



Nothing Like a Duke

Jane Ashford

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A Georgette Heyer-esque tale of high society in the glittering Regency

Lord Robert Gresham has given up all hope that the beautiful Flora Jennings will ever take him seriously. He heads to an exclusive country house party to forget about Flora, but his plans are thwarted when she suddenly arrives.

Their attraction flares, but their romance becomes complicated when the sinister Anthony Durand shows up and threatens Flora. Every bone in Robert's body says to save her...but he'll have to learn that some damsels in distress can save themselves if he truly wants to win her heart.

Nothing Like a Duke Details

Date : Published May 2nd 2017 by Sourcebooks Casablanca

ISBN :

Author : Jane Ashford

Format : Kindle Edition 352 pages

Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Historical, Historical Fiction, Regency, Fiction

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From Reader Review Nothing Like a Duke for online ebook

Sissy's Romance Book Review says

Book Review For: 'Nothing Like a Duke' by Jane Ashford 'Nothing Like a Duke' by Jane Ashford is book four in "The Duke's Sons" series. This is the story of Robert and Flora. Robert has agreed to attend a house party and is headed there when his carriage has an accident. Then he arrives to find that Flora is there who he thought to avoid. Robert tries to not take notice of Flora but it is hard for him to ignore the bluestocking. But Flora and Robert can't be discouraged for long. This was another good story by Ms. Ashford. *A Book Obsessed Chicks Review Team Selection*<https://www.amazon.com/gp/profile/A2H...>
<http://sissymaereads.blogspot.com/> <https://romancebookreviewforyou.wordpress.com/>
<https://www.tumblr.com/blog/romancebooksbyjaneashford>

Angel Hatfield says

Robert's carriage hit a rut and broke the axel. One of his carriage men took one of the horses to go back to the farm they had passed and he knew what the man brought back would probably be very crude but they were only about ten miles from their destination. Robert had never been this far north before but his friends had asked to come to their party and he had said yes so he would go. So he made this long hard journey to them. Robert got out to help his men and when under some shrubbery to avoid the rain he heard a whining when he went to see what it was it was what he thought was a puppy but really was just a small abandoned abused dog that he named Plato and decided he wanted and he went back to the carriage and grabbed a blanket and got the poor helpless leery dog dried him off and went to the carriage gave him a little to eat and some water and the dog went to sleep as Robert was talking about how his friends asked him to the party as he added luster to parties that he attended. Luster was one of Robert's gifts . Hostesses counted themselves lucky to have Robert there or so he told the dog his new friend. Robert added he liked to helping people enjoy themselves. It was only about ten more miles they had to go in this rough farm cart and Robert made sure to take the dog with him. Several hours later after a bath and a change of clothes Robert sat in his bedroom with the dog and read a letter from his mother- the Duchess of Langford. Robert told Plato that he was back with his own and he wasn't thinking of her. Then when Robert was in the drawing room he saw her -Flora Jennings then he went to Flora and asked why had she come to this party. Robert told Flora he was surprised to see her among the people she professed to dispose. Robert went over to Lady Victoria who was the daughter of the house and her friends as it wouldn't hurt Flora to see how charming how most females found him. Flora had been told by her mother they would always be snubbed by the ton as her mother had chosen to marry a lowly poor scholar instead of someone from the ton that she had been part of. Flora thought she was mistaken about Robert but maybe she wasn't after all. Flora and Robert had hot chemistry. I did not really care for this book. I didn't connect to the book or the characters. I did however like Flora and Robert but they did seem to bicker a lot. There were too many characters that just weren't needed and only tended to confuse me. Where were the hosts and servants anyway? I just didn't feel this was for me. But I did love Plato the dog way my favorite thing in the book.

Marsha Spohn says

Reviewed at Romantic Historicals

I'm very much in the middle on Nothing Like A Duke. I liked it while I was reading it, yet when I think back on it the most memorable character for me was the rescued pup, Plato. So, yeah. I didn't hate it nor did I love it so let's say I enjoyed myself while reading it but it won't, unfortunately, stay with me enough to want a re-read down the road. To be fair, a 3 star review does, to me, indicate a good book, it simply wasn't a memorable one. The Duke's Sons series has been like that for me – loved some, others were okay. Odd, since I usually love Jane Ashford's works. Still, I would recommend it as a good story that does move the series along somewhat. You need to make up your own mind though. This is merely my own personal opinion.

Flora was born into the wrong era. her thoughts and beliefs would have made her quite comfortable in today's modern world – in her own time, well, not always. She has a quick, intelligent mind and isn't too afraid to use it. She's taken her mother's words to heart and knows that the snubs from society can not only be painful, but ruin a reputation. Yet, she cannot hold her opinion back any more than a leopard can change its spots. Stuck at this dreaded week long house party, Flora has resigned herself to being absolutely bored and as quiet as she can make herself be. Then the one man that she can have a real conversation with arrives... with a puppy in tow?

Lord Robert is in a bit of a melancholy mood. He is attracted to a decidedly stubborn bluestocking who would be perfect for him... if she would take him seriously and not fob him off as just another arrogant man. He wasn't arrogant, was he? No, opinionated, yes. Still, he'd accepted this invitation to the house party in the hopes of getting the annoying Flora off of his mind. In an odd accident of fate, he rescues a dejected puppy who he instantly feels a kinship to... Plato becomes his confidante of thoughts he'd never speak out loud. And, perhaps a way to the lady's heart that he wishes to win for himself. With Flora at the house party, Robert begins to believe he might still have a chance. Until one nasty villain gets in the way. A man must rescue his lady, even when the lady in question feels she can rescue herself, thank you very much.

As I mentioned, I did like Nothing Like A Duke, for the most part. There are some bumps along the way though, and I wish I could give it a higher rating... but it became a story that while I liked it while reading it won't be one that I'll return to for another visit.

I purchased a paperback of this story.

Michelle says

Pub date: May 2017

3.5 An old-fashioned romance with a feminist bent, I liked the way Flora wanted to handle everything herself in an age that discouraged females from being their own persons. And how I wanted more of Plato the dog!

Stacee says

2.5 stars?

I liked Flora and Robert. They had excellent chemistry and their banter was feisty and intelligent. Sadly, we didn't get a lot of scenes with the two of them together and that's where I started to get bored. There are sooooooo many characters in this story and most of them were bland. Flora and Robert definitely stand out.

I'm not sure what was going on with the dog...

Plot wise, I was expecting a lot of threads to follow, yet there weren't that many. It seemed like certain characters were given small scenes to add depth; for me, it just added confusion. The conflict was boring and also felt forced, especially at the ending scene.

Overall, I liked the premise, but struggled with the execution. I doubt I'll be reading any other books in the series.

Huge thanks to Sourcebooks Casablanca for providing the arc free of charge

Mel says

Nothing Like the Duke is poorly written and lacks structure. The segues from scene to scene were clunky and two of the plot devices were totally unnecessary. The story which takes place at a house party in Northumberland would have moved along splendidly without the cartoonish dog and pedestrian villains. Robert and Flora have enough issues to deal with just navigating through their own relationship obstacles amongst the drama of a tonnish house party to make it interesting. The whole set-up is weird. There is a lack of description of the house and furnishings, plus the hosts and their servants were absent through most of the book. Where was the butler and the housekeeper? Where were the hosts? They had no idea what was going on in their own home during a party they devised for their own daughter's pleasure. Lady Victoria was just another spoiled debutante, mean spirited and entitled. Also, the vagueness of the guest list was not well done. When a book takes place at a country home I want all the particulars, the number, the names and a little insight into all the guests. So that was another annoyance! Robert and Flora were lovely, but they were situated in a shamble of a book. The ending was particularly bad, with the return of the villain, which was so ridiculous. The last few pages of the story were bland and abrupt. I have really enjoyed some of Ashfords books in the past, but I can't recommend this book or the series at all.

Vashti says

How I tried to get into this book, but it was a snooze fest that is literally putting me to sleep, DNF.

Caitlyn Lynch says

How do you solve a problem like Flora?

Like Maria in The Sound Of Music, Flora is ill-suited to the life she has to lead. She's an educated, intelligent, independent-minded woman living in an era when women were often considered to be nothing more than property, and at best young unmarried women were supposed to be prettily ornamental and do as they were told.

Flora, however, gets lucky. She has managed to find a man who appreciates her for everything she is, and doesn't want her to change into something she is not. Now all Lord Robert has to do is convince her that not all members of the ton are worthless fribbles.

Watching Flora and Robert interact was a delight, especially their dealing with the jealous machinations of a young woman with a schoolgirl crush on Robert. Flora's grace and ability to see the comedy inherent in the situation was absolutely wonderful; the scene where they were both stifling their laughter was one of my favourites in the book.

Nothing Like A Duke is well-written; even though it is the fourth in the series (and I haven't read any of the others) and there were some plot points that had obviously been carried forward from previous books, I had no trouble at all following events and figuring out what was going on. To me that is the mark of a good book in a series; being able to pick up a book in the middle at random - because after all, we've all picked up a book in the bookshop, only to realize later that it's in the middle of a series - and NOT having to go out to buy the rest to figure out the plot.

A great read on its own, no doubt the rest of the series will be just as good. Maybe I'll get to them one day when the TBR pile is reduced from its current mountainous proportions. Five stars!

Disclaimer: I received a copy of this book for review through NetGalley.

Joann Maggio says

Nothing Like a Duke ??? written by Jane Ashford

This was a rather mundane attempt at a historical romance.

A bored aristocrat, Lord Robert Gresham, ripe for marriage but still hesitating. He is apparently enamored with a bluestocking Flora Jennings but tries to ignore the attraction. He escapes to the country for the longest party I have ever read about only to find Flora a guest as well.

It seems the root of their attraction is that they constantly disagree. Their bickering really wears thin. The storyline is fragmented and there is little to no romantic scenes to compensate for a weak narrative. The author many times goes off on nonsensical conversations for her characters which I found distracting. A Book Obsessed Review Team Selection.

I was given this book by Netgalley for an unbiased review.

Roses R Blue says

As reviewed at Roses Are Blue: <http://wp.me/p3QRh4-xL>

Flora Jennings is a scholarly type of lady who has no use for society. Her mother was ostracized when she married Flora's father, and retreated to live a quiet life. She made a point of drumming into Flora how much being snubbed hurt, and Flora learned the lesson well. Despite all her misgivings, she has been persuaded to attend a houseparty with her friend, Harriet, and is dismayed to find Robert Gresham in attendance as well. Flora and Robert have somewhat of a recent history, as they spent time together while Robert was pursuing scholarly interests. Though he's the son of a duke, Robert happily spent time in Flora's world and became

quite fond of her. He eventually gave up on the relationship due to Flora's seeming reluctance, and decided to forget her. He's only attending the houseparty to please his friend, and is very surprised to see Flora. Despite his resolution, he decides to further their acquaintance to see where it may lead.

I haven't read the previous books in this series, so I did feel a little at sea for not having seen Flora's and Robert's interactions firsthand. Flora comes off as very wary, a little petulant, and often stubborn, as she keeps insisting that she can take care of herself. As the book progresses, she does manage to loosen up and take part in some of the activities, even enduring the efforts of the host's daughter to paint her in an unfavorable light with good humor. Robert is an endearing man, charming, good natured, and kind. He even rescues and adopts a sadly abused mutt, whom he dubs "Plato." This is no ordinary dog, and he's as much a main character as Robert and Flora, and sometimes manages to steal the show.

NOTHING LIKE A DUKE is about two people from different walks of life who have to learn to live in each other's world if they want a future together. Robert seemed much more open from the get go, but Flora had a lot of growing to do. I did not like Flora at first, and while I did warm up to her somewhat, I never really grew to love her. The pacing of the story seemed a bit uneven, as some parts dragged, while others were interesting and amusing. The romance was sweet, but not scorching. For those following the Duke's Sons series, NOTHING LIKE A DUKE will be a must read.

Eileen says

Robert Gresham and Flora Jennings 3.5 stars

This is my first book by Jane Ashford and it was a good story. Having won the book I decided to try coming into the series at such a late start and go from there knowing I may be coming in midstream. I looked to me that Robert and Flora had spent a great deal of time together while in London and are now attending a house party up north. He feels she argues a great deal with him and I think she feels they have a good connection and hopes it can continue at the party.

I liked that Flora has a mind of her own and that she tried to fit in with the ton but still couldn't confirm all the way. Robert doesn't know what to make of her trying to fit in and comes to find that he does miss her and her arguing. There was a little bit of drama with the host's daughter Victoria but that worked out in the end. And of course there was Plato the dog. He had interesting mannerisms for a dog. I'd like to see how his brother Randolph manages getting a wife in the next story.

Sportochick says

A most unusual story with some very interesting scenes. The reader will enjoy this story and how the author introduces some fun games played back in the era this book is written about.

The theme throughout this book gives the reader a clear sense of the era involved and how house parties functioned. I found it entertaining with all the hidden agendas this book had and how they were resolved was priceless.

Flora's courage to go to this party that she clearly wanted to avoid comes across the page in such a manner that it encourages the reader to take heart and give something in their lives a chance.

Robert at times drove me crazy. I wanted him to just go up to Flora kiss her and make everything better. He also had his brilliant parts though where he carefully negotiated how events where turning out and how he fought to protect himself from hurt.

This story also brings in several secondary characters who not only cause upheaval but open other plot components for added interest for the reader.

I give this 3.75 stars because of all the new things I learned while reading it.

Received an advance reader copy in exchange for a fair review.

Visit my blog for more reviews: Sportochick's Musings

Linda says

Lord Robert Gresham was intrigued by the intelligence of Miss Flora Jennings. When she arrives at a country house party, Robert comes up to her and reminds her that the fellow guests are the ones she had scorned as mindless simpletons. Flora and Robert might argue about various academic points but they were of the same mind and loved each other. Flora had to go up against Lady Victoria Moreton, who was determined to marry Robert and Flora was determined that she not. Robert wanted to marry Flora and wanted to get Victoria interested in someone else. Someone else had barged into the house party. Anthony Durand arrived uninvited and soon many of the young men had lost quite a bit of money at his card games. Robert and Flora knew he was cheating and devised a way to watch and see how he did it. Robert's father had accused Durand of cheating earlier but had no proof. Robert was determined to get proof and get rid of Durand once and for all.

Eileen Dandashi says

Plato is much the stealth and steals the show! Simply a delightful read!

Author Ashford knows how to engage a reader. First with action and danger, then humor.

I loved the relationship which ensnared Lord Robert Gresham. He could speak his mind and be listened to. When he wanted to go somewhere, his wishes were complied with. Dare he say those brown eyes held intelligence and understanding, knowing just how he felt? In fact, this relationship of Lord Robert's set the tone of the story, providing a good insight to the man himself.

Plato is much more than a puppy dog. He also knows all of Robert's secrets and worries.

Plato became companion and confidant to Lord Robert one miserable night when Lord Robert's carriage broke down and rain came in trenches.

Excerpt:

Robert searched for the source. He had to wait through another period of silence before he found his way to a low bush. Raising one of its branches, he discovered a huddled bit of dark fur. When he bent to look closer, a small head lifted, and dark eyes met his.

It was a dog, quite young, he thought, soaking wet and shivering. As he eyed it, the whimpering began again. The sound seemed involuntary, because the tiny creature stared at him without demand, or hope. Even as he gazed, its head sank down again, too tired, or dejected, to resist whatever fate was about to descend. The brown eyes closed.

Not only did I fall in love with this puppy, so did Robert. Well, maybe not in love, but definitely was moved—took the puppy in. From the beginning of the story Robert talked with the pup.

Excerpt:

*“What are you doing so far from a farm or village? He asked the dog.
Wary brown eyes watched him.*

“I expect it’s a sad story, and you’d rather not think about it,” Robert went on. “I don’t suppose you know Salbridge Great Hall? I’m on my way to a house party there.”

One of the dog’s ears twitched.

“No, I hadn’t heard of it either. But I understand that it’s the showplace of its district.

Robert and his new-found companion and confidant attend the house party. Highly unusual, but he could just start a fashion.

Flora, daughter of a great scholar, and quite an intelligent woman in her own right happened to be at the house party, chaperoned by Harriet Runyon, an older woman who apparently has a heart which well remembers how it is to be young.

Flora, thrust into the house party, not of her choosing, didn’t like the goings-on of the ton. They were beings empty of character and intelligence. The one she wishes would have looked at her twice is Lord Robert. The times they spent together within her father’s home had been full of excitement. She and he would discuss and argue historical events. He exited her life as quickly as he had entered it.

Now, here he is at the house party. She won’t have anything to do with him. Obviously, he would only snub her. He, on the other hand, remembers the good times in the company of brilliant minds. He has much to discuss with Plato when they are alone!

Excerpt:

Robert was acutely conscious of her, as if she was a lodestone to his compass. It was a mystery as unfathomable as Randolph and his lute. Robert knew prettier ladies. Many were more vivacious, more sweetly attentive. But Flora Jennings compelled his attention.

The novel has its moments of danger giving it greater depth. Additionally, it is charming, sweetly heart-

warming, full of silliness and entirely worth acquainting yourself with these characters. Plato, will you come live with me?

SS says

A house party in the country brings together Lord Robert Gresham and Flora Jennings, once again. This is the fourth book in the series, and the first one I've read. I had no problem understanding what came before. It can easily be read as a stand alone.

A nice, light Regency. There's nothing ground breaking in this book, but the "good" characters are likable and the "bad" characters are despicable. I fell in love with Lord Gresham immediately. How can you not love a man who takes pity on and rescues an abused puppy? And, honestly, that dog, Plato, becomes a character I constantly wanted to see. It's Plato who moves the action forward in this book. He is the one who is always finding the one who needs help, or figuring out what's going on and leading Lord Robert to it.

For those who are concerned about such things, Flora and Lord Robert do anticipate their wedding vows. In fact, they anticipate any actual proposal. I honestly don't think it was necessary or that it added anything to the story. It was done, I guess, because some readers want that. As I said, I didn't think it added anything to the tale. I'm not opposed to such scenes, but it seems that they should form organically in the story, not be maneuvered into existence. I didn't think that this one met those criteria.

I've read better Regencies, but this was not a bad book. There are a couple of memorable scenes such as when Flora gets caught in the briars and when she's abducted, but much is standard Regency formula. Everything ends well, but sadly, many outcomes are telegraphed. The best part of this book are the characters, specifically Lord Robert, his brother, Randolph, and Flora.

I received this book in a Goodreads giveaway.
