



Miss Bramble and the Leviathan

Kristen Painter

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The last thing she planned to steal was his heart.

The Company. Military institution, protector of Praeton and the nation of Grand Isle. Dirty rotten thief.

When Pandora Bramble steps aboard the Company's premiere airship Daedalus it's not for the exclusive VIP tour. It's to secure proof that the Company stole the regulator valve her father designed even if it means tearing the engine apart. Foiled by the unexpected appearance of a handsome crew member, she despairs of ever getting another chance until he kisses her.

Captain Theolonius Hatch, sentenced to engine room duty for refusing to take part in the Company's fleet week activities, never dreamed a woman like Pandora existed. Her brains match her beauty, a combination that adds up to more trouble than he ever expected.

As Pandora allows Theolonius to sweep her into a whirlwind courtship, her wildest dreams come true. As do her greatest fears, leaving her to decide what matters most. Loyalty or love.

The clock is ticking. Warning: This book contains airships, mechanical owls, women who are good with tools, men in and out of uniform, steam generated by engines and people, and some hot carriage scenes.

Miss Bramble and the Leviathan Details

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From Reader Review Miss Bramble and the Leviathan for online ebook

Maddie says

I was lucky to get and ARC of this book for exchange of an honest review.

Whenever Kristen offers up the chance to review her novels or novellas I jump at the chance to get a copy. The way she draws you into her stories and the way she excites you till the very last page. Steampunk is a genre that I want to explore more into and Kristen has pleased me.

Pandora is a middle class woman who looks after/works for her father but wishes she could lead her own life. She planning to retrieve the stolen valve on the airship, Daedalus to prove the company stole it but her plan is put on hold by a handsome captain Theo. Will she go with her plans or will she follow her heart.

Another thing I want to mention is Pandora and Simka friendship reminds me of the friendship I have with my friend, she the one where guys go crazy and I'm more like Pandora who wishes something good can happen to me. But what a whirlwind ride from start to finished, the story was short but Kristen keep you guessing till the last page although I wanted more from this story.

If you are looking for a story of romance, mystery and Steampunk of course this is the story for you and Kristen if you read this review please write more novellas on Pandora and Theo, this story was moving and want to see what happens next. Maybe Theo will take Pandora to the sky.

Amanda says

I absolutely love steam punk stories so this definitely hit the spot. The female protagonist is intelligent and strong, just how I like to read them. She looks after her father and thinks shes plain and simple next to her beautiful friend. Used to being over looked its a shock to her when she meets a man with green eyes that only seem to see her. To make things complicated shes on a mission to prove that the Company stole her father's invention. Shes determined to gather evidence, the only problem is a certain handsome captain.

The book is filled with banter between the hero and heroine. I'd have liked to read more steam punk gadgets and perhaps had more background about the world and its characters. This is a short story and simply gives you a taste of a great world. I wish it was longer.

I now want more adventures in the Great Isles. I really hope Kristen ventures more into the world of steam punk because I will certainly gobble them all up.

I was lucky enough to receive this as an ARC

Jess the Romanceaholic says

Two things that I should probably start my review with in the interest of full disclosure: First, I'm a total

Kristen Painter fangirl, and second, that I received this ARC at no cost to me from the author herself.

Now that that's out of the way, I get to gush about the story ;)

Pandora Bramble is a bit of a wallflower. With her "average" looks (in her mind, at least) and above-average intelligence (and skill with mechanics), coupled with the fact that her best friend is an über-gorgeous flirt with a sizable dowry to match, she always finds herself being ignored by the men she encounters. This suits her just fine, however, because while she has no true desire to die a spinster working in her father's shop, she feels as though she'd have to give up everything that matters to her in order to make a "suitable" match.

Pandora's father is a brilliant inventor whose prize design was stolen years ago by the Company. Her mother ran off when she was young to be the mistress to a rich merchant, leaving Pandora and her father to fend for themselves, and in the end, all this translates to Pandora taking care of her alcoholic, debt-ridden gambler of a father and running his shop almost entirely on her own. It also deeply affects Pandora's feelings of self-worth and her view of herself.

Captain Theolonius Hatch is a Company man through and through, who is tired of vapid women who are mainly attracted to his uniform. He finds Pandora's intelligence incredibly refreshing, even if he does tend to underestimate her in the beginning because of her gender, and sees beyond the plain dresses and no-nonsense manner to see the captivating, intelligent woman that she is.

What worked for me:

* Y'all all know I'm a sucker for an intelligent heroine :) Pandora is more at home in an engine room than a ballroom, and is often under-appreciated and underestimated simply because she is a woman.

* The angst is lovely, since Pandora's on a "secret mission" of sorts, and yet finds herself falling for the very man she knows she must betray to save her family.

* I also thoroughly enjoyed how despite her low self-esteem, our handsome Captain Hatch feels **he** is not good enough for **her** and is insecure as to how to secure her affections without scaring her off :D

* I liked the chemistry between the H/h and even though the sensuality level was relatively low compared to a lot of romance novels (and the only real "love scene" being fade-to-black), their romance and the rapid progression of their relationship felt real.

What didn't work for me:

* I admit, this seemed more of a straightforward historical/regency romance than a steampunk. The Leviathan could've easily been a regular sea ship rather than an airship, and the marquees and sentinels and gadgetry in Pandora's shop seemed more set dressing than a part of deeper world-building. Kristen Painter is a master at world-building (as evidenced in *Heart Of Fire*), so don't for a second think that this is due to anything more than the constraints set by the length of the story -- in a novella there simply isn't time to dwell on *all* the minute details that make up any sort of fantasy world, be it steampunk or the realm of the fae. Unfortunately, I think this might turn off some fans who pick this up *solely* for the steampunk aspect, as I almost feel as though we were barely dipping our toes into the world around them, and a lot of the steampunk aspects ended up as mainly garnish rather than an intricate part of the plot.

* Again due to the length, the romance aspect seemed a tiny bit rushed. This is a really minor point for me, because I personally adore "Love At First Sight" stories (especially when there's a twist of fate that comes between the lovers, such as the Company's theft of Mr. Bramble's valve and Pandora's subsequent mission to prove their theft and restore her family's wealth). I only mention it because I know some readers can be put off by a true whirlwind courtship (though, honestly, how many *novellas* do you read where they're not at

least a tiny bit of a whirlwind lol Nature of the beast I think).

Overall, I was quite pleased with this story. It was angsty enough to be entertaining without being depressing, and watching Pandora flourish under Theo's attentions was quite enjoyable :)

Kristen Painter is hands down one of my favorite indie authors, and really folks, when even a Big Mac runs around \$3 these days, you should skip the fast food and buy yourself several hours of enjoyment in this sweet romance instead (and save yourself some indigestion to boot lol)

4 Stars :)

Madison Warner Fairbanks says

Miss Bramble and the Leviathan by Kristen Painter

A steampunk novella with the expected cogs, airships, and toolkit. But also an adorably fun romance. It had humor. It had mechanicals. The heroine was super smart about all things machine and inventions. All around, a great adventure.

Captain Theolonius Hatch is he Captain of the Leviathan airship that just docked. Pandora Bramble is determined to get on board and into the engine room to prove her family's good name. When they meet, he is entertained by her quick mind but he's a Company man so must walk away from her. Right?

Excerpt:

“He closed the small gap between them with a single step and pressed his mouth to hers in a kiss so hot and hard, steam whistles screamed in her ears. His mouth was a furnace, the heat from his lips stoking the blood in her veins to a dangerous, untried level.

After a brief forever of sinful pleasure, she broke away. Her breath came in unladylike pants which only served to fill her lungs with the rosemary and lime scent of him. She pointed behind her, shut her mouth and swallowed. “Go,” she whispered, hoping he understood she meant herself and not him because the word was all she could manage with her whole body aflame. No one had ever kissed her, let alone kissed her with such urgent hunger. That had to be wrong. Or right. At the moment, there was no telling.”

Excerpt From: Painter, Kristen. “Miss Bramble and the Leviathan.” Kristen Painter

Excerpt:

“She brushed past, tangling him in her perfume once again and grazing her upper arm against his. Sparks shot through him at the slight contact, leaving him dazed in her wake. Common sense fled and the urge to ravish her bubbled up like erupting champagne.

He swallowed it down, knowing suddenly what a drowning man must feel like.”

Excerpt From: Painter, Kristen. “Miss Bramble and the Leviathan.” Kristen Painter

Kathy Davie says

Painter's premise was cute , but oh my god...the storytelling was so juvenile. I couldn't believe this was written by Painter.

Just. No.

Rebecca says

So I love Kristen's work. this book is included. I was so excited to read this book and it is not like her other books. I stayed up late just to read it. I love the short, cute steampunk romance, a nice change from some of the 'heavy' novels I sometime read by other authors. Kristen writes amazing books and this book is one of them.

TJ says

Good story with a rich foundation and tons of potential for incredible depth. But, as a novella, it's just too rushed. I also could never quite figure why she just didn't tell the truth and ask for help. Especially if they were so in love.... Couldn't have made the situation any worse and may have avoided heart-break.

Deniz says

3.5 Stars

Let's just put it out there... this is way to short. I mean it's a good length for a novella.. BUT I want more.

I loved the character building. In a few pages Painter made me feel like I know Pandora and Theo. I got where they were coming from, what drove them and felt like I knew them. Then this isn't really surprising, because I kinda got to expect this when I read anything by Painter.

The story line is sweet, a bit too insta love for miss-commitment-issues over here, but again, it's a novella. There are actually quite a few obstacles and issues put up- then Theo just found the most simple solution possible. - the novella part I guess...

The world building was interesting. Not quite a steampunky- aka technical as I would like but in 80+pages Painter painted a clear background. And I would love to know what she would come up with, if this was longer...

The end by the way is perfect, just like I like my short stories to end. Left me wanting more but also left me thinking of all possibilities!

I wish this would have been a full length novel, because I am sure Painter would have elaborated, where it was all a bit too fast for me.

But alas it is a novella and I enjoyed every single page of it.

I am however left hoping Painter will consider writing a full length novel set in the same world!

Christine Lee says

I love Steampunk stories. Kristen Painter's Miss Bramble and the Leviathan is no exception.

From the first word, to the last, I could not stop reading. I immediately felt for Miss Bramble, and fell just as hard as she did for Captain Hatch.

This story has everything, humor, romance, suspense. Definitely a 1-click!

Katter says

This was a pleasant little novella, if not a bit predictable. Still I found myself enjoying the characters and the world building. In all honesty I am surprised that I liked the cast of the story as much as I did. Initially I wasn't sure if I liked the female MC, Pandora.

Like in a lot of romance novels the protagonist is the witty wallflower that has grown to spinsterhood. No man could ever like her, want her, or desire her! Actually, I am pretty sure that is the premise for every regency romance novel ever.

Anyway, Pandy is nearly a dead ringer for all those other wallflowers except that she is a tinkerer. She likes building things, inventing things, and helping her father out at his shop. Her father is alone and she feels like it is her responsibility to take care of him.

Yes, it's that old chestnut. Willful daughter taking care of her lonely needy father. But of course nothing is at all as it seems. Pandy needs to get a stolen invention back from one of the docked leviathans and will do whatever it takes to get it.

However, her plans of re-thieving did not include getting tangled up with one broodingly handsome man, Captain Theolonius Hatch. For our heroine things get rather sticky when he gets thrown into the mix. He teases and taunts her, pursues her, so can she really steal from him in the end? Will her heart allow it? Will he?

Secrets come to light and then suddenly all is revealed. For the most part I already knew what was going to happen but I didn't feel that it dampened my enjoyment of the book. The banter between Pandora and Theo was fun to read about and the romance scenes were not over the top, which was nice.

Anyone who reads books with romance knows that the love scenes are generally gratuitous and eye roll inducing. All the intimate encounters in this ebook are enticing but not ridiculous. Plus the actual romp was implied instead of written. No silly descriptions of throbbing manhood here!

I have never read from this author but I must say that I liked what she wrote. Her plot weaving didn't blow my mind but I liked what she came up with. I think I will look into more of Painter's books in the future. It was sweet and fluffy and left me feeling happy. Plus it's Steampunk so that makes everything even better! This was just my kind of book.

Miranda Beazley says

I received a copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

Pandora Bramble lives a middle class life. Her mother is gone and her father spends his time in the drink or at the tables. And she's determined to prove that her father's invention was stolen so that they may have a better lot in life. Theolonius is a Leviathan captain and dead set against visiting the 'unwashed masses'. An unexpected encounter and neither can forget the other.

Set in a time of corsets and long dresses, this steampunk story was different to anything else I've read. This genre in a romance is truly courting - with the reserved interaction, the stolen kisses that are so brazen for this era but commonplace now a days, lends a different air to the story. The twists, turns and the way the characters play on each other is fun to read. And sigh worthy in the simplicity. I thoroughly enjoyed this story and it's reserved era.

Suzanne (Doppleganger) says

I picked this up to get a sample of Kristen Painter's writing before the release of Blood Rights later this year. I wasn't disappointed. The romance was full of tension and the banter between the hero and heroine was fun to read. The steampunk elements make for interesting additions to the story, but really the story would work in any other setting with little more than a change of wardrobe.

My only criticism is that I couldn't buy into the point of Miss Bramble's mission to steal the valve from the Leviathan. How would possessing a valve prove that it's design had been stolen from her father? Especially when the valve itself had been stolen. Plus, it seems that a smart mechanically-inclined steampunky heroine should know that pressure vessels tend to either go 'splody or are rendered useless without their regulating valves. Stealing that valve would either destroy or cripple that Leviathan's engine. BAD FORM Miss Bramble! These hiccups could be more of my own creation than of the authors though - I do have a tendency to overthink stuff like this.

Even with my little hiccups, I still found this to be an enjoyable romance novella. I'm really looking forward to Blood Rights now!

Melindeeloo says

Miss Pandora Bramble thinks that she has missed her only chance of gathering the evidence she needs to restore her father's honor, and that there is no hope of ever again finding a way back onto the airship, Daedulus. But fate steps in to give Pandora another shot when a customer with a broken spyglass turns out to be not only the handsome airman who foiled Pandora's plans and stole a kiss, but he is also the airship's captain. So when Captain Theolonius Hatch, entranced by Pandora's spirit and intelligence, begins his pursuit of Pandora, she only thinks to use him to get back on board the ship. Soon, however, Pandora finds herself falling for the dashing Theo and lamenting her need to sacrifice her own happiness and betray his trust in order to redeem her father.

Miss Bramble and the Leviathan fits right in with my new Iron Duke inspired Steampunk kick, though the steampunk element here is mostly in the background (airships, horseless carriages and a mechanical owl) and serves as a framework for the romance without overwhelming it. Theo's courtship of Pandora moves quickly, and there is a good steamy build up of attraction in this short story romance but readers uncomfortable with on screen sex will be happy to know that the consummation is a 'fade to black'.

Both of the leading characters here are extremely likable, and the handsome, forward Theolonius Hatch who

is so taken with the unusual, intelligent and outspoken Miss Bramble is perfect hero material. His fascination with, and his willingness to accept the unconventional Pandora along with his struggle to behave honorably despite his attraction to her are quite appealing. Pandora is equally wonderful. She is capable, strong and determined, but there is a bit of pathos attached to the young woman who bears the burden of being the 'adult' in her relationship with her father with little hope of a life of her own.

My only nits with the story were that, it was very short - I would have happily read more - and, I would have loved to have been given a glimpse of Theo's thoughts right before he grabs Pandora and kisses her thoroughly within minutes of meeting her - considering the mores of the era, what was he thinking when he decided to take such liberties?

But nits aside, I really enjoyed Miss Bramble and the Leviathan, which is by pure coincidence my second book by author Kristen Painter, I've also read her more classic fantasy romance, Hearts of Fire. In both cases I have loved her unusual heroines and have found her writing to be entertaining, so I am seriously considering hunting down her third (unconnected) book and will certainly be keeping an eye out for her new urban fantasy series which is to be published by Orbit sometime next year.

Laura says

I really liked Pandora Bramble. She's smart, she's got gumption, but she's not perfect. And I love that what attracted Theo to her first was the fact that she knew about steamship engines.

Although I'm generally disappointed in romance novellas because I feel they gloss over too much relationship development, this one did pretty well in that department. And it made me cry, in a good way, so, it gets an extra star for that. The tears were quite unexpected, but when Pandora found out that she just stole a valve from a steamship for reasons that were based on lies her father had told her for her entire life and Theo is there for her and understanding and tells her he wants to marry her....well, they just came out.

Would I have liked a little bit longer story? Yes. Do I feel the author did the characters and the story justice with the length the story actually was? Yes. I guess I'm just a greedy reader who often wants more.

Technical note: I read the .epub version from MyBookstoreAndMore, and the font by default was super tiny. I had to increase it up to extra extra large on my Nook to be more legible.
