



The Illegitimate Duke

Sophie Barnes

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United in a common cause...

Juliette Matthews longs to be much more than just another pretty ornament in society. But using her recently acquired fortune to do some good is more complicated than she anticipated. Young ladies are not expected to risk their safety in helping the less fortunate. And the one gentleman who could help in her mission is stubborn, infernally handsome—and far too honorable to act on their mutual attraction.

And in a desire impossible to deny...

Florian Lowell has suddenly been made heir to the Duke of Redding—a far cry from his status as a dedicated physician. Yet even with his new role as the country's most eligible bachelor, the beautiful, fearless Juliette is utterly beyond his reach. The scandalous circumstances of his birth would destroy both their reputations if they became known. But when a more urgent danger threatens Juliette's life, Florian must gamble everything...including the heart only one woman can tame.

The Illegitimate Duke Details

Date : Published August 28th 2018 by Avon

ISBN :

Author : Sophie Barnes

Format : Kindle Edition 384 pages

Genre : Historical, Romance, Historical Romance

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From Reader Review The Illegitimate Duke for online ebook

Michele says

See the full review at HarlequinJunkie.com

The Illegitimate Duke was a charming, slow burn historical romance that had me hooked right away. How could it not, with its delightful characters, a diabolical villain, and even a bit of a medical drama that unfolded?

I've been looking forward to Florian and Juliette's romance since I finished reading the previous book, The Duke of Her Desire, which was Juliette's sister Amelia's story. I just thought the pairing of a stoic, highly talented physician and an intelligent, do-gooder woman who had just come up in Society sounded intriguing. And Sophie Barnes did so well with this book, creating the perfect amount of awareness and tension between Juliette and Florian without losing the other threads of the storyline. [Read More](#)

Julie says

Received an ARC via Edelweiss

This was a tough book for me to read. I loved the two main characters and thought they deserved great things and each other. They got each other and were often thinking similar things about serious subjects. The problem I had was all of the detail on the horrendous, contagious, and deadly diseases. That was a bit off putting to me. I know that Florian is a doctor and Juliette read a lot of medical books, but a bit much for a romance. If it had been a history of medicine in the 1800s then I would understand the detail.

Maria Dariotis says

Oh my! I just loved this third instalment of Diamonds in the Rough series!

This is Florian Lowell's and Juliette Mathews the youngest sister of the Duke of Huntley story. A page turner full of danger and suspense, villainous characters coming back to wreck havoc for Florian. So many secrets that if exposed Florian fears that many lives will be destroyed. Just when he thinks his life can't get any worse his feelings for Juliette take on a new meaning for him. He tries to keep her at a distance but she's gotten under his skin. Their attraction is palpable and it heats up the pages! When a typhus epidemic erupts and her life is at jeopardy Florian will move mountains to save her!

"SIGH" Florian is such a GENTLEMAN this is absolutely a love story that gives you all the feels! Sophie Barnes has a GEM of a story! Well paced lots of interesting characters and heart wrenching situations. I'm never disappointed with a Sophie Barnes book! I'm so looking forward to the next one, Florian's brother and the Duchess!

I recieved a complimentary copy from the author/publisher via Edelweiss. This is my honest unbiased opinion.

Jaci says

Book 3 in The Diamonds In The Rough tells the story of Juliette Matthews and Dr. Florian Lowell. If you have read the first two books in the Series then you know Juliette and Florian. This book can also be read as a stand-alone novel, but if you can I would highly recommend you read the previous books also. Sophie is a wonderfully talented author who writes beautiful love stories with marvelous characters. Her books are full of wit, suspense, with spellbinding drama, evil villains, heart-stopping peril and ravishing sensual love scenes.

Juliette is the younger sister of a Duke who spent her young life living in the slums of St. Giles. Her brother did his best to keep them sheltered and fed. Now her family is back in their place in Society and Juliette is a much sought after young lady. Her brother and sister are now both happily married and they want Juliette to find the same happiness. She is still uncomfortable in her new role as a debutante and hasn't met anyone yet that she would consider as a husband. She wants to do all that she can for the poor people that she lived around in St. Giles. She is determined to do everything she can to ease their heavy burdens as much as she can.

Florian Lowell is one of the most respected doctors in England. He is a Gentleman by birth and heir to a Dukedom. He has devoted his life to helping the poor. He is very uncomfortable in social situations and feels time spent away from his patients is a waste of his time. Now that he is his uncle's heir he has to take time out of days to attend Ton functions. He doesn't like to dance and small talk and gossip are not his forte. The only saving grace is that he can see and talk to Juliette Matthews. She is not like the other young ladies in that she is interested in learning all she can to help anyone less fortunate than her. It doesn't hurt that she is beautiful, but even though he is attracted to her, he doesn't have time to court a woman. Florian has a secret that if it ever got out could ruin him and take away everything he has worked for. So it is best to keep Juliette at a distance if only it was that easy.

When a typhus epidemic strikes St. Giles Florian will need all the help he can get. Juliette donates 3,000 pounds of her money and joins the board at the hospital to help. As they see each other more the attraction that they both are fighting grows stronger. Juliette doesn't understand why Florian is keeping her at a distance. The attraction is electric and Juliette knows he wants her too. Florian won't explain why they cannot be together, he just says that he is not the person that she thinks he is. When Juliette becomes ill Florian will do anything to save her life.

I absolutely loved Florian and Juliette's love story. Two people who are made for each other and the forces that attempt to keep them apart. In the darkness of Florian's secret is a madman who is determined to punish him and take away everyone who he loves. When Florian's enemy goes after Juliette he realizes that he can't live without her. Can he save her and keep his life's work at the same time? Do not miss this one. I loved it!!

Katie Michaels says

Review to come.

Dee Deacon Foster says

Born on the wrong side of the blanket, Florian Lowell's true love is medicine and a quiet simple life. An unexpected title upends that life. His paternity and the secret he holds close guarantees the one woman he craves is still beyond his reach. Fate, his friendship with her family, and her headstrong determination to help those in the less savory parts of London are continually throwing them together. As if protecting her wasn't enough, he is determined to fight the attraction between them despite her determination to see what they can make of it. However, if she knew the truth of his parentage he knows he will lose her forever.

Sophie Barnes takes two headstrong people and helps them find love despite the "differences" in their station. At times I wanted to beat sense into Florian while cheering Juliette on. These two are truly "Diamonds in the Rough". I can't wait to see which diamonds Ms. Barnes chooses to polish into love.

Sissy's Romance Book Review says

The Illegitimate Duke by Sophie Barnes is book Three in the Diamonds in the Rough series. This is the story of Juliette Matthews and Florian Lowell. I have read (and Loved!) the previous books, but feel you can make this a standalone book if you wish to do so.

When Juliette was younger she became sick and with the death of her sister she became very protected and confined. But this lead her to read and become very interested in medicine and helping others. Florian being a second son had taken up the profession of being a doctor, but then his life changed when it was set for him to inherit the title of Duke of Redding. Florian was a doctor that helped Juliette get over a illness and her feelings for him started. Now she is better in health and better financially looking to help others. Florian has feelings for Juliette but because of a past and present threat that is plaguing him, he can't risk ruining her. Really enjoyed reading their story and seeing how it would end....loved it!

Connie Fischer says

Lady Juliette Matthews is attending a ball at Hawthorne House. She is so thankful that her life is so much better than it was when she lived in the slums of St. Giles just one year ago. While she enjoys dancing and chatting with men, Juliette likes it when men and women can just be friends without it going any further than that.

Juliette sees Florian Lowell, a physician who treated her for measles last year, attending the ball as well. She is quite taken with his manners and his handsome looks. Florian's uncle, the Duke of Redding, is quite ill and he is petitioning the crown to allow him to make Florian his heir. Florian is not really happy about it because he loves being a doctor. Juliette is quite interested in the medical procedures that Florian performs and enjoys discussing them with him.

Sometimes, Florian battles bouts of depression and anger. His real father is a man named Bartholomew who was supposed to have been hanged for his crimes but managed to escape. He has reinvented himself as William Mortedge and is back wanting to make Florian's life miserable. Thus, he has some low self-esteem

issues.

Juliette realizes how terrible things are in St. Giles and has just learned that there has been an outbreak of typhus there. She now wants to use some of her money to help the people there. But her brother, Raphe, who raised her and her sisters, does not want her to get involved for fear of her becoming ill. He has always been very protective of her. However, she learns that with her large donation, she can secure a seat on the board of the local hospital to see that the funds go where they are most needed.

Juliette is very interested in the medical field which results in some great discussions between she and Florian. He is impressed at the knowledge she is gaining and appreciates her caring about people. But when typhus hits close to home, things get very intense.

I think that readers might wish to read the author's novel, "A Most Unlikely Duke," as background to understand the change in circumstances for the Matthews family. I had to refer to my review of the book to refresh my memory about Juliette. I enjoyed the book but wish that more background of both Juliette and Florian had been introduced at the beginning of the story. Not having that information available, can tend to turn readers away.

Copy provided by Edelweiss in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Jessica Grogan says

Juliette Matthews is now a young lady of privilege and wants to use her family's newfound wealth to help others. Florian Lowell, a physician with a secret, has recently inherited a dukedom. Together they must overcome illness, secrets, and danger to find their happily ever after.

This was a slow start for me. I didn't read the previous title in the series and had to get caught up on a few characters and events and I felt lost at the beginning of the book. Once I got past that, however, the rest of the book flowed well and I had trouble putting it down.

I liked Florian because he wasn't a "normal" historical romance hero and was rather serious. I love heroes that do more than run their estates, too. Juliette was a bit of a disappointment, however. I found her to be much like every other heroine and that she acted like she'd grown up with wealth and privilege.

I felt like the major conflict was easy to guess from the beginning. That didn't keep me from reading what happened, however. The slightly more minor conflict got a little repetitive after a while and probably could've been resolved had Juliette and Florian just talked to each other.

I missed an epilogue in this story but am looking forward to the next title in the series.

*I received an eARC from Edelweiss and the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Heather andrews says

Juliette doesn't mind calling her man out, "...you are pulling me along at a pace that is difficult for me to keep up with in my current state of dress. I cannot simply hike up my evening gown and lengthen my stride, Florian." Florian likes to state his feelings, "because I am no longer a mere physician, Juliette. I am a man who desires you in every way imaginable." His breath was ragged, his words coming in quick..." I liked this book, I fell in love with Florian.

WTF Are You Reading? says

Florian and Juliette make quite the winning pair in this third book of the Diamonds In The Rough series. Juliette is as determined to make her newfound wealth and status help her make a difference in the world. As Florian is to avoid his at all costs.

This third story of the working class turned aristocracy. Is perfection in almost every way. The character interaction and spirited rapport between Florian and Juliette is splendid. Florian's struggle to resolve his life's work with the demands of his new social status.

Superb!

And let's not mention the rather hard-won romance found here.

Can you say "mmm...mmm... good?"

There is however, one detraction from this most stellar read.

And unfortunately for this read. It concerns a major element in the story. Florian's parentage.

The reason.

Though it is true that such information coming to light could hurt Florian socially.

Both his status as a Duke and a doctor is enough to render any ill done quite the moot point.

So, aside from a rather unnecessary bit of drama that it manages to provide. The whole mental and physical "goose chase" that all involved are subjected to as a result. Is in truth, quite distracting.

Not to worry though.

The story is quickly put to rights when duty calls. And Florian and must spring into action as the doctor that he is to save all that he holds dear from an even greater foe than scandal.

The scourge of Typhus.

This is a beautifully written and masterfully crafted tale of a couple doing their best to rid themselves of the ghosts of their pasts. So that they may make a better future for themselves and the world in which they live.

AnnMarie says

The Illegitimate Duke is the third book in the Diamonds in the Rough series by Sophie Barnes. It can easily be read as a standalone story.

Florian Lowell is a physician, he disagrees with many of the old ways of medicine such as using leeches to bleed the sick. He is more forward thinking and because of that, he cures more patients than many doctors of his time. When Typhus is discovered in St Giles Florian knows he must do all in his power to have it contained in that area. He has had the disease before so should be immune to it now so he will be the one to

go into the area and help the afflicted.

Juliette Matthews is fed up with being expected to sit around gossiping, or doing needlework etc. She was brought up in St Giles, but good fortune finds her now a lady of means and she wants to use that money to help others less fortunate. She decides she will donate her yearly allowance to the local hospital with the proviso that she join the hospital committee so that she can have a say in how the money is used. The money couldn't come at any better time because a clinic needs to be set up in St Giles in order to deal with the Typhus outbreak.

Being on the committee brings Juliette and Florian together. They know each other already and both feel an attraction to the other. Florian fights his attraction because he has a terrible secret that would ruin her if anybody found out, and there is somebody threatening to let that very secret out. So not only does Florian have the stress of the outbreak, of trying to fight his attraction to a very determined Juliette, he also has to fear an enemy that he hoped never to have to deal with again.

This book has it all, romance, drama, intrigue. There is never a dull moment. Juliette and Florian are so perfect for each other, and I love when he has the opportunity to be her hero. I also shuddered at the reason he needed to be that hero. This book definitely had me running the gamut of emotions and although there were a couple of things that have left me wondering, I can still happily recommend this story and this series.

Jennifer Becker says

Loved the story but i felt it was more about the medicine and epidemic than it was about the romance. it was through typhus that these two Florian and Juliette come to meet. Juliette doesn't like to be in society any more than Florian does but they connect through medicine and wanting to help others.

Barbara Rogers says

Series: Diamonds In The Rough #3

Publication Date: 8/28/18

Danger, suspense, and romance abound in this great addition to Sophie Barnes' Diamonds In The Rough series. I loved the earlier tales about this 'fish out of water' family and was afraid this was to be the last book, so I was delighted to learn that there is at least one more book coming. The characters are interesting and unique, the villain finally gets his punishment and the romance is delightful.

Florian Lowell is the most brilliant physician in England. He is always learning from the medical sciences in other lands and incorporating them into his practice. Other physicians decry some of his modern practices – probably out of jealousy – but Florian gets results. He really just wants to be left alone to practice medicine, but the world just won't leave him be. Florian has deeply held secrets – secrets that would ruin him, his family and anyone who is closely associated with him. To add to the stress of his secret, his uncle (his mother's brother), the Duke of Redding, has petitioned the King to make Florian his legal heir, there is a typhus epidemic in London, and the most beguiling woman he has ever met is plaguing him at every turn.

Juliette Matthews is the youngest sister of the Duke of Huntley. She has always had a delicate constitution

and has, therefore, always been protected and coddled. She chafes at that. She is stronger than they think and she wants to do something with her life. She was raised in the slums of St. Giles and has no patience for the ton's habits of making morning calls and attending balls. Earlier in the year, her older sister, Amelia, used her yearly allowance to purchase a building and set up a school for underprivileged children and now Juliette wants to do something similar. She wants to donate her yearly allowance to St. Agatha Hospital and to become a member of the hospital's board. The fact that a board membership would bring her into regular contact with Florian Lowell is just icing on the cake.

I loved the romance between Florian and Juliette. He was so honorable and selfless that you just had to love him. He fiercely fought his attraction to Juliette – for her sake, not his. He knew that an association with him could put her in physical danger and also ruin her family. Then, you have Juliette who is so open and honest – she doesn't hide the truth from herself or Florian. She is attracted to him and she lets him know it. How in the world can he fight against such innocent and open honesty?

I loved learning more about the medical practices during that period and Florian's implementing some of the more creative practices from around the world. Typhus was a horrible disease and could have wiped out all of London if Florian hadn't acted quickly and decisively. Juliette's ideas and money contributed greatly to containing and stopping the spread of the disease. (Be sure to read the Author's Notes in the back – they are great – very informative.)

The suspense is palpable. When Florian's enemy threatens Juliette, he will do anything and everything to protect and save her – and she feels the same about him.

I would have loved to learn more about the street urchin that escaped from the quarantine in St. Giles. How many other people did he come into contact with? Was he found dead on the streets somewhere? Was he somehow found and treated? It just felt like a thread that wasn't wrapped up.

Other things I wondered – What happened to the house where Juliette contracted typhus? Florian had the coach burned – would the house have been burned as well? Why wouldn't Florian have treated Juliette in that same house since it was already contaminated instead of taking her to his uninfected home? Another thing was the conversation between Huntley and Florian as they were removing Juliette – From what I've seen of Huntley so far, I don't buy that conversation. At that particular moment, he wouldn't have cared one whit about what would happen with her reputation, his only concern would have been her survival. He'd think about her reputation later.

It seems strange to me that someone so young (23 or so) would CHOOSE to be the Dowager Duchess of Tremaine. Actually, her name would have been Viola Tremaine since peers use the title name as their last name. Anyway – she doesn't automatically have to be the dowager. She has no children. She could just continue to be the Duchess of Tremaine until the day she dies – or remarries. Should the new heir have a wife that wife would also be the Duchess of Tremaine. One would be the 4th Duchess of Tremaine and the other would be the 5th Duchess of Tremaine (or whatever the appropriate number is).

Anyway, it is a great read – don't let my 'wonderings' make you think that I didn't thoroughly and absolutely love it – because I did love it.

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"I requested and received this e-book at no cost to me and volunteered to read it; my review is my honest opinion and given without any influence by the author or publisher."

Linda says

Florian Lowell is a dedicated physician who was recently named the heir of the Duke of Redding. Now he is the most eligible bachelor and at a ball, all the eager mothers try to get him to dance with their daughters but he has eyes only for Lady Juliette Matthews. His eyes meet hers and he hurries to her. Florian's biological father is the notorious criminal Bartholomew who was thought to have been hanged but Florian sees him at the ball. He is disguised and posing as an American investor. Bartholomew is angry at Florian for ruining his business and determined to destroy him by killing Juliette. But Florian has powerful allies who are determined that Bartholomew will not succeed.
