hijo ilegítimo del duque

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### **Ingela says**

*Written September 17, 2014*

**4.8 Stars - The fourth BRILLIANT part in this lovely *Brothers Sinister* series.**

### **Book #2**

About a very wealthy '100.000' heiress who doesn't want to be a bride for marriage in the next 480 days ~ And the man who can't but feel and be interested in this wildly silly young lady who is looking like a glittery peacock...with a lot of dangerous feathers.

**...sigh devoutly with increased heart rate.** - Impressing good!! This story give us wonderful (ordinary human) characters, big emotions, strong women and so nicely imbedded important social-liberal issues.

**By now one of my favorite HR series.**

Courtney Milan has written some great addictive stories. The fourth (stand alone) part in the Brother Sinister series is a grand proof.

*(My reviews of the first novel + 2 novellas: (view spoiler)*

Geek info: *The Heiress Effect* is about the man who was a unborn baby in the first novella prequel (#0.5), Serena and Hugo Marshall's now grown up son. The man who also are the Duke of Clermont's (#1) half-brother.

(hide spoiler)] )

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*Cambridgeshire, England, January 1867...*

**Miss Jane Fairfield can't do anything right.**

When she's in company, she always says the wrong thing—and rather too much of it. She'll do anything, even risk humiliation, if it means she can stay unmarried and keep her sister safe.

...Mischievous young ladies in the 1860's can be charming but there is a line.

'She was a blight. A poison. A pestilence. She was the enemy of all proper conversation. Grown men would rather be mauled to death by lions than converse with her.'

**Mr. Oliver Marshall has to do everything right.**

He's the bastard son of a duke, raised in humble circumstances—and he intends to give voice and power to the common people.

'He'd started caring more about becoming the kind of person who could make a change than he cared about the change itself.'

When these two meet it immediately begins to crackle in lonely hearts and twinkle in wise brains.

\*\*\*\*\*

**The topic, plot and 'parlour-suspense'...**

Jane has made it kind of bad for herself in the end. Far too many unwise statements and silly words has made

her a dreaded non-liked young lady in the Cambridge dining rooms and lounges.

The mighty *Marquess of Bradenton* can't stand Miss Fairfield anymore. He wants to really hurt her and Oliver Marshall, an since school acquainted 'friend', is *asked* to take care of the matter with this disturbing and shameless young lady. In exchange will Mr Marshall get some votes for an important bill about the extension of the franchise in the Parliament.

**Is Oliver Marshall really deep down a true gentleman** even when the lady in question is a rather annoying, talkative, ill dressed, quite odd (and remarkable..) woman? Should Oliver choose what he so long strived to create or will his heart be the victorious? ~ Love or career?

‘...the great excesses had been slightly muted, changing her from utterly impossible to merely overly exuberant.

**Jane Fairfield and Oliver Marshall are both kind of neglected**, rejected, so-called intruders (and also despised bastards) in the finer society. He has ambitions to reach the very top in politics and creating needed changes for common people. She must remain unmarried to be able to take for her younger sister as soon as her sister gets older and they are both free from their uncle.

You can't but like these two. Once again is it about a mischievous scruffy *Cinderella* and an angry former bullied *Ugly Duckling*. Together they could become ten times as strong — ...but they doesn't know that — yet.

“When you keep quiet, people fill in their own most intelligent thoughts on your behalf.”

**Three sisters (but not siblings)...**

As always, in Ms Milan's fine stories, there are also other small adorable side stories. (view spoiler)

**The grand saga about Jane and Oliver ended** (..grandiose and colourful). ~ It's just for me to start to listening to the next book (#3 - The Countess Conspiracy) as soon as possible. (Maybe will my dear Maltese friend join me. Lucky me!)

\*\*\*\*\*

**Wonderful narrated by a lovely skilled female voice**

As I said before, Ms. Rosalyn Landor is undoubtedly a great narrator for a historical in this style. (view spoiler)

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**Intelligent historicals in my taste**, because they feels "meaningful" (with some important underlying messages).

These Brother Sinister books are about wise and clever, but not the most heavenly beautiful, women on our Earth. You'll meet admirable adult heroines to identify yourself with (...and admire because they dare). ~ Stories about heroes that are both charming and manly strong, but also a bit damaged, slightly wistful and very love-thirsty men.

...Sexy fine (gentle)men who don't act like "horny cavemen" in all situations. (If you're in for some romance smut, don't worry, the romantic steaming hoooot smex are goood.)

**I LIKE - immensely!!**

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*The Brother Sinister series by Courtney Milan. Four novels and three short novellas. (view spoiler)*

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**Bubu says**

**Update Nov 2017**

Sometimes, rereading a favourite can turn into a huge mistake: My tastes may have changed; or a certain part, I overlooked the first time, simply grates and it's just wrong.

But most of the time, rereading my favourites is like coming *home*. 'Coming home' has a quite literal meaning to me due to circumstances in my life, but that's neither here nor there. But when I do come home, it makes me want to hug the world.

Reading **The Heiress Effect** again felt indeed like I wanted to hug Jane and Oliver all over again, and not let go. Never let go.

Jane, this wonderful, strong and brave woman, reminds me of the much quoted poem by William Ernest Henley, *Invictus*, which ends with:

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate,  
I am the captain of my soul.

And Oliver? Don't I know it to stay quiet, bite your tongue, try to fit in although people won't let you forget. How soul crushing is the scene after his aunt Freddie's death, and how uplifting when he realises what is truly important in life? And I'll never forget your fuchsine coloured waist-coat. I always, always think of Oliver when I come across the word 'fuchsine'. Never mind that he started my slightly obsessive fascination with red-haired heroes.

Jane and Oliver are right up there on the same level as Byrony and Leo.

I doubt I'll ever read *The Suffragette Scandal*, however often I've tried already. That would be saying goodbye to characters I don't want to let go. Sappy, ol' me.

\*\*\*\*\*

Original review:

Of all the *Brother Sinister* series, this one is my favourite.

I have yet to read a book from Courtney Milan that hasn't surprised me. She doesn't use the 'Historical' part of her books as a wallpaper. No, she puts her characters directly into the context of their times and shows us the consequences. May it be the consequences of rape in *The Governess Affair*, worker's rights in *The Duchess War*, the reform of the voting system in this one, the 'forgotten' work and influence of women in science in *The Countess Conspiracy* or women's rights in *The Suffragette Scandal*. Not to forget racism and lesbian/gay life in that era.

Before reading this series, I came across one review saying that Ms Milan puts today's issues and transfers them back. On the contrary! It's shocking how even now, 150 years later, the issues are still there. In some parts of our world more than in others, but they're still there.

The smaller context of this book is to be part of a society, but rather than being truly accepted our main characters are merely tolerated. They are both bastards. Miss Jane Fairfield has the advantage of being the heiress to a large fortune, and Oliver Marshall is the bastard son of a Duke, and his now ducal brother has publicly acknowledged him and settled a rather big sum on Oliver once he was of age and supports him in his political career.

Both, Jane and Oliver, have reasons to seek Society. But being rather on the fringes of social acceptability means they're exposed to the little cruelties and ridicule Society reserves for them.

Their approaches, however, couldn't be any more different. Jane has to appear to be looking for a husband. Otherwise, her uncle, Titus Fairfield, who has also the legal power over her half-sister Emily, will get rid off Jane. And Jane can't have that. Emily, who has some form of epilepsy, would be subjected to even more painful treatments inflicted by doctors and quacks hired by Titus. To him Emily is unfit for the world outside his house. So Jane needs to stay unmarried until Emily reaches her majority, but the huge inheritance she received by her biological father makes her the target for fortune hunters.

Her strategy to keep them away from her is an unusual one. Her dresses couldn't be more hideous, her mannerisms unpolished, and she insults anyone and everyone who might show interest, thus making her an impossible future wife. She's well aware of the cruel jokes she's being subjected to but endures them for Emily's sake.

Oliver is the slightly more complex character. He's the son of Serena and Hugo of *The Governess Affair*. He grew up in a loving family, but upon joining Eton he's being made painfully aware of his parents' lower class status. Even his friendships to his brother Robert (*The Duchess War*) and his cousin Sebastian (*The Countess Conspiracy*) can't prevent the bullying he experiences, not only from his classmates but also by his teachers - the ultimate powers at Eton.

However, as a consequence he realizes that by staying quiet, not fighting them, silently enduring the insults but staying as a player in the background he can still achieve his dreams. But make no mistake. For all his politeness and silence, Oliver is an angry man after years of submission to people who aren't worth licking his beloved fathers boots. He wants to make changes in politics, he wants to give people like his father, Hugo

who has never treated Oliver as anything else but his own son, the right to vote. For this he needs the Marquess of Bradenton, a powerful political figure, and his cronies on his side. As a condition for his support for the Reform bill, however, the Marquess of Bradenton (he's the constant target of Jane's rudeness) wants Oliver to publicly humiliate Jane.

And this is where Oliver and Jane meet. And this is where Ms Milan breaks my heart. I know I'm reading a Romance novel and I know there will be a HEA. But how dare she create two such wonderful characters who make me cry? How dare she write such beautiful and poignant dialogues that make me giggle at one point, only for her to make me want to scream at the injustices that Oliver and Jane have to endure a page or two later? As with my other two favourite authors of Historical Romances, Meredith Duran and Sherry Thomas, we are being treated to a story that unfolds in layers where both of our main characters come to realize that the other is not what she/he seems to be at first sight. And before they fall in love they become friends, or maybe it happens at the same time, I can't tell. But here's one beautiful example of how they talk with each other.

He let his gaze drift down briefly, and then looking up at her. "Your gown, on the other hand..."  
He took a deep breath. "It makes me want to commit murder, and I do not consider myself a violent man. What are you wearing?"

"It's an evening gown." She spread her outrageously gloved hands over her hips.

"It is the most hideous shade of pink that I have ever seen in my life. Is it actually glowing?"

"Don't be ridiculous." But the smile on her face seemed more genuine.

"I fear it may be contagious," he continued. "It is setting all my preternatural urges on edge, whispering that the color must be catching. I feel an uncontrollable urge to run swiftly as far as I can in the other direction, lest my waistcoat fall prey next."

She actually laughed at that and brushed her shoulder. "This would make a lovely waistcoat, don't you think? But don't worry; the color isn't virulent. Yet.

"What does one call a color like that?"

She smiled at him. "Fuchsine."

"It even sounds like a filthy word," Oliver replied.

They talk about their experiences. They explain their motivations. Oliver even discloses Bradentons plan for her. They come up with a plan of their own as to how to thwart Bradenton's intentions for Jane.

But this all happens in the first half the book. Now comes the second part of the book So once the problem with Bradenton is out of the way, you'd assume the HEA is close at hand and a lesser gifted author would have contrived a couple of more plot lines to keep Oliver and Jane separated just to fill the pages. Not so here! Oliver has fallen in love with the wrong woman. See, Jane doesn't only wear these outrageous dresses because she has to. She simply doesn't really have much taste in the first place, nor does she have enough knowledge of fine manners, and she is a rather loud and opinionated person. She could learn all that and become the perfect wife for Oliver once Emily reaches her majority but she simply doesn't want to. She's done playing a different person. She wants to be the way she is. Oliver, to advance his political career, needs to marry a presentable woman. Not one as outrageous as Jane. She is the impossible girl.

At this stage of the book, we are confronted with a rather unusual situation for a Historical Romance, where the heroes are usually larger than life. No, Oliver, silenced at Eton in his formative years, is somewhat of a coward and I, personally, loved that. Because that's what life is like: Make either the convenient choice or do it the hard way. The choice is ours. As it is Oliver's. Marry Jane and give up his political career; or choose his political career and be unhappy with a woman who would never be anything like Jane. Both seeing that there's not much that can be done, Oliver and Jane part ways.

There's so much going on in this book. It is the secondary romance of Emily that brings them back together months later. But the initial problem hasn't been resolved, and although they love each other, it is Oliver who has to have good, hard look at himself before he realizes that staying silent has changed him and he doesn't like the person he has become. The context in which Oliver realizes it, is so heartbreaking it made me cry again. Ms Milan, have mercy!

So yeah, Oliver and Jane get their HEA and it's beautifully done. Oliver even gets to wear a fuchsine colored waistcoat! And my heart is whole again.

Thank you, Ms Milan! Thank you, thank you, thank you for a wonderful time you've given me, not only for this book. Never, ever stop writing Historical Romances, please!

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## **Jill says**

### **4.5 stars**

Miss Jane Fairfield is a loud, over-talkative social misfit. Her gowns are unfashionable, hideous creations. Despite her fortune, and her plump yet pleasant looks, she is considered a joke no man would seriously consider marrying. She is an object of ridicule. And she wants it that way. If Jane can remain unmarried, she can stay with her sister and protect her from their guardian, their uncle.

Mr Oliver Marshall knows what it means to be shunned. A duke's bastard, Oliver has been caught between two worlds, that of the upper classes of his brother and his biological father, and the working class of his parents. His hunger and ambition for power to right the wrongs that have been inflicted on him and his family, is put to the test.

Will he do the bidding of the Marquess of Bradenton and gain his favour in his political aspirations? Or will he sacrifice all that he has worked for and protect the honour of Jane Fairfield?

Oliver is the child of Serena Barton from *The Governess Affair*, and raised by his stepfather, Hugo Marshall. He wants to do the right thing by Jane but is tempted to humiliate and betray her. Oliver isn't purely good. And neither is Jane's uncle purely bad. He could so easily been cast as a caricature, the evil uncle who mistreats and abuses his nieces. These types of complex, nuanced characterisations are what makes Ms Milan's work a cut above.

Courtney Milan doesn't write the expected. Her writing is intelligent. She has once again combined a story rich in historical detail with a clever, deep plot, a slowly building romance, and some wonderfully humorous scenes. My favourite: when Jane (deliberately) gets Oliver's name wrong calling him Mr Cromwell.

This is not a story that oozes sex with gratuitous scenes planted strategically along the way to titillate readers. But rather a gradual falling-in-love of two people that grows from friendship and respect.

Another stunning, layered story from one of the very best writers of historical romance.

**Steam: 2**

*ARC courtesy of Courtney Milan via NetGalley*

## Alba Turunen says

Al igual que el anterior de la serie, éste libro me ha gustado bastante. He encontrado ciertas similitudes, pero han sido sobre todo por el mismo ambiente original que tuvo la primera novela. Lo que sí puedo destacar desde el principio es que el mayor elogio del libro se lo lleva su protagonista femenina: Jane ¡Es todo un personaje!

¿Qué encontramos en éste libro? Pues volvemos a estar lejos de Londres (por lo menos durante más de la mitad de la novela). "La ventaja de la heredera" se desarrolla desde sus inicios en la universitaria ciudad de Cambridge. Jane Fairfield es una heredera nacida en el lado equivocado del matrimonio, pero por ello le fueron legadas 100.000 libras, por lo que pasó a ser una gran y codiciada heredera. Junto con su hermana menor Emily, viven en casa de su tío y tutor, Titus, pero éste es un pusilánime que no siente ningún afecto por Jane (pues no son realmente familia) y a Emily la trata como si fuera de cristal (debido a la rara enfermedad que la aqueja). Lo único que Titus desea es que Jane se case para quitársela de encima, pero Jane, poseedora de una gran visión de futuro e inteligencia, sabe anular todo lo que se le viene encima, sólo espera el momento en que su hermana cumpla la mayoría de edad para que puedan establecerse solas.

¿Cómo mantiene Jane a raya a todos sus "pretendientes"? Siendo zafia, maleducada, poniéndose en evidencia, soltando lo primero que pilla, y quizás lo más importante: poniéndose unos vestidos horrorosos y mal conjugados que matarían de un infarto a más de uno que la viera. Sí, su gran virtud es su herencia, y por desgracia eso es lo que ven la mayoría de hombres que conoce, hasta que llega Oliver.

Tenía muchas, muchísimas ganas de conocer la historia de Oliver, primero por haber leído el relato de sus padres, y después por el anterior libro de su hermano. Por éstos sabemos la clase de persona que es y lo que se propone. Oliver también es bastardo, fruto del desliz que tuvo su madre con el viejo duque de Clermont (poco llorado y muy odiado). Precisamente por la mancha de su nacimiento Oliver debe probar ante todos que es tan válido como ellos, que puede lograr grandes cosas. En lo que atañe a su libro es político y está pendiente de que se apruebe una ley del Acta de Reforma, dicha ley consiste en el sufragio universal. Ya que su hermano aboga por la disolución de la nobleza y pretende dar voz y voto a los desfavorecidos, Oliver intenta que éstos sean escuchados y tengan un papel social en la política de la época. Oliver llega a Cambridge para ganarse el voto de un importante marqués, pero sólo logrará su apoyo (y del de toda su camarilla de amigos que le lamen el culo) si humilla y pone en su sitio a la maleducada de Jane Fairfield.

Deciros que la situación entre los personajes no es tan fácil como parece. Oliver fue fruto de humillaciones y en el fondo ni quiere ni puede hacerle eso a Jane, y no sólo porque sea una dama y él un caballero, no cree que ella se lo merezca. Si algo me ha gustado de la relación de ambos protagonistas es que en ningún momento hay secretos, ni ocultamiento entre ellos, van siempre con la verdad por delante, y es por ello que me he llevado más de una sorpresa que he acabado aplaudiendo, porque nada en éste libro es lo que parece. Al igual que el primero es muy original, por eso me está gustando tanto ésta serie, porque es distinta a lo que muchas autoras consagradas publican de época victoriana.

Tampoco voy a engañaros, ha habido un par de momentos en que me han dado ganas de darle de collejas a Oliver por "cagarla", sí. He entendido sus motivos, pero no los comparto, creo que todo se podría haber llevado de otra manera. Por supuesto no voy a decir de qué se trata, pues sería spoilear, y no, no puedo hacerlo. Lo mejor es lo bien que ha llevado Jane la situación de todo, es una mujer muy fuerte, valiente, luchadora, arriesga con y por todo, no tiene miedo del mundo, aunque también es cierto que con 100.000 libras en el bolsillo puede enfrentarse a todas las adversidades que se le pongan por delante. Pero sí, tengo que repetirlo, el gran personaje del libro es Jane, y hay que conocerla. Me he topado con muy pocas

protagonistas femeninas que me hayan gustado de ésta manera y que las haya admirado tanto. Para mi gusto, y esto es personal, el romance me ha sabido a poco, el anterior fue bastante más romántico, y éste segundo libro es más... casto. El romance tarda en surgir, pero no voy a mentiros, los protagonistas se gustan y se desean desde que se ven, pero es todo tan políticamente correcto que me ha tenido toda la novela impaciente esperando que hubiera algún beso más.

Por último destacaré que me ha gustado mucho la historia secundaria de Emily, pero me ha sabido a poco, quizás en un relato corto habría ido mejor. Desde luego me ha encantado conocer a Free, y creo que va a dar bastante caña en su libro. De momento haré un breve parón de la serie, para no empacharme, y más adelante empezaré con ansia y ganas el de Violet y Sebastian, que en éste libro me han dejado con la miel en los labios.

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## **Ally says**

**Oh Oliver, you simply cannot keep a good woman down.**

That's right. The woman has no shame nor should she.

**Read for URR New Years 2017 Challenge, Victorian category**

**Series:** Yep

**Sexy times:** Our lovely couple gets busy a couple of times, nothing graphic.

**Plan on reading more by the author:** Yup - got to finish the series, don't I?

**Synopsis:** Oliver has been taught that to get anywhere in this world he must shut up. Jane refuses to be quiet or perfect. Jane has wads of green, a misguided and, in such, abusive uncle and a sister who might have some form of epilepsy. Said uncle will not stop finding bs treatments for said sister and Jane is determined to remain unmarried so she can stay in the house with sis. There is a lovely side story with sister which is just darling. Oliver is absolutely attracted to Jane and while cannot be mean and snarky to her the way his political cronies want him to, he cannot act of his attraction either. Jane is too loud, and too improper, and too Jane.

**Heroine:** Jane. Damn skippy. This girl does NOT back down. She stands in her power and owns it.

**Hero:** Oh Oliver, how you break my heart. Here is this person you want more than breath itself but it was instilled, nay forced, in you that you must disappear. Your walk in the sunshine was everything.

## **Why it did or didn't work for me:**

I have no idea what happened to me last summer that I stopped at 70%. Jaysus. What was wrong with me? Whatever it was, the book has been finished and it rocked my world. These two are perfectly, heartbreakingly endearing.

Signed,  
*I live to walk in the sun.*

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## Stacia (the 2010 club) says

*It hurt his head, that pink, yet he couldn't look away.*

When the scene came up in *Heiress Effect* with Jane wearing the hideous pink dress, I was instantly recalling a moment from the show *Firefly* when Kaylee wore the tacky, pink, poofy dress. Ah, memories.

One might wonder why Jane is wearing hideous clothes to begin with. Let's just say that she's the exact opposite of a woman having a coming out. Jane doesn't want to attract a man. She wants to send them all running for the hills. Why? She has her reasons. You'll find them out.

So why is Oliver drawn to the woman in the garish clothing? Maybe he sees a little bit of himself in her.

*And there had been a time when he'd been the one saying all the wrong things.*

I had a great time reading *The Heiress Effect*. Imagine what it would be like to say every single insulting thing to people as you're thinking it, without fear of reprimand or being cast out. THIS is what Jane got to do. Some of the conversations between Jane and her peers were so incredibly awkward, yet so incredibly priceless, because she was flinging insults left and right off the cuff while trying to act as if she wasn't actually clued in to normal social graces.

*She patted his hand comfortingly. "There's no need to worry," she confided. "Not everyone has that capability. You make up for any lack of intellect by being so kind."*

You can imagine that Jane and Oliver were going to have an interesting go of it spending time in one another's presence. There wasn't even any playful or sexy sparring going on. Instead, these two were fumbling along, trying to figure each other out - which was quite a bit more interesting than the standard argumentative banter.

Jane was pretty but a little more robust than the average women in her social circles. Oliver was trying to overcome his own shaky past and make a new man of himself. He wasn't perfect looking and he even wore spectacles! Can I get an amen for the man being just as imperfect as the woman? I love when couples are flawed together, and not an extreme imbalance of one person seemingly more beautiful or put-together than the other!

And thankfully, the sexual chemistry was much improved from the last Milan book I read. Who knew that time spent on horseback could be so intriguing (well I guess I already knew, since I first saw it with Jamie and Claire in *Outlander*, but I assumed that was a one time fluke). I'm still trying to figure out how neck cramp wasn't happening, but ah well. Small details, whatever.

I am having a hard time believing that this book was as entertaining as it was because I didn't much care for the first book of the series. Since you don't need to read book 1 in order to enjoy book 2, I say skip on ahead and get lost in *Heiress Effect* if your interest has been sparked. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did!

*This book provided from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. Quotes were not taken from the galley but instead from the final, published copy.*

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## **Jilly says**

The heroine in this book is the kind of girl that you want to know. She has 100,000 pounds as her dowry, but doesn't want to marry. She turns herself into the craziest, most unfashionable woman there is in order to make the men simply turn and run when they see her coming. They dubbed her the "feather heiress" although she should be more of the laced heiress or beaded heiress. She brings tears to the eyes of anyone with decent taste when she enters a room.

Some descriptions of her clothing:

*It was a furious shade of pink, one that nature had never intended...It didn't just shout for attention, it walked up and clubbed one over the head. It hurt his head.*

*"Your gown..It makes me want to commit an act of murder...."*

*(another gown)*

*"Do you like my walking gown?"*

*"It's an improvement on screeching horror...It ranks almost as high as sick fascination.. But, really. Are those vermilion bananas printed on the fabric?"*

*"Yes, I love it. Look." Jane held out her pendant, a green enameled monkey with fierce topaz eyes. "See? Isn't that wonderful?"*

Who wouldn't love a girl who wears a banana dress with a monkey necklace? I think I have a girl crush on her.

Jane becomes friends with the Duke from the last book's brother, Oliver. As for him, I wasn't that excited. He was a little bit boring for my taste, but Jane more than made up for it.

One of the best parts of this series is how interesting all of the side characters are. In this one, we have a romance going on with Jane's sister and an Indian man which was taboo at that time, we have an aunt with agoraphobia, and we have the ongoing story of the rake that I'm already in love with and will be featured in the next book. He is getting all angsty and broody. My poor future book boyfriend needs me.

## **Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says**

\*4.5 stars\*

Apparently I messed up the order of the series, listening to *The Governess Affair* followed by this one, skipping *The Duchess War*. No matter, I had no trouble following along. In fact, I was totally riveted the entire time.

This audiobook was... dreamy.

I like my historical romance, M/F especially, a very specific way. So far, Tessa Dare has been the only one to get it spot on, but I can now add Courtney Milan to the list.

I love an offbeat heroine and Jane was quirky, outspoken, and just plain awesome. She was funny, smart, and EVERYTHING a MC should be. I loved her and I loved her chemistry with Oliver.

And an interracial historical romance side plot to boot? Could I ask for more??

The narration was also SO good. The narrator, Rosalyn Landor, did an extremely competent job.

I am pumped for the rest of this series. Courtney Milan, you have a new happy customer!!

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