



The Conquest of Lady Cassandra

Madeline Hunter

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HER PRIDE.

HIS PREJUDICE.

THEIR PASSION.

As headstrong as she is beautiful, Lady Cassandra Vernham defied convention when she refused to marry the man who had compromised her. Now, estranged from her family, Cassandra struggles to make ends meet. A recent auction of her jewels has brought her a modicum of relief, but one of the most valuable lots was never paid for by the highest bidder: handsome, rakish Viscount Ambury. Cassandra needs that money badly, and not to buy a new hat.

Ambury has only to look at Cassandra to begin imagining her in his bed... He has not settled that outstanding debt for a reason. He suspects that the expensive baubles were stolen, perhaps even by Cassandra herself. Erotic fantasies about her notwithstanding, the vixen is not to be trusted, for she has already destroyed his good friend—the man she refused to marry who later lost his life in a duel, which Ambury suspects was fought over Cassandra. But nothing is as it seems...

As the seductive lord and the scandalous beauty are drawn together, the passion that flares between them will illuminate shocking secrets that will change both their lives forever...

The Conquest of Lady Cassandra Details

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Author : Madeline Hunter

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From Reader Review The Conquest of Lady Cassandra for online ebook

CoffeeTimeRomance and More says

Lady Cassandra Vernham would rather be a scandalous lady than some man's doormat. Her decision not to marry the man who compromised her honor left her reputation in tatters. Cassandra does not mind being independent and notorious as long as she can continue to care for her aging Aunt Sophie. Sophie provided Cassandra with a home and acceptance when it was needed most; a favor that must now be returned.

Viscount Ambury has always been fascinated by Cassandra's beauty and spunk. When tying up some loose ends of his father's estate, Ambury finds himself wondering just how Cassandra and her aunt came by their collection of jewels. He has always loved a good mystery, but this latest puzzle seems to have Ambury stepping all over Cassandra's independent feet. Knowing firsthand just how much a man will give to a beautiful woman, Ambury is determined to ferret out the truth.

Cassandra desperately needs the funds from the sale of her aunt's jewels to keep her brother from taking control of their lives. Why Ambury seems determined to get in her way, Cassandra cannot imagine. As she finds herself bumping up against the handsome Viscount at every turn, she is intrigued against her good sense. Yet the more they learn about their inexplicably linked pasts, the more Cassandra just cannot seem to get enough of the one man who can convince her to give in.

There is nothing more fascinating than watching love blossom between two people who are so obviously determined to think the worst of each other. However, as titillating as it is, the friction can also be just a little overwhelming to the reader. Cassandra is almost too stubborn, leaving the reader wondering just why Ambury continues to bother. Truly, the book is saved by a fascinating twist at the end that no reader will want to miss.

Kaitlin
Reviewer for Coffeetime Romance & More

Nidofito says

We wait a considerable long time to uncover the mysteries of Aunt Sophie's earrings, Cassandra's secret, and Gerald's animosity while being distracted by the romantic game played by Cassandra and Yates. And then all of a sudden, you've reached the end of the book and everything comes right out in the open, with new developments to boot. You don't get enough time to appreciate these developments, and are generally left unsatisfied as you close the book. There were a few juicy comments regarding 18th century society (men in particular) and how they've dictated what is right and wrong for a woman to do. But that little peek inside Yates parents' marriage was devastatingly short.

I do like that Cassandra was one of the few heroines who was successful in evading the marriage vows much longer than most. Usually the hero is often teased for getting tied down. In this case though, it's the heroine that almost got away.

CJ Patrick says

Madeline Hunter has been an auto-buy for me for many years, but I'm sorry to say that I wish I had waited to check this one out of the library instead of buying it. Based on the first book in the series, *The Surrender of Miss Fairbourne*, I was really looking forward to Cassandra's story. She had all the qualities I usually like: older, wiser, calm, little mystery, etc. Unfortunately, there was way too much mystery (most of which could have been solved with a short and sweet conversation with her Aunt) and whole lot less of wise.

I admired Cassandra for her calmness and lack of hysterics, but it seemed to me that she was too willing to wait and let Ambury dictate terms. I think a little hysteria and urgency would have solved everything much quicker, but then we would have missed the great descriptions of Ambury's tight bum over and over again. By the middle of the story, I was frustrated at the slow pacing of the story. This is weird because I am usually thinking that things happen too fast, but the constant back and forth of Ambury and Cassandra to their family members seeking out information but yet coming up with nothing was very frustrating...at least to me but not to them.

The secondary characters were also frustrating. I can only think that the inclusion of Southwaite's sister, Lydia, was only to set up a book for her. I hate that because she really had no place in the story and I don't think I would read anything about her because she wasn't written as a very good person. Also, Kendall was just really, really annoying. At some point, I began to think that maybe he had a thing for Lakewood and that was why he hated Cassandra so much. I almost hope he is paired with Lydia in a book so I can skip it completely.

Which brings me to my main beef with this book. Why did Ambury, Kendall and Southwaite carry such a grudge against Cassandra. I mean, usually, the friends would be upset if she did trap him in a marriage, but in this case she didn't and refused to marry him. According to Kendall, Lakewood loved her and continued to pine for her, but on what planet are girls obligated to marry every man who professes love to them. Obviously she didn't want anything to do with him since she forfeited her reputation rather than marry him. And the scene where she tells Ambury (or Yates depending which chapter you are reading) about why she refused to marry him was so late in coming I had really ceased to care.

I'm not going to even touch on the whole drama with brother Gerald, Ambury's parents and Aunt Sophie's secret. That was a seriously messed up plot.

So in the end, I couldn't wait for this book to end. I'm very sorry because Ms. Hunter is usually better than this mess.

BookMaven says

Lady Cassandra Vernham has a notorious reputation. A duel was held a few years earlier that resulted in a death. It was rumored that Cassandra was the reason for that duel.. She had also been caught in a compromising event and she refused to marry the man who compromised her. She fled to the home of her Aunt Sophie to escape her brother, Gerald, the Earl of Barrowmore's displeasure with her and his

determination to marry her off. Gerald has just let her know that he will put Aunt Sophie in an asylum if Cassandra does not relent and marry a man of his choosing. Cassandra needs money to take her Aunt to America to escape her brother's nefarious plan. Cassandra sold some jewelry at an auction to Yates Elliston, Viscount Ambury, heir to the Earl of Highburton, but he is delaying payment. She goes to him to demand payment, and there begins the rocky path to romance. There is the mystery of whether the jewelry is stolen and who is the rightful owner, and Cassandra learns that her aunt has many secrets that could bring even more trouble to their door.

Madeline Hunter is one of my go-to authors. She knows how to weave a romance that is filled with just the right tempo with a very intriguing plot line that has a mystery that will keep you up all night. The characters were introduced in "The Surrender of Miss Fairbourne". I could not wait to read their story, and the story was very satisfying. There is another in this series and I will definitely be in line to buy it as soon as possible!!

Keri says

Liked this one much better than the first one in the series and it has a better flow to me. But what is it with bad brothers and this series. Although the mystery part of it was pretty good and unexpected.

Maria says

Lady Cassandra Vernham lives on the edge of good society. Six years ago she was "compromised" by Baron Lakewood and then refused to marry him when he offered for her hand. Complicating matters, Lakewood has recently died in a duel, supposedly defending Cassandra's honor.

Cassandra lives with her Aunt Sophie, a beautiful, but aging woman who is beginning to suffer from dementia and was known for somewhat scandalous behavior in her own time. Cassandra's brother, Gerald, the Earl of Barrowmore, has never forgiven Cassandra for tarnishing the family name. He plans to put her in her place by forcing her to marry a man of his choosing by threatening to put Aunt Sophie away.

Aunt Sophie is the only family member who supported Cassandra during her scandal and Cassandra is determined to take care of her lovely, if somewhat, forgetful aunt. She plots to take Aunt Sophie away from Gerald's power, even if it means that the two of them must escape to America. In order to raise cash for their getaway, Cassandra sells some of Sophie's famous jewels through the Fairbourne Auctioning House. The jewels are bought by Yates, Viscount Ambury. Yates suspects the jewels are stolen and refuses to pay until Cassandra can prove where Sophie obtained them.

Yates, along with Southwaite (the hero from The Seduction of Miss Fairbourne) and Kendale (most likely a hero from a future book) were all good friends of Lakewood and blame Cassandra for his death. Despite her reputation as a fallen woman (or maybe even because of it) Yates cannot help but be drawn to the beautiful Cassandra. The fact that he has always desired her gets in the way of his investigation of the stolen jewels and the two of them begin a cat and mouse game in which the stakes are dangerously high for Cassandra and her aunt.

With her typically elegant writing, witty dialogue, and a deliciously sexy hero, Hunter has written another

winner that kept me reading way past my bedtime.

This is the second in Madeline Hunter's Fairbourne Quartet and a great follow up book to The Seduction of Miss Fairbourne, although you don't have to read the first book to follow this one. I highly recommend this to all lovers of good historical romance.

Sandra says

Um livro bem leve e fofo que irei esquecer não tarda nada.

Mas um livro que me recuperou de uma pausa enorme nas leituras (a chamada gigantic reading slump).

Assim, depois de semanas sem ler nada de jeito, li um livro em 48horas. Nada mal.

A fórmula não é nova. Apenas mais um degrau na escada deste quarteto.

Linda says

Lady Cassandra Vernham exists on the fringes of tonnish society, spurned by the majority of the ton for her refusal to marry a gentleman who in the tons eyes compromised her. Cassandra's brother Barrymore is continually trying to force her into marriages to men she does not know whom he has chosen, if the continual harassment is not enough; Barrymore has pulled His and Cassandra's Aunt Sophie into their ongoing skirmish and is using her as a weapon to ensure Cassandra's co-operation; but Cassandra will not go down without a fight.

Auctioning off her jewels at Fairbourne Auction House, owned by her friend Emma and Emma's brother, a particular set of jewels was purchased by Viscount Ambury, Yates Elliston future Earl of Highburton; however Yates suspects the jewels were stolen so he withholds the funds, funds Cassandra needs desperately to escape her brother's machinations.

Yates' curiosity and investigation into the Jewels, continually provides him reason to visit and spend time with Cassandra to spite her being the reason or his belief she is the reason his friend fought a duel and lost his life, Yates is still drawn to her as he has been since her first season.

In the end Yates turns out to be Cassandra's knight in shining armour, to spite a long twisted road for the two of them unraveling mysteries surrounding the Jewels, the death of Yates' friend and protecting Aunt Sophie an enduring love grows.

To put the cherry on top of the story Ms. Hunter drops a surprise near the end that I did not see coming, but so fit with the plot line!

Joana V. says

3.5*

Review completa em: <http://pepitamagica.blogspot.pt/2016/...>

Full review: <http://pepitamagica.blogspot.pt/2016/...>

Fiquei com alguns sentimentos contraditórios relativamente a este livro. No general, foi um bom livro, e a história, como a maioria dos livros da Madeline Hunter, apelativa.

(...)

O início do romance não me pareceu muito credível, a maneira como Cassandra e Ambury ultrapassam os seus problemas... Mas a parte mais sensual e vê-los agir mais como um casal até foi giro.

Houve um enredo de jóias e roubos, com dramas familiares à mistura, com supostos mistérios (fáceis de descobrir), mas que nos deram mais conhecimentos sobre as personagens que compõe a família e amigos de Cassandra, e o porquê de alguns agirem como agem.

Resumindo, gostei mais do primeiro livro do que deste, mas planeio continuar a ler a série.

Jacob Proffitt says

*This is the second in the series and characters from the first are frequently present—including both main characters. Definitely read *The Surrender of Miss Fairbourne* first, but you can look forward to this one while you're at it.*

I apparently have two types of five-star experiences. Most stories reach five stars by delivering the expected elegantly and with a dash of delight. This is one of those. Which is why you'll get this review while I'm still a week or so constipated on another I haven't been able to write up, yet.

We met Cassandra in the first book where we got hints of a more complex past hidden below her worldly demeanor. Those hints are elucidated here and Hunter does an excellent job of showing the strength and fragility that exist simultaneously in her character. I love that her motivations make complete sense and that her decision to present what is expected or be sincere is consistent and depends strongly on the situation and company she finds herself in. And I really like that I never had to feel like she was pushing the "poor me" button beyond reason. Now I think on it, this is a good example of a character with positive motivation when most authors would be tempted to go with the more standard bunker mentality of the constant "no". In other words, she has things that she wants and acts to try to get them as opposed to being over-attached to the comfort of the status quo. So anyway, I liked her right off and had sympathy for her situation and admired her courage in making the tough choices that led her to where she is.

Ambury, too, is handled with excellent nuance and care. He's strong and determined and worse, entitled. He reads Cassandra as a valid target for romantic conquest without having to be careful because she seems all worldly and stuff. Not the best beginning for a romantic hero as it's essentially a want/take/use scenario. But beneath that you can also see that she intrigues him more than he is ready to openly acknowledge. Better, she engages him emotionally in ways that he knows are deeper than he expected and I like that he takes the time, and has the maturity, to notice and alter course accordingly. Plus, again, those positive motivations make a stronger plot while he's getting to know her better.

What pushed this into easy five-star territory, though, is their relationship. There were a couple times when

one or the other had to make the choice to be vulnerable and/or trust and I loved that they had the courage to do so. I loved, too, the missteps they made along the way and how they suffered the discomfort of knowing something was missing in their marriage (they marry about mid-way through) as both sought to figure out what it was with the goal to making it better. There are some subtle relationship moments that dealt with layers of intimacy and the difference between emotional and physical expressions of trust. I loved seeing that so well presented and while I hated to see them struggle, I loved how much stronger it made them in the end.

Also, the story didn't suck. And by that I mean it was outstanding. It was both interesting and had some really poignant moments (though heavily weighted towards the end as revelations mount). Aunt Sophie turns out to be marvelously layered and I loved how she turned out to be so much more complex than the outre adventuress we see in the beginning.

Anyway, a solid novel I greatly enjoyed reading. It worked on every level and none of the awkward missteps I sometimes get with Hunter's books. And now I'm really looking forward to the next...

A note about Steamy: Another change from the norm is the explicit sex in this book. The first explicit scene is a wedding-night double-header and quite long. There are three or four later scenes but each is a page or less. They're used to highlight the differences between the physical and emotional intimacy Cassandra and Ambury are experiencing and are absolutely necessary to the character arc of the relationship. So still the middle of my steam tolerance for all there are more than usually fit for that range.

Tina says

Lady Cassandra Vernham is one of those women you just WANT to be like: independent, caring, bold and outspoken. She is unafraid to speak her mind, even if it causes people to think she is a bit scandalous.

Viscount Yates Ambury (egads, what a name!) is a man with similar qualities. He is somewhat on the edge of polite Society, yet he does come from a long line of distinguished and well-known ancestors whose reputations are unblemished.

The beginning of this story kind of confused me, although I started this book when I was very tired so that may explain it. The first half of a chapter or so is a dialogue between Cassandra and her best friend Emma. I could not immediately determine who was the protagonist. Again, it could have just been me, but the story almost ended up in my "sell back" pile.

Fortunately, I am persistent, and things picked up and became more clear. The subject of the story starts out as Cassandra's need to collect payment for some auctioned jewels from a man who is stalling for time with seemingly ridiculous questions about the jewelry's origins. That man would be Ambury, and he is insistent that Cassandra fulfill his queries before he pays her for the jewels he has won at auction.

Around and around they go, with Cassandra trying to get him to pay, and Ambury trying to find out the info he wants. Cassandra vents much of her frustration on her aunt Sophie, with whom she resides in rather blissful peace. Many of the jewels Cassandra is auctioning were gifts from Sophie, so they have much to talk about when the money starts coming in.

All in all, I liked the progression of the story between Cassandra and Ambury. I also really liked Aunt Sophie, for all that she does not have much dialogue in the book at all. I think the author could create a

whole tale of Sophie's adventures by itself, even, inventing Continental lovers and escapades for her.

The origin of the jewels is the object of Ambury's questioning, and the mystery to be solved at the end of the book has QUITE a surprise turn to it. Usually I see things like this coming, but...I will not spoil it for you! Let's just say it is a very unique event that is uncovered, and it is enough to make you want a handkerchief nearby when it happens.

Overall I gave this book 3 stars. I did not realize it was not the first in the series, so I will be on the lookout for the others (there are 4 in total).

Sonya Heaney says

Originally posted **HERE**.

Relatives were put away all the time. Officially, her brother had no authority over her aunt, but as the closest male relative, and an earl at that, he would probably succeed if he tried.

I'm silly for paying too much attention to reviews, because I nearly passed on this series. One book genre I don't seem to agree with a lot of people on (apart from those New Adult "blockbusters" everyone but me seems to love) is historical romance. Madeline Hunter's reviews tend to be all over the shop, but she remains a favourite of mine in this genre because she is one of the few who captures the past in a way I believe.

I wish I'd read this series in order – this is the second book, and the first I've read – but for some reason this was the one I had on my Kindle. There's clearly an interesting story in the preceding book, but once I'd read a few pages of *The Conquest of Lady Cassandra* I was hooked and decided to keep going.

"Because she is my sister, Ambury, and because all that she does, and is, reflects on me and my family, it is my duty to correct her if I see the need."

Hunter writes historical romance from a feminist perspective. This doesn't mean she writes characters with attitudes off by two hundred years and has all her *I want to be independent, so I won't marry* women discarding their corsets and donning trousers.

No – she writes within the context of the time, and this heroine is a perfect example. She refused to marry the man who compromised her in order to force a marriage, and because of this she has largely been ostracised for a number of years. She's strong but she's no Disney princess. The characters, hero included, approach this situation with the sort of historical accuracy that almost makes me weep with joy it's so hard to find in the genre nowadays.

That doesn't mean we have an awful man for a hero. What we have is someone who was born in the second half of the 1700s and so has the social ideas to match. He is capable of learning a few things along the way and capable of showing respect to his wife (because these two marry halfway through the book, for reasons

other than love), without acting like he's from the twenty-first century.

One of my favourite things about this author is how she writes male friendships. Her heroes socialise and participate in work and activities as men of the day would, and they also have distinct personalities and interact like realistic men. I love reading the scenes she creates between her male characters. I also love the genuine friendships her women have.

I loved everything about this book. The history is woven so intricately through the story. "Current" events have an effect on what happens (and this book takes place in 1798, rather than the oh-so common Regency era). It's not one of those *this could be set at any time* stories. I was also happy with the ending, even though there're some secrets being kept and I usually hate dishonesty.

Okay, so I lie. For all the gorgeous detail, it made me cringe when the men kept referring to their *arse* as their *ass*. Especially as it happened most frequently at a livestock auction. Englishmen saying *ass* in that situation could only be talking about donkeys! It gave me some odd visuals as I read.

Highly recommended if you actually care for some history with your historical romances.

Karen says

I really enjoyed this, and I'm looking forward to going back and reading the first in the series (which I thought I had, but it didn't sound familiar. Oh, well).

Strong characters and a deliciously twisty, intriguing plot.. what more could you want? How about a hard look at the nastier side of Tonnish society's strictures, and what happens to a young woman of means AFTER she's refused to accept an untenable marriage? Part of what happens is that she's forced to the edges of good Society, the target of all sorts of nasty rumors, true or not. Another part is that she's forced to sell her jewels to support her tiny household-- which means she really, really needs the money that Viscount Ambury has been indolently withholding from her for the last piece she sold.

Ambury hates Cassandra Vernham, placing blame for the death of his friend squarely upon her doorstep. But he also desires her, and has for a very long time. Now, as a figure of scandal, she might be his for the taking. (Ambury's mental arithmetic of exactly how far his duty as a gentleman should restrain him around her is rather chilling, honestly.) If nothing else, he needs to draw her close to discover how the earrings she sold at auction came to be in her possession-- because they once belonged to *his* family.

As it turns out, Cassandra's long-ago scandal was not as straightforward as anyone thinks, but (like her namesake), Cassandra knows she won't be believed if she tells the truth. Her beloved, outspoken aunt was the only one to offer her shelter when the scandal broke. Now her domineering brother, the earl, seeks to bring Cassandra to heel by attacking those close to her. He's promised to put her aging and sometimes forgetful aunt in an asylum if she won't comply with his order to marry the man of his choosing, and suddenly it's Cassandra's turn to be the rescuer. But to save herself and her aunt, she needs money. Money that Ambury has promised her, if only she can satisfy his curiosity on one more point....

This was an absorbing and deeply emotional read. Ambury is NOT a terribly likeable character at first, but he has good reason not to trust Cassandra. Nothing and no one in this book are quite what they seem to be at

first glance, and the ending holds more than a few shocks. I also get the sense that the mystery's not quite plumbed yet... I very much look forward to what's to come.

SidneyKay says

What's old is new again.

The Conquest of Lady Cassandra by Madeline Hunter is a delight. Having said that I believe this is a book that some people may have a problem with. And that, my fellow romance readers, is due to the hero of this story, Yates Elliston.

Ah, Yates, a manly man. A sexy guy, a bit of a chauvinist who reminded me of some of the heroes who lived in the pages of early modern romances. You know the ones I mean: the Rosemary Rogers, Kathleen Woodiwiss kind of guy. Oh, he's not as much of a jerk as Steve Morgan from *Sweet Savage Love*, but he has the feel of those old heroes. While I thought Yates may have been trained in the **Steve Morgan School for Bonehead Heroes**, he is a softer version of that all-time king of the jerks. So be prepared for an old-fashioned, powerful man when you open this book.

Don't be worried that Yates is so powerful, so strong that he dominates the pages and the heroine Cassandra. No sir, Cassandra is no shrinking violet. Cassandra takes no prisoners; she is the perfect fit for the strong male who is Yates.

I liked Cassandra a lot. She truly doesn't need a man to make her happy or make her life complete. She is a very independent woman. She is ahead of her time and isn't afraid to speak her mind. And, she has one of the strongest line/lines I've read in a book in a long time. I loved it when she tells a typical not-listening-male Yates why she didn't marry his friend. - "I.Did.Not.Want.Him." Loved that moment, and that moment got Yates' attention.

For me this story was a fascinating study of two strong people and their journey together. I was happy that I was presented with a couple who were a couple and on top of that there was a romance! *The Conquest of Lady Cassandra* is a mature couple traveling down a rocky road together, uncovering secrets, growing separately and together. The slow acceptance of love was wonderful to watch.

Now, there were some quibbles. Without going into too much detail, there was one bedroom scene that bordered on uncomfortable for me because of the way Yates treated Cassandra during and after. This scene was really a strong throw-back to the old bodice ripper stories and I had trouble understanding the point of that scene.

The other quibble I had was the assumptions the three friends, Yates, Southwaite and Kendale jumped to with little or no facts of the event. The grudge against Cassandra these seemingly intelligent men held for so many years was a little puzzling to me.

Overall, I enjoyed *The Conquest of Lady Cassandra* and Madeline Hunter's strong writing. And, if you are looking for a sexy manly man, Ms. Hunter has given us one in the guise of Yates Elliston. This is a very subjective book and it may not be your cup of tea, but for me it hit the spot!

Desi says

4.5, well-written. I really didn't enjoy the beginning that much, perhaps it was a little too somber at first. Most of the rest of it was lovely though. Interesting characters, quirky aunt, endearing hero. Relatively realistic interactions.

I expected a more dramatic event at the heart of why she accepted scandal rather than accept the fellow from years ago who compromised her, so that was a tad anti-climatic after all the lead up.

There were some gems in terms of wonderfully constructed dialogue and Hunter is great at conveying the feeling of being threatened, as Cassandra was by her brother, yet not being able to pinpoint what exactly is bothering you.

It was very Hitchcockian, building threats out of the mundane, honestly though, especially for the times, her brother was actually not doing anything 'bad' in terms of what was socially acceptable, what with him being 'the head' of the family. Enjoyable overall.
