



So Enchanting

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The Scottish hamlet of Little Firkin has one important industry: the guardianship of Amelie Chase, a witchling banished by the ton for her alleged supernatural powers, and entrusted by her benefactor to Fanny Walcott. But the scheme is hitting a snag: Little Firkin is cramping Amelie's style, anonymous notes are threatening her life, and now, two handsome travelers arrive with tantalizing links to the pasts of both women. And what's happening in Little Firkin is so enchanting, it's going to take a leap of faith to believe it.

So Enchanting Details

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holly quigley says

This book was simultaneously charming and frustrating. I found myself skimming a lot of it, and when my suspicions were confirmed about the "mystery" arc in it (BOTH suspicions, btw), I was thoroughly annoyed. I loved the premise - the heroine with a supernatural or paranormal "gift" against the hero whose sole aim is to find and reveal frauds and con-artists claiming to have supernatural and paranormal gifts. There really was a great plot set-up here. Unfortunately, though, it just kind of... fell apart.

The main issue was a huge one: TOO MANY POVs. Plenty of other reviewers have said as much, but the sub-romance between Amelie and Hayden was obnoxiously sappy enough on its own - we really didn't need their narrations/points of view added to the mix. It wound up really detracting from the flow of things and it seemed gratuitous and pointless. The whole story would have been better served by paring down the narration/POVs to only Fanny and Grey, with the added bonus of helping us believe in their lightning-fast and utterly unlikely tumble into "love." Maybe that was supposed to be part of the old-fashioned charm of this story (separate of it being a historical, it totally felt like one of those black and white romantic comedies where proclamations of love came early on, and usually with the climactic ending being little more than a kiss). But as much as I *wanted* to be convinced, it just felt so rushed. And for a book that was over 300 pages, there was plenty of room to not be rushed. I would have preferred a shorter novel without Amelie's and Hayden's stupid mooning POVs. Then I might have been able to say, "hey, light, fluffy, entertaining read," instead of, "not really worth the patience required to muddle through it." Which is totally unfortunate, because like I said, I loved the premise. The plot was a great idea. The execution was just distracting.

Sandy M says

I'm a relatively new Connie Brockway fan. In the last couple of years I've read her McClairen's Isle and The Rose Hunter trilogies and enjoyed all those books immensely. Now, I've not yet read her contemporaries, so this new book isn't the "coming home" for me like it is for many of you. No never mind for me, though, because I had one heck of a good time being enchanted by just about everything in this book.

The best part of this book for me is the main characters. Greyson and Fanny are alike in so many ways while their beliefs concerning magic and the paranormal are as wide as the ocean. Even they don't know if what is between them will be able to span that chasm to bring them and keep them together, even despite the love that neither of them really truly believes in anymore.

Grey has made a career out of debunking con artists and charlatans who prey on the grief and emotions of those who have lost loved ones. He had watched his father year after year be taken by such thieves. This is his way of making sure it doesn't happen to as many other people and families as he can. One such instance is what leads him to a young woman who draws him to her and he can't fathom why. Perhaps her look of innocence, her beauty, her fear at being caught; but it doesn't matter because he can't abide what she's done.

All her life she's been different from everyone else. Her rapport with animals is something that has taken everyone Fanny's loved from her over the years, but she thought she'd found the one person who loved her for who and what she is. He'd only duped her into believing he wanted her, but it was only her magic he needed to help him further his schemes and lies. After escaping unscathed when her husband's deceptions were

revealed by Greyson Sheffield, Fanny has lived the past six years in the small hamlet of Little Firkin in the Highlands of Scotland. A place where she's finally been normal as a companion to a young girl who's thought to be a witch, though Fanny knows better.

But when Amelie's life is threatened by an unknown person, it is Grey who is sent to investigate and Fanny's world collides with his once more. This time, however, there is something different between them. A something they both try to deny, especially Grey, because he just knows Fanny is running some kind of con again, and he's determined to find out what it is. They both fight their attraction to the other, and it's not until things take on a more dangerous turn than anyone could imagine that their desires overtake their good sense. Grey lets his guard down and goes with his feelings for the first time in a very long while, only to find out he should have known better.

It took a bit for Grey to grow on me. He's so dispassionate in the beginning, except when it comes to exposing the culprits he's after, that I thought at first I may not like him all that much. But once Fanny worms her way under his skin even the tiniest bit, it's wonderful to watch him hesitate, stare, stumble, stutter, all of which are very unlike him. And he attains a sense of humor to replace his ever-present sarcasm and cynicism. It's interesting to watch them both learn how alike they are in certain aspects of their life. While I liked the Amelie/Hayden part of the story, I found myself wanting their scenes to be over to get back to Grey and Fanny, they both intrigued me that much, made me laugh more than I anticipated, and made me wish they'd had another love scene after their raw and magical night together.

Other secondary characters are fun and eccentric, and there's a couple of twists thrown in to keep you on your toes. The only thing I would have liked to have seen more decisively is Grey experiencing Fanny's gift in a more in-depth way, but that's not all that much to quibble over considering what I did get.

See my complete review at <http://www.goodbadandunread.com>

willaful says

Started well, ended well, but there was a lot of drag in between, particularly the most tedious two young lovers I've seen since Georgette Heyer was writing. There's even some Heyeresque commenting on how very tedious they are: "The only interruptions to this inanity were the breathless silences during which, Grey imagined, they pair stood gazing raptly into each other's eyes. Rather like poleaxed beef. God, but young people in love were boring." Too true, and the lampshade doesn't help enough.

Other than that, the story has some of Brockway's wit and sparkle; even some inauthentic sounding language kind of works with the mood of the book. And the primary romance is strong and appealing. So overall, not as good as it could have been, but worth a read.

Ruby says

I think I have mixed feelings about this book.

Based on the goodreads reviews on this book, it doesn't seem like this book is an example of Brockway's best. I for one was not all that amused by the Hayden/Amelie romance. I thought those two were annoying as

all hell. I thought the "villain" at the end a bit ridiculous, although it did fit with the humor that tinged the book. I wished the plot moved a lot faster with more fun scenes with Grey and Fanny.

Despite some of the book's flaws, and despite the inconsistent ratings, I DID see experience some spectacular writing and nuance. I loved the verbal sparring between Fanny and Grey, and I found their dialogue hilarious and fun. When they finally got together (about 2/3rds of the way through the book, might I add :) it was gorgeously written and so romantic and amazing. I thought they were a well matched pair and I found their internal conflict an interesting one. There was depth to the characters and to the romance. Even though I hated Hayden and dumb Amelie, I understood why they were included in the plot as foils to the jaded and world-weary Grey and Fanny.

At any rate, if this is Brockway at her so-so, I am really excited about the prospect of potentially reading her better stuff.

Adrianna Kowalska says

Lubi? romanse historyczne i wcale si? z tym nie kryj?, bo ka?dy ma prawo lubi? co? innego. „Urzeczenie” ju? kiedy? i wiem, ?e w jaki? sposób musia?o mi si? podoba?, bo kojarzy?am postaci i fakty po spojrzeniu na ok?adk?. Postanowi?am j? sobie przypomnie?.

Francesca Brown by?a ?on? m??czyzny, który uwa?a?, ?e jest w stanie kontaktowa? si? ze zmar?ymi osobami. Podczas jednego z takich seansów, jako par? oszustów demaskuje ich lord Greyson. M?? kobiety ucieka z kochan? a potem ginie przejechany przez poci?g w Pary?u lub Orlando (sama autorka tego nie wie, bo s? podane dwie ró?ne nazwy). Sama Fanny dostaje propozycje od dawnego s?siada jej rodziców, aby zaopiekowa?a si? jego córk?, która wed?ug m??czyzny posiada pewne paranormalne zdolno?ci, a Brown powinna to doskonale rozumie?. Kobieta zgadza si? i razem z Ameli? wyje?d?aj? do Szkocji, gdzie po kilku latach odnajduje je Greyson, który szuka ‘czarownicy’ z pó?nocy.

Romanse maj? to do siebie, ?e maj? bardzo przewidywalne zako?czenie i tego wcale si? nie czepiam, bo przecie? o to w nich chodzi. Po prostu szukam w nich czego?, co mnie przyci?gnie. Czasami mo?e by? to styl, którym pos?uguje si? autor, a czasem wystarczy zabawny bohater lub ?mieszne, s?owne utarczki mi?dzy g?ównymi postaciami, jak np. w „Mistyfikacji” czy „K?opotliwym d?ugu ksi??nej”. W „Urzeczeniu” te? to by?o, ale wyczuwa?am pewnego rodzaju sztuczno??. Nie przekona?o mnie to do siebie. I co?, za co drastycznie obni?y?am ocen?. Ta pomy?ka z miejscem ?mierci m??a Fanny. To Orlando czy w ko?cu Pary?? Dobrze by by?o, ?eby sama autorka to wiedzia?a, bo mo?e nagle oka?e si?, ?e m?? ?yje i Fanny wcale nie jest wdow? i wtedy m??ulek b?dzie rogiaczem? Bardzo, ale to bardzo nie lubi? (chyba nikt tego nie lubi), kiedy autor gubi si? w swojej ksi??ce. Dla mnie jest to znak, ?e ksi??ka by?a pisana na kolanie i czytelnicy nie s? dla pisarza wa?ni, bo wed?ug niego ?ykn? wszystko jak kaczor kluchy. To nie robi dobrego wra?enia, a ja, jako czytelnik poczu?am si? rozczarowana.

W zasadzie niczym specjalnym ta ksi??ka si? nie wyróżnia. Podoba?a mi si? te? ?rednio ta ca?a fabu?a. Na dodatek Amelia jest postaci? tak naiwn? i irytuj?c?, ?e ja bardzo wiele razy przewraca?am przy tej ksi??ce oczami. Ca?e szcz??cie, ?e postaci nie da si? wyj?? z ksi??ki i jej zabi?, bo u mnie w pokoju le?a?aby ju? ca?kiem spora kolekcja trupów.

Romans jak romans. Nic specjalnego. Jeden wieczór i po ksi??ce.

"Pragnienia serc nie spe?niaj? si? tak ?atwo." ~ Connie Brockway, Urzeczenie, Warszawa 2009, s. 295.

K.C. Bateman says

Laughed out loud a couple of times with this one. Not quite as brilliant as 'As You Desire,' (it's tough to beat Harry Braxton!) but still a fun, quick read.

Alicja says

I liked (like always Brockway). It was the tragic heroine, who, after a big error, scandal found the strength and built a new life. A tragic hero, glacier, distrustful. It was intrigue, lack of confidence and fascination. Wow, once again Brockway could describe fascination, desire and obsession with the other person as to be withheld breath. Chemistry between the characters, their struggle with feeling, hurting each other .. and all so human, natural. The contrast was love young pupils - a bright, luminous, poetic. Full of elation and sighs. Francesca and Greyson? They had to tear down its own walls, defeat dragons. Without preconceived problems, they had enough of their own.

Melanie says

Hmm... Not as good as As You Desire, My Seduction or My Pleasure, but good nonetheless. I liked the book till the last 50 pages, where it kind of sputtered a little. I wish Fanny and Gray had actually had to talk out their problems instead of him just deciding "what the heck" and staying with her.. But 4* because I loved their banter, and Amelie and Hayden were so funny!

kris says

Six years ago, Francesca Burns/Brown/Walcott's husband was outed as a fake medium before he died in a train accident; now she's companioning the beautiful Amelie Chase. When Lord Greyson Sheffield rolls into town with his nephew Lord Hayden Augustus Collier, he and his boner recognizes her. Unfortunately, she's kind of a witch and he's kind of a cynic and also their wards are pining for one another—OH NO WILL THEY EVER FIGURE OUT HOW TO LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER.

1. The thing about this book is that it's just...rather silly? And I don't mean that in a negative way! It's just got elements of the ridiculous to it: Amelie and Hayden's over-the-top romance; Grey and Fanny's bickering; the tight-knit town that begrudgingly accepts Amelie Chase as their witch: it's all very *light* in a way that seems redolent of Heyer (especially the older couple falling in love in spite of the younger couple's nonsense).
2. That said, that ending was twisted and I'm not sure in a good way. Having your villain literally threaten to shoot your hero/heroine? Standard issue. Having him threaten to shoot dogs? More unhinged. Having him literally rave about (view spoiler) is....not in fitting with the tone of the rest of the book, methinks.
3. I must once again commend Brockway on her use of setting; I absolutely love the slivers of Victorian life we get in her novels. The flavor is unique and strange and familiar and this amazing blend of historical with technology and cultural and societal advancements and I just really like it OK.

4. Overall: this book suffers from its very levity. Is it a paranormal? Not really. Is it a romance? Somewhat. It doesn't seem to have enough weight to allow it to settle and take root and ultimately results in a somewhat disappointing read.

Katie(babs) says

Connie Brockway is one of my all time favorite historical romance authors. When I heard she was taking a break from historicals to try her hand at contemporaries, I was saddened. I assumed she would leave the historical world behind like many of her other author counterparts have done before. I was pleasantly surprised when I heard she was publishing a new historical romance this year. So Enchanting is exactly what the title states. This is one enchanting read.

It is 1892 and England has a new craze on their hands with those who can contact loved ones that have departed the Earth. Lord Greyson Sheffield works as a special prosecutor for the Lord Chief Justice where he exposes these frauds. He hates these charlatans ever since his father was a victim of one when he was just a boy. He is on another case where he has exposed a so-called spiritualist who uses his wife as his accomplice. There is something about Francesca Brown that brings out Greyson's protective nature. When he finds out that her lying husband has been killed, he goes to her, but she has left London and disappeared to places unknown.

It has been six years since Francesca, now known simply as the widow Fanny Walcott was given a new lease on life. She has left her old life of tricking people behind and resides in the small town of Little Firkin, Scotland. There she is the companion to Amelie Chase, a young girl who is believed to be a witch. Amelie's father, who was once Fanny's neighbor when she was a girl, came to Fanny after she was exposed and asked her to watch over his daughter who may have supernatural powers. He felt Fanny could help Amelie control her powers because Fanny is much like his daughter even though all of London thinks she is a hoax. Fanny's gift is that she has a way with animals (There are no Dr. Doolittle scenes in this book). The Colonel gave her a way out all those years ago. Fanny's life couldn't be better and only has to deal with the villagers who act a bit wary when it comes to Amelie. The townspeople accept Amelie because when she turns twenty-one she will inherit most of her father's estate, and those who resided in the town around the time of the Colonel's death will divide the one hundred thousand pounds among them that the Colonel has left them in his will as a thank you for keeping Amelie safe.

Greyson and his nephew Hayden visit Amelie because Hayden's father is Amelie's guardian. An anonymous letter was sent stating that Amelie's life is in danger. Both Greyson and Hayden go to investigate. The men are dumbfounded when they meet Amelie and Fanny. Hayden is dumbstruck by the beauty and personality of Amelie, while Greyson cannot believe that this Fanny is the same one who ran away from him so many years ago. Fanny would love nothing more for Greyson to leave and even though Greyson feels the same way, he can't help but enjoy the teasing and banter he has with Fanny.

Greyson and Fanny have to keep a strong eye on Hayden and Amelie who are so young and passionate, as well as finding the person responsible who may want to harm Amelie. All of a sudden, strange accidents start to happen and soon Fanny and Greyson are the ones who have to start looking over their shoulders. Is there something supernatural force at play or someone who is out to cause harm to the young girl and the woman who treats her as her own daughter?

Connie is a master at writing witty dialogue and there is a great deal of it here. One such scene that had me in

stitches is a scene in the middle of the book between the Greyson and Fanny. From the moment these two see each other in Little Firkin, they insult each other left and right.

Here is where Greyson and Fanny are at odds over Amelie and Hayden's growing love. This is the perfect example of what a skilled author like Connie can do:

"Well, what do you have to say about that?" Fanny repeated, glaring out toward the terrace.

"Calm yourself madam," Grey said. "They are simply viewing the wildlife."

"Oh for the love of all that's sacred. They most decidedly are not viewing the wildlife. They are canoodling."

"Canoodling," Grey repeated blankly.

"There's hanky-panky going on out there, mark my words."

"Are you under the delusion that you are speaking the King's English? Do you think you might communicate without resorting to vulgar slang?"

Then there is Fanny's reaction to the canoodling she and Greyson share later on:

"You did not ask permission. You... you took me by storm!"

A slow, amused smile spread over his dark, bold face. "Oh, my dear Mrs. Walcott, I assure you, you were not taken by storm. Should that have happened, you would not now be standing here berating me for kissing you."

"Then where would I be?" she demanded, setting her hands on her hips.

"Still abed. With me."

Isn't the dialogue between Grey and Fanny so witty and engaging? One minute they are ready to come to blows, the next they are in a passionate embrace and kissing each other like there is no tomorrow. Amelie and Hayden's romance is the complete opposite of what Greyson and Fanny have. These two young lovers are sweet and tender with one another and their internal thoughts will crack you up. Hayden thinks Amelie is the perfect woman while Amelie, who is still so naive, wants to experience the world and life in general. I also really loved Fanny's relationship she has with Amelie.

The love scenes are a bit tame but should still please most readers. As for the mystery of who wants to harm Amelie, that could have been handled better, but I didn't mind since I was enjoying these four characters and their reactions to each other. This is a light hearted mystery that will keep you smiling till the last page.

Every single one of Connie Brockway's historicals are so incredibly well written and I can say without a doubt the same goes for *So Enchanting*.

Judy Martinez says

This was pretty average-y. It had a lot of potential, if she would have incorporated more magic/surrealism it would've taken from average-y to amazing. But I think that's more personal preference than a critique. Maybe if she would've touched upon the weirdness going on with the secondary character? It would have added more character to her, than just an annoying self-centered, and judgmental. Maybe have a parallel? Though, in some way there was a parallel, which counts for something.

It was a little slap-dashed together, I think, the whole mystery of it all. It did make sense, but I dunno if I wanted the killer to actually be real. I think it kinda loses the psychological, indepth conversation and

character turn around that could have possibly happen instead of having a quick resolve because a killer was on the lose. Especially with the whole reveal of her super power. Again, I think this is more personal preference than an actual critique.

The secondary characters were annoying. And it was more annoying that the "older" characters pointed out how annoying, self-centered, and unobservant those secondary characters were. It's a bit alienating, especially, if you are the same age as the secondary characters and you've been "in love," it's a bit disheartening to have this view point, but I could be reading WAY more into it. But maybe, dial it down a notch?

What happened to Violet and Grammy? Violet went to tattle to Grammy about magical animals and never heard from again, other than to say that Grammy is sick, yet, Grammy is happy anyway because she gets the village at the end? So what of Violet? What happened when she went to tell her? I need answers if you spent most of the book building this character and not have a resolution for her. Does she have a book?

I did love the main couple. It did seem that they kept going around and around, and not in an interesting way, but more of a repetitive way. He didn't trust her, he sorta trusted her, he trusted her for real now, oh wait, false alarm, wait, no he's in love with her!, dammit, there goes that because she's definitely been caught in a shady position. I dunno, it would've been more refreshing if there was more trust, but then what would the point of this book be, right? Also, the turn of this book wouldn't've happened, and you kinda needed it.

All in all, it was pleasant, if a bit annoying at points. This is all personal view points.

Caroline says

It was my misfortune to read the Kindle version of this book. It contained so many egregious typographical howlers that I was tempted to ask for a refund -- until I consoled myself that the fault probably lay with the original publisher, not the retailer.

I feel sorry for Ms Brockway, that such a fine book should be such an eyesore. It would be untrue to say I enjoyed reading it. It was painful. My four-star rating reflects my reaction to the content.

The Victorian seance was a masterful opening attention-grabber. The shift of location from the salons of London to a village somewhere in the Scottish highlands was as refreshing as a mountain stream.

The romantic leads of *So Enchanting* are a bluntly boorish aristocrat lawyer who has devoted much of his adult life to exposing spiritualist frauds, and a victim of one of his exposures who has transformed herself into an equally blunt but sharply articulate companion to an under-aged lady. The dialogues between Lord Grey and Fanny sizzle and sparkle, reminiscent of the cut-and-thrust of two equally matched swordsmen. The vapid romance between Grey's nephew Hayden and Fanny's charge Amelie is a perfect foil to the overpowering adult attraction between Grey and Fanny.

As if this wasn't enough, Ms Brockway throws in several witches, real and imagined, a deranged stamp collector willing to murder to acquire the funds for a rare stamp, and a supporting cast of bats, birds, and animals.

The lack of a fifth star in my rating reflects the length of the book and a few patches in the narrative that

might have done with some firm editing.

Julie says

So Enchanting is a 2009 Penguin Group publication.

Six years ago, Francesca Walcott, along with her husband were exposed as fraudulent spiritualist. Shortly thereafter, Fanny becomes a widow and re-invents her life. She is offered the job of governess to Amelie, a girl that has had a few experiences with the paranormal. Fanny starts life over with a new identity and raises Amelie after her father dies and her guardian finds himself too busy to find the time to be a part of her life. An unusual provision in Amelie's father's will keeps her trapped in a small community until she become of age or marries. But, then a letter arrives to her guardian claiming that someone is out to harm Amelie. The man still can't seem to find the time to investigate on behalf of his charge, so he sends Lord Greyson Sheffield and his nephew to see if there is anything to worry about.

Well, it turns out there is plenty to worry about. Grey is the very man that exposed Fanny six years ago. Now he is convinced she is up to her old tricks and intends to find out what kind of scam she is trying to pull this time.

In the meanwhile, Amelie has fallen in love and wants to leave the small community she is tied to more than ever. Not only that, it appears that the threat against Amelie may be real.

This is a delightful, light, historical/paranormal romance. Grey has a strong opinion in regards to spiritualist and mediums and all things magic. His father spent his fortune hoping to make contact with his dead wife and daughter. But, when Grey sets eyes on Fanny, he finds his attraction to her unsettling. Now, six years later he finds himself fighting that attraction more than ever. But, can Fanny convince the skeptical Grey that magic really does exist?

I really enjoyed this one. Overall an A.

Kim H says

Connie Brockway's long awaited & newest historical. I had this on my wish list from the moment I knew it was due to be released. Overall, I thought it was an excellent book, but graded it somewhat less than perfect at 4 stars. The heroine is an animal empath and the widow of a con artist & fake medium, and the hero is a man driven & determined to expose supernatural charlatans. She and her husband run afoul of him in the opening chapter, and even though he is profoundly attracted to her, her life is ultimately destroyed due to his intervention in her husband's nefarious activities.

She goes to work for a former acquaintance as a governess & companion for his mildly telekinetic daughter after her husband is killed, and ends up caring for her after the death of the girl's father. The hero coincidentally is a relative of the daughter's new guardian, and he finds the heroine again six years after their first encounter, when he journeys to Scotland to investigate a possible threat to the girl's life. Of course, he's still attracted to her and sparks immediately start to fly.

This book ultimately reminded me a lot of Brockway's 2001 Victorian Romance, The Bridal Season. It has a similar storyline and the author's signature comic subtlety abounds. It failed somewhat to engage me as consistently as some of her previous efforts, however. The story lags a bit toward the middle, but picks up

very nicely later in the second half. I felt the resolution of the external conflict was somewhat abruptly resolved, and the ending a little nice & neat for all that the hero had so many trust issues with the heroine due to her past; I really felt like more of a heartfelt discussion between the H&H was in order to fully resolve their internal conflict.

That said, I still highly recommend it and will be adding it to my keeper shelf. I adore Connie Brockway and I'm nothing short of thrilled to see her writing historicals again. Even her less than perfect efforts are ahead of the pack in terms of wit & originality.

Sensuality Rating: PG-13

Cynthia says

"Witty" banter between H/H was probably the highlight, but everything else was a dud.

The "magic" plot in this book was much more dull than it sounds like. Fanny has a connection with animals, Grey hates charlatans, conflict ensues.

Fanny has a charge/adopted daughter Amelie who falls for Grey's nephew. Their romance is young, melodramatic, boring, and annoying. Both the adults comment and bond over this. Then why does Brockway subject us to So. Many. Damn. Pages. devoted to them? I'd much rather that be spent giving more meat to Grey/Fanny's relationship.

But thanks to the not so secondary romance and a pretty inane "mystery", Fanny and Grey really don't have much to their story except witty banter and trust issues.

Also the plot with the bad guy near the end was so ridiculous I can't believe it made it past the first edit.
