



## Who's Holding the Baby?

*Day Leclaire*

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## Who's Holding the Baby? Day Leclaire

Get out your scorecards boys and girls, and try and follow along.

Grace Barnes is pretending to be ugly so her gorgeous boss, Luc Salvatore, won't fall in love with her—or she with him. She's even pretending to be engaged to the nonexistent Will-William. It's worked for almost a year, which is how long she needs to fund her own business. Maybe Grace would have succeeded if unwed mother Carina Donati hadn't dumped her son on Luc and taken off for Italy. Not that Tony is Luc's. No, Tony belongs to Luc's youngest brother (of five), Brand, who takes off after Carina.

When the police show up, Luc tells them he and Grace are engaged and babysitting his nephew for a few hours for his brother and sister-in-law. A bit of a fib since Tony's parents aren't married and, oops, the baby is really a girl...Toni, short of Antonia. Who knew, considering the Salvatores haven't fathered a daughter in more generations than Toni has toes. That would have been fine, if the police hadn't returned and discovered Tony is really Toni and that it isn't a few hours they'll be babysitting, but a few days. And that Brand and Carina aren't really married. They take Toni into custody and turn her over to CPS. When CPS shows up, Luc charms the woman, telling her that he and Grace are married.

Got all that? They're boss and assistant at work, engaged for the police, married for CPS, and just good friends in front of Luc's irrepressible family.

At least until Luc's father, Dom, shows up from a nine month sojourn in Italy. He knows full well they're not married and assumes Toni is Grace and Luc's. Maybe they could have skated by that if they hadn't allowed nature to take its course. Or if Grace's father hadn't interrupted them. Oh, did I mention that Grace's father is a minister? No? Well, as you can imagine that didn't go down well. So now Luc insists they marry for real. And Grace would...if only Luc loved her. There's only one way to convince her and that is to say the three little words he's never said to any other woman: I love you. Will he...or won't he?

## Who's Holding the Baby? Details

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## From Reader Review Who's Holding the Baby? for online ebook

### Pravana says

What a riot this book was.

Alessandro who is Luc's brother sums up the situation while clarifying his other brother's query "Look...." He ticked off on his fingers. "They're boss and assistant at work, engaged for the police, married for the baby people and just good friends in front of us."

"You guys ever consider scorecards? This is getting confusing" Stef complained.

All this fibbing comes back to bite them when -

"You're married?" The Reverend gasped.

The minister's gaze seemed drawn to Toni like a magnet. "You have a baby?" He whispered in disbelief.

"No!" Grace shouted.

"Maybe!" Luc shouted louder. "It depends on who you are." He looked at Grace. "Where's Stefano's scorecard? I'm getting confused. Which story do we tell the minister?"

"There isn't a minister on our damned scorecard!" she practically shrieked.

I'd read it years ago while in college and was pleasantly surprised to get hold of this book after so many years. Great read.

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### Karlyflower \*The Vampire Ninja, Luminescent Monster & Wendigo Nerd Goddess of Canada (according to The Hulk)\* says

It has arrived..... this is going to happen.....

### Review Time!!!

*staring into eyes that made her think of hot, liquid gold*

And it begins....

Grace came in third place in a contest. Instead of winning money or any such thing she's approached by Dom Salvatore and told if she can work as his son's assistant for one year he'll sponsor her financial dream, to open her own baby toy store! The trick is, she has to not fall in love with her boss, Luc, and no assistants before have accomplished this feat..... RUN!!!!!!! But no, she accepts.

So Grace alters her entire appearance.

Let me just throw some one-size-too-big clothes on, a pair of glasses and some mousy brown hair-colour and BAM! I will never be viewed as attractive...

But whatever, so she meets Luc....

Okay NO!!! No way am I working for a man who 1.) I am obviously already attracted to within 5 minutes AND 2.) invades my personal space to do up a button on my blouse, back the FUCK OFF, buddy... Sexual harassment, thy name is Luc Salvatore. Also do NOT call me Italian terms of endearment I.e. "my beloved" the first day I meet you, CREEPER!!

Why do women in romance novels **ALWAYS** seem to be unaware of what sexual harassment is?! It is not okay for your employer to continuously fondle your face or site opinions on your love life!

And then this happens (oooops, I forgot to tell you that Grace has donned a ring and is claiming to be engaged),

*And whether you believe it or not, everything about you is my affair.*

No, Mr. creepy-face, it most certainly is NOT!

And then some young attractive girl comes into the office with a baby, uh oh, and craziness happens. Much yelling, such passionate fights and flying objects.... the child is Luc's brother's son errrm.... daughter, Toni. Police happen, lying to police happens, no biggie..... ummm, what?!

So Grace moves in with Luc, temporarily, because he *needs* her to help with Toni and the children's services agents who deem him unfit unless a woman is present in his life..... HELLO!? Sexism much!!

### **Sexism is sexism, ladies and gentlemen!!!**

Anyways moving on..... there is so much sexual harassment in this book.

Dear, Day Leclaire, sexual harassment is **NOT** fucking sexy!!! NO!

Also, having someone watch you sleep is not "uncomfortable" it's CREEPY!!! Especially when the one doing the watching is your boss!!

Side note: What is this *way* that you can pin your hair up in a TIGHT knot at your neck and just have it softly brushed out?! You know what hurts.... THAT!

Also, what kind of monster buys a child a clown night light?! Is this a horror or a romance O.o

Also-also, I don't understand how all these virginal women in romances are so in the know about heartbreak, the first time I realised it was such a painful experience was when I was going through it, not before!

And "I want you" happens, why does this always have to be said in romances? It's so trite.

I will end this review with a delightful quote that, to borrow a phrase, made me wet myself...:

*You don't get it, do you? I want to kiss every inch of your body, starting with that luscious mouth of yours. I want to strip off your clothes and make long, sweet love to you.*

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### **Mariya-Teodora says**

Such a funny and sweet story!

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### **Chloe Friend says**

All I can say is that it was so bad it was good... I really liked it!!! An easy by the beach read!!!

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### **Saly says**

#### **Rating 3.5 stars**

Such a mad caper! Filled with mass confusion and lies. The heroine disguises herself when she goes to work with the hero, she has a deal with his father, be dowdy for a year and get the financing for her own business. Things go well then the last four weeks, things blow up. The hero is left with his newly discovered niece and ropes in the heroine for help, drama ensues, with lies, social services etc The heroine's disguise also starts unraveling. The book was cute & fun.

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### **Lisa Montgomery says**

When I read this book, I was hoping for another "Dante Legacy" type of series. Grace and Luciano are perfect. I also read "The Bride's Proposition" (which isn't listed on GR except as a Harlequin comic and a foreign language version). Penelope and Stefano are equally as engaging. Unfortunately, Harlequin did not complete the series, leaving us readers dangling.

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### **Booked says**

"Toni isn't your nephew--she's your niece!"

"You're kidding!" Luc grinned in amazement. "That's wonderful!"

Grace struggled to control her temper. "You're missing the point. If the police had discovered we'd lied,

they'd have thrown us both into jail. Darn it, Luc, how dare you involve me in your family problems?"

"Our problems," he reminded her in a soft, deliberate voice. "We're engaged. You told the police that, remember?"

"But it's all a lie," she protested. "Every bit of it. I'm not engaged to you...and the baby isn't even a boy!"

"You have a choice. You can stay with me--posing as my fiancee--until my brother returns. Or you can turn your back on a helpless baby."

"You don't play fair!" she complained.

"No," he agreed. Then he smiled, a charming, dangerous smile. "I play to win."

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### **Lorna Rennicks says**

When I see that a book has been penned by Day Leclaire, I automatically buy it without reading any details or information on it. Why is that? Because I am never disappointed with her books and 'Who's Holding The Baby?' is no exception. This is Book 1 of the Salvatore Brothers (there are six of them), and I absolutely loved it. It has it all. The love, the romance, the passion, the strong hero, the cute, sexy heroine, the gorgeous baby, the wit, the humour and the laugh out loud moments. This book is Day Leclaire at her best. Can't wait for Matteo's story which is coming soon. Simply the best.

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### **XX Sarah XX (former Nefarious Breeder of Murderous Crustaceans) says**

*May 2015 buddy read with Tadiana. Read her review here. Yes, we know we are not totally sane. Nothing new here.*

**Warning:** this book is a lethal combination of utter boredom and total stupidity.

**I've read a lot of very very VERY bad books this year.** There was this. And this. And this. And obviously this. But this one right here? **It tops them all.** And it's not even because of the absolutely cheesiness oozing from every page. Nope. **It's because of the sheer stupidity of it all.** I deserve a medal for reading this to the very last page. And the author definitely deserves a **lifetime achievement award.**

**I don't usually do story recaps** in my reviews but here the story is everything. Everything stupid that is. To be honest, I have to say that the plot is kind of complex in its **absolute absurdity**. Kudos to Day Leclaire for coming up with such a far-fetched, ludicrous premise. **Please bear with me here**, the story is such a mess I'm not even sure I'll be able to make you understand what it's about. Oh, and **this should take a while**. So grab a drink and a snack. And some aspirin. Please don't forget the aspirin. **Ready? Here we go.**

## ① Meet Grace

**Grace is gorgeous.** A gorgeous blonde of course. Because only blondes are gorgeous. Grace is hiding her utter gorgeousness. She wears glasses (ooooh, **UGLY!**), she dyes her hair brown (ooooh, **HIDEOUS!**) and she wears baggy clothes in earth shades (ooooh, **SCARY!**). Why is Grace hiding her utter gorgeousness you ask? Why is she pretending to be engaged when she doesn't even have a boyfriend? **Isn't the suspense killing you right now?**

## ② Meet Dom Salvatore

**Dom owns a family business.** Dom wants to retire. Dom has to go away for a year. And Dom wants to leave the company in the hands of his eldest son, Luc. **Problem:** the guy is a total Casanova (he is, after all, Italian. And it is a well-known fact that all Italian males are total Casanovas) and can't be relied upon. **All his secretaries fall for him and never get any work done.** *Silly women!* So Dom's brilliant idea is (this is where a light bulb goes off in Dom's little head): "I'll hire a gorgeous girl **who will disguise herself as an ugly girl and tada!** Luc won't be distracted while I'm away. Such a simple solution to the problem at hand! Why didn't I think of that before?!" ← *this makes no sense to you? It shouldn't. Anyone else would have hired a male secretary. But no, not Dom. He's clever like that.*

## ③ Dom hires Grace

**The deal is:** if dear Gorgeous-Turned-Ugly Grace manages to not fall for Luc for a year, **Dom-The-Ever-Generous-Philanthropist** will finance the **toy store** she wants to open (it was her mom's dream but her mom died blah blah blah sob sob sob) ← *Now that's a perfectly realistic agreement right there. This kind of thing happens every day.*

?? **We pretty much learn all this in the prologue.** And then boom! Chapter 1: fast forward 11 months! My my my, how time passes by! Isn't Day Leclaire clever? **So for 11 months, nothing (apparently) happens.** Luc and Grace are definitely **not attracted** to each other. They have a **very strict business relationship.** So strict platonic doesn't even begin to cover it. **Well. Almost.** Grace is kind of falling for Luc ← *Ooops. Not good. Falling for him=no dream business, remember that Grace? I'm afraid this is not going to go well. Isn't the suspense killing you again?*

## ④ Luc flirts with Grace shamelessly

**Because, you know, he's Italian.** And that's what Italians do. And it makes it perfectly alright for him to come on to Grace. **And touch her.** And tell her sweet things in Italian (in case you didn't know, everything said in Italian sounds sweet) ← *Is this sexual harassment? Absolutely not. It's called flirting shamelessly, you silly.*

?? **Still with me at this point? Good. It probably won't last.**

## ⑤ Hysterical College Foreign Exchange Student incoming

**Just another day at the office.** In barges said Hysterical College Foreign Exchange Student, holding a baby in her arms (so far we know who's holding the baby, it gets pretty confusing after this scene). **It turns out the baby is Luc's brother's.** But he doesn't know it. His brother I mean. His brother doesn't know he has a son. Well Luc doesn't either actually. I mean Luc doesn't know his brother has a son he doesn't know about ← *How's the headache going? Not too good? Sorry about that. And you just wait, it's about to get worse.*

## ⑥ Hysterical College Foreign Exchange Student outgoing

**So. Dear Catarina** (that's the Hysterical College Foreign Exchange Student's name by the way) here disappears as quickly as she appeared. Because back in good old Italy her mommy is pretty much **on her deathbed**. She needs to go see her! Now! So what does she do? She leaves the baby in Newfound Daddy's arms (**hey! Look who's holding the baby now!**) and goes poof! ← *Do you seriously think she'd take him to Italy with her? To see his granny? Are you joking? She doesn't want to give dear mommy a heart attack. We're talking about real, die-hard Italians here. No kids out of wedlock. No marriage = immediate doom and destruction.*

## ⑦ Newfound Daddy outgoing as well

**Because he obviously** has to go after his Hysterical College Foreign Exchange Student. So who's holding the baby now? Last time I checked it was Luc. **No, wait.** I think Grace has him now ← **Told you this would be confusing.**

## ⑧ Chaos ensues

**Hysterical College Foreign Exchange Student** hits Newfound Daddy on the head with a vase (*damn Italians, they can never control their temper can they?*) in the company lobby while Luc & Grace watch the scene on TV monitors. *I think someone is still holding the baby at this point but I'm really not sure as to whom it might be.* The police are called. **The Responsible Parents flee.** The police want to take the baby in custody. No need to, really, Casanova Brother is babysitting him officially. Besides, "**my secretary here is actually my fiancée,**" **says he to the dumbfounded cops.** To which he adds, "my dear brother and his Hysterical College Foreign Exchange Student are married anyway, which makes everything alright. Please move along gentlemen, I've got this covered." ← *At this point you might think none of this makes any sense. At this point you might be right.*

?? **Mind if I take a break here?** This really is proving exhausting. I need a drink. **Be right back.**

## ⑨ Police. Social services. Lots and lots of cheese

**That's pretty much the rest of the book in a nutshell.** Crime must be really low in San Francisco. Why else would the police check repeatedly on a Casanova man who happens to be babysitting his dear niece? Because yes! It turns out **the nephew is actually a niece!** Dear Grace finds this out while changing her diapers in front of a police officer. **Or was it someone from social services?** Can't remember. I know someone was asking for a birth certificate at some point. And that Grace obviously had to move in with Luc (**who might or might not have been holding the baby** at the time so she could move all her stuff in his apartment). Even though they're not married and no marriage = immediate doom and destruction. **But they're engaged, which seems good enough for everyone** ← *well if you remember correctly they really aren't engaged. They're only pretending to be. So that the dumbfounded cops and bewildered social services people won't take Luc's nephew niece away because he doesn't have his her birth certificate and no no no you can't babysit in San Francisco if you don't have your nephew's niece's birth certificate even if you are pretending to be engaged to your secretary who is pretending to be engaged to her imaginary boyfriend while hiding her utter gorgeousness. So how's the headache going now?*

?? **At this point you might be asking yourself what the hell is going on here.** To be honest, I have no idea. We have this stupid girl, who is supposed to be engaged to an imaginary guy, living with her boss, **pretending to be engaged** to him (yes, I know I keep repeating this. Just trying to do the book justice here)

and babysitting his **nephew** niece, while his unmarried (shame on you) brother is **frolicking in Italy** with his Hysterical College Foreign Exchange Student. Not to mention the fact that neither Grace nor Luc bother to go to the office anymore (that's because they're on babysitting duty). **Not to mention the fact** that Grace is supposed to stay the hell away from Luc if she wants to open her toy "this was mommy's dream" store. **But they have a very platonic relationship** so everything is under control. And they have a pretty boring routine: get up, change diapers, prepare the **baby bottles** (very important sub-plot right there), let the police in, let the social services in, **have Luc grope Grace** repeatedly but very platonically. **Just your basic everyday stuff.**

#### ⑩ Suspension of disbelief to the power of 10

**Now throw in:** 4 or 5 Salvatore brothers (I stopped counting after a while) who keep visiting the engaged-yet-not-engaged babysitting non-couple and **might or might not hold the baby at some point**, a no longer Ugly Grace (never fooled Luc anyway), a nosy neighbour, the Luc Macho Man Show (it's okay, he's Italian), **Grace's Minister Father (don't ask)**, Dom (remember who he was or are you completely lost at this point?) returning unexpectedly and **finding out he has a nephew niece who is Luc's Newfound Daddy's baby, said baby's mother being Graee Catarina** and oh my god doom and destruction are near my son had a child out of wedlock! Let's see, what am I forgetting here? **Oh yes.** Grace will probably never open **her toy "this was mommy's dream" store** because she fell for Luc and Dom won't allow it but wait all is not lost because Luc wanted to promote her anyway and **does he really want to marry me or will this be just a sordid affair I'm not that kind of girl** well I guess we'll just have to wait and see oh look Minister Daddy is here he can marry us right away well hello there officer what can we do for you we were just about to get married **but weren't you married already I don't understand** shhh shhh it's going to be alright let's get married well hello there Lovely Lady from Social Services what can we do for you we were just about to get married **but weren't you married already I don't understand** shhh shhh it's going to be alright let's get married well hello there Salvatore Brothers what are you doing here **well we heard you were getting married** so we thought we'd join the party okay **let's get married already** well hello there Newfound Daddy and Hysterical College Foreign Exchange Student what are you doing here **well we just came back from frolicking in Italy** and we thought we'd stop by to pick up our **son** daughter **thank you so much for babysitting** we're very sorry to interrupt by the way were you getting married oh good for you it looks like **you are no longer doomed as we are.**

**?? SO WHO'S HOLDING THE FREAKING BABY NOW? ??**

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#### **karen says**

okay, so i am finally reviewing this for real. sorry for the delay, karly - this is no way to handle a buddy read! this review will have spoilers for sure. read at your own risk.

here are some things i have learned from this book.

1) there is no crime in san francisco. i mean, this is what i am inferring anyway, because there's no other reason for the police to be so interested here in, well, "who's holding the baby." since the synopsis up there does nothing to tell you the plot, i will:

basically, an italian-american gentleman impregnates an italian foreign-exchange student (a 20-year-old *college* foreign-exchange student - this isn't *that* kind of book), who never tells him she has borne his child because she broke off the relationship and "vanished" when she thought he had been hooking up with some other woman, although he had not. her mother back in the old country becomes dangerously ill, and she wants to go see her, but since she is scandalously unmarried and does not want to be breaking her mother's failing heart, she swoops in to leave the infant with its father, mere hours before her flight. stereotypical italian hysterics ensue as the man is overwhelmed with the knowledge that he has a kid, and the demand that he take care of it while this woman he still loves goes away and as he tries to win her back all at once. the baby is dumped in the arms of its uncle who dumps it in the arms of his assistant, the police are called because of the spectacle, and the parents of the kid flee the building after she clocks him in the head with a vase, and he ends up following her to the airport, and eventually all the way to italy, leaving the baby behind and begging his brother to take care of it. the police try to take the baby into custody, claiming it has been abandoned, but the uncle tells them he is babysitting it, and that the parents are married (which matters for some reason), and it's all good and that his assistant is actually his fiancée, so there's no problem here, officers. the police spend the rest of the book trying to catch him in his lie and get the baby back into protective services.

what i have learned from this:

- a) it is illegal to babysit. unless you have the birth certificate on hand.
- b) it is doubly illegal to babysit if you are an unmarried man, even if you are related to the baby in question, as the police only back off (temporarily) when he lies about his relationship to his assistant.
- c) in san francisco, the police have nothing better to do than check up on a man who is babysitting his brother's child. repeatedly.

2) it is impossible for a woman to excuse herself from a weird-ass situation, particularly if she is already involved in a weird-ass situation. more plot will be necessary here. the assistant in the above paragraph is our heroine grace. her boss/fake fiancé is luc salvatore. she got the job through luc's father dom, who owns the company, and who desperately wants to retire, but he is concerned about luc, who is such a lady-killer that every assistant they have hired for him has fallen under his spell and been useless at the job. dom needs to go away for a year, and rather than hire a male assistant, by whom luc would not be tempted, dom instead commissions grace, a gorgeous woman with small-business ambitions, to be luc's assistant for the year, and if she can keep things platonic - keep luc at arm's length - dom will finance her dream of opening a children's toy store. so - grace makes herself all ugly by dying her blonde hair brown and putting on some oversized tinted glasses to hide her green eyes.

UGGO!

she also wears baggy clothes and a fake engagement ring. little does she know that luc does not just like pretty girls, he likes ALLLLLLL girls, even uggoes like in that picture above, and he comes at her pretty strong from day one, "fixing" her collar and touching her face and making with all the italian endearments. however, he does respect the engagement ring and never takes his flirtations too far (i mean, in the world of a romance novel - most women in the real world would not suffer that much cheek-cupping from their boss) but he takes every opportunity to denigrate her imaginary fiancé.

but grace has resisted luc's advances for 337 whole days, even though she is wildly attracted to him, because she really really wants to start her own business and fulfill the dream she and her mother had planned before her tragic death. this ruse is for you, mom!

SO - when luc tells the police that grace is his fiancée, she is all OH NO!! what if dom hears??? but she can't turn her back on a helpless little baby, and she doesn't want it to be sent away with social services, so she goes along with the ruse, panicking the whole time. at first, it is only for a few hours, then a few days, but as the situation in italy seems to take longer and longer to resolve, she eventually goes so far as to move in with luc, sleeping in the other room, and has to do some fast-talking to convince him yes she really has a fiancé named william and he's totally cool with her living with another man for now while all the time her hair dye is washing out and she is getting attractive again and luc is getting increasingly suspicious and plucking off her glasses and picking out more form-fitting clothing for her to wear around his place and his (many, many) brothers are hooting and hollering all over her and making assumptions about their relationship but still getting gropier with her than most women would tolerate.

*Noticing his brothers' reactions, Luc explained, "Will-William, her fiancé, has her in disguise. For some reason, he wants her to look like a bag lady. I haven't quite figured out why. I will, though. I will."*

*"A disguise?" Stef laughed, intrigued. "Like in the movies?"*

*Rocco approached. "You mean all I have to do is..."*

*Before she could protest, he whipped off her glasses. From behind, Alessandro slipped the pins from her hair, fluffing the wayward curls around her face and shoulders. "This isn't fair," she protested. "Stop it!" Marc advanced next, and she knew from his mischievous grim that he intended to investigate what lay beneath her bulky wool suit.*

*Apparently, so did Luc. Sweeping her clear of his brothers' clutches, he gave her a gentle push towards the door. "Put on the green dress," he said.*

*And by the remorseless gleam in his golden eyes, she knew it wasn't a request.*

but no hard feelings, despite that reading super-predatory; she just goes and puts on the pretty green dress and returns to eat dinner with them while they get all moony over the fact that she is suddenly somehow less hideous and luc checks out her tits.

so, all of this to say - what is it with women in romance novels and bets? or dares? or other similar arrangements where there is no ironclad legal force binding them into keeping their ridiculous promises but for some reason, they are helpless to just walk the fuck away?? so many needless hijinks. and while this one is less disturbing than Fifty Shades of Grey or Beautiful Disaster, and it's more of a slapstick situation, it's a real headscratcher as to why she doesn't just say - "you know - i don't think this plot makes much sense. i know i heard the social worker said that unless there was a woman here, the baby would be taken away, but that doesn't make a lot of sense, does it?? i mean - this is the 90's, right?? and plenty of single men have raised children, and all you are doing is watching it for a while, right?? i feel like it would be totally okay for me to not get involved in this silly circus and go back to my own apartment and leave you to this since i am already kind of enmeshed in a ridiculous arrangement with your pops that it's better you never find out about. so, grace out."

3) here are some additional complications, because this book isn't complicated enough

- a) i keep calling the baby "it." this is because the mother calls it "toni" when she thrusts it at its father, and everyone hears that name as "tony," and since the salvatore family has not produced female offspring in like a billion, luc tells the cops that he is babysitting his nephew. but oh no, the baby turns out to be a girl!!! which lie eventually causes problems for luc and his babysitting arrangement.
- b) dom is totally not okay with children being born out of wedlock. so luc has to hide the existence of pietro's baby from dom, lest pietro be disowned, and when dom arrives back in the usa unexpectedly for thanksgiving, luc claims that it is his own, from the secret elopement of himself and grace. which compromises grace's arrangement with dom, of which luc still knows nothing, and makes it look that she hooked up with luc on like day one, even though she is totally blameless. (ish)
- c) grace brought all this shit from her apartment to make social services believe she was living there with luc. yet somehow, when dom arrives and she is hiding in the closet with the baby (where social services eventually finds her and is totally not cool with), he notices none of the girly things and is not suspicious in the least.
- d) luc has a very nosy neighbor across the hall who keeps on calling those police on him, because - again - it is illegal to babysit. meanwhile, with those officers distracted, people are probably being eviscerated all over san francisco. she also scolds luc for using profanity in the hallway.

e) grace's father is a minister, and is also against the idea of babies being born out of wedlock. he walks into luc's apartment along with the new case worker in the middle of their nude, near-intercourse, (yeah, that happens) and he is super confused about why grace never told him she married luc and where this baby came from and grace tells him everything and her father agrees to marry them for real right there and grace agrees to it because it's just easier that way, telling luc they will get it annulled as soon as pietro gets back, and the ceremony is underway in luc's apartment when luc's other brothers walk in in the middle and are all loud and rowdy, and then the baby poos so they have to pause the ceremony AGAIN, and then dom, who was told they were ALREADY married and that toni is their baby walks in, and then shortly after that the new-new case worker comes in and it just happens to be luc's ex with a grudge, and then pietro and carina walk in and they have been married in italy so it's totally okay for them to have toni back and all the lies start colliding and are so very hard to keep track of and WHO'S HOLDING THE BABY?

but it all gets resolved and luc and grace get married for real and live happily ever after the end.

phew.

what a long, strange trip it's been

old, pre-read review:

upon reading the title, i wasn't sure if this was a book about distracted parents, or about a kidnapping. so, i looked a little more closely. and i saw that dude's sweater. and then i looked still more closely.

**"Toni isn't your nephew - she's your niece!"**

**"You're kidding!" Luc grinned in amazement. "That's wonderful!"**

**Grace struggled to control her temper. "You're missing the point. If the police had discovered we'd lied, they'd have thrown us both into jail. Darn it, Luc, how dare you involve me in your family problems?"**

**"Our problems," he reminded her in a soft, deliberate voice. "We're engaged. You told the police that, remember?"**

**"But it's all a lie," she protested. "Every bit of it. I'm not engaged to you...and the baby isn't even a boy!"**

**"You have a choice. You can stay with me - posing as my fiancee - until my brother returns. Or you can turn your back on a helpless baby."**

**"You don't play fair!" she complained.**

**"No," he agreed. Then he smiled, a charming, dangerous smile. "I play to win."**

and then i wet myself.

and you thought that was going to be the end of it. BUT NO!!!

buddy read is going to happen!!!

karly

and me!

sitting in a tree!

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**Marionela says**

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**Alarna Martin says**

Good. :)

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## Dalia says

3.5 stars

This is more like a farce than a romantic comedy. It's more about Luc trying his best to keep his niece in his care till his brother comes & gets his daughter. Grace is his PA, she has her own agenda, disguising her beauty & pretending to be engaged to keep Luc at arms length. their interaction with police officers & social workers are funny, Luc always trying to charm his way out of any bad situation, & at the same time trying to keep the baby secret from his father till his brother sorts things out. The romance element is not eminent in this book, but It's a quiet entertaining read.

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## Tadiana ☆Night Owl? says

I will never again rag on Regency romances for being contrived. . . . Well, okay, maybe I will, but at least I'll do it knowing that they don't have a monopoly on such silliness. This one was every bit as bad. Grace, a virginal 20-something year old, wants to start her own business; old Italian man offers to finance her startup business if she can work a year as an assistant for his hot son Lucian without falling in love or starting a relationship with him. So she hides her gorgeousness behind tinted glasses and bad makeup, wears baggy, shapeless clothes, and rinses her lovely blonde hair a muddy brown color and sticks it in a tight bun (feel free to roll your eyes here). Oh, yes, she also wears her mother's engagement ring and pretends to have a fiancé.

Luc still manages to sexually harass flirt with Grace, from the first day, but somehow she gets through eleven months safely, when suddenly Luc gets his baby niece dumped in his lap while his brother goes chasing off to Italy to try to fix things with the baby's mother. Of course Luc needs help with the baby and, of course, only Grace will do. And he needs her to live in his apartment to do it. And pretend to be engaged and then married to him so as to allay the concerns of the authorities about an abandoned baby. Throw in a little more employee sexual harassment, some purple prose romantic moments, a few diapering scenes and a truly bizarre amount of police and social services interest in this baby, and we're good to go! It tries to be slapstick humor, but the idiocy of the plot twists and the attempts at serious sexual tension cut against it.

Sarah can't believe I'm not going 1 star with this, but this book, as silly as it is, doesn't quite wallow in the pit of awfulness to the extent that I demand of my 1-star books. I've got standards here, people! ;) But I will say that it was a close call.

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Previous post:

**Sarah** sucked me in to a buddy read, after **Karly** suggested it. I have such great GR friends! The question is, which will provide the better laughs/ranty review material, this one or Shattered Dreams?

Bottoms up!

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