



An Unnatural Vice

K.J. Charles

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In the sordid streets of Victorian London, unwanted desire flares between two bitter enemies brought together by a deadly secret.

Crusading journalist Nathaniel Roy is determined to expose spiritualists who exploit the grief of bereaved and vulnerable people. First on his list is the so-called Seer of London, Justin Lazarus. Nathaniel expects him to be a cheap, heartless fraud. He doesn't expect to meet a man with a sinful smile and the eyes of a fallen angel—or that a shameless swindler will spark his desires for the first time in years.

Justin feels no remorse for the lies he spins during his séances. His gullible clients simply bore him. Hostile, disbelieving, utterly irresistible Nathaniel is a fascinating challenge. And as their battle of wills and wits heats up, Justin finds he can't stop thinking about the man who's determined to ruin him.

But Justin and Nathaniel are linked by more than their fast-growing obsession with one another. They are both caught up in an aristocratic family's secrets, and Justin holds information that could be lethal. As killers, fanatics, and fog close in, Nathaniel is the only man Justin can trust—and, perhaps, the only man he could love.

An Unnatural Vice Details

Date : Published June 6th 2017 by Loveswept

ISBN :

Author : K.J. Charles

Format : Kindle Edition 250 pages

Genre : Romance, Historical, M M Romance, Mystery, Historical Fiction, Lgbt, Historical Romance

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From Reader Review An Unnatural Vice for online ebook

Adam says

Group review with Baby and Chelsea

Nathaniel Roy and Justin Lazarus are two completely different men. From the moment they meet, they're at each other's throats. The mutual dislike is intense. But underneath that, there's also a strong current of desire.

Most of Nathaniel and Justin's issues boil down to the fact that they see the world differently. Nathaniel wants justice and order. Justin see life as a jungle - you either eat, or get eaten.

Justin seems cold and aloof at first, but I was immediately drawn to him. Through his POV, readers see that the shell around him is only for protection, and he had very little control over how his life turned out.

Their first few meetings are disasters. I thought they were hilarious. Ordinarily, I wouldn't want to see two potential lovebirds shoot daggers at one another, but these two so obviously wanted each other, that it was just funny.

And of course, once Justin and Nathaniel finally gave in to what was building between them, they were *hawt*. Angry sex FTW!

Things are made more difficult when the two MCs are embroiled in the scandal involving bigamy and murder from book 1. Though Nathaniel and Justin are accidental players in the game, I was more entertained by the mystery this time around than I was in book 1.

The twists and turns kept me hooked, and the action scenes kept me on the edge of my seat.

The situation that the MCs find themselves in also forces them to figure out what they really want from each other.

The big stumbling block in the relationship is Justin's career as a fraudulent spiritualist. Though I understood why Nathaniel had issues with it, I thought he was being deliberately stubborn by refusing to see things from Justin's point of view.

But my annoyance with Nathaniel was short-lived. Once the two finally decided to be honest and open with each other, and actually *talk*, it didn't take long for them to find a way forward.

Overall, I really liked 'An Unnatural Vice.' The main characters are complex and interesting, the mystery was engaging, and the romance was angsty but with an excellent happy ending. I'm looking forward to book 3!

SheReadsALot says

Group unicorn review with Adam and Chelsea

4.25 Hearts--Once again, KJ Charles blew my expectations to smithereens after reading *An Unnatural Vice*.

Once again, she delivered word porn to savor. And wrote a mystery arc that I was fully engaged with and can't wait to be solved.

Once again a set well written characters that I just wanted to pick apart and re-read over and over.

The leads in the second in Sins of the Cities series, are the serious, crusading former lawyer, now journalist Nathaniel Roy and the deviously cunning spiritualist Justin Lazarus. I don't there isn't a theme this author couldn't conquer. Vice is enemies to lovers and is always my weakness which the author writes it sooooo well.

Nathaniel is writing an expose on the frauds that are spiritualists. The alleged psychics that can communicate with the dead and tell the grieving their loved ones' wishes from beyond the veil... for a price. Nathaniel visits a popular to see the schemer in action. Enter one of my favorite KJ Charles characters, the "Seer of London" aka Mr. Justin Lazarus.

From their first meeting the adversaries are attracted to each other, even if they think that other person is in the wrong. Archbishop's son Nathaniel might be atheist, but he will always fight for what's right. And Justin grew up in the gutter, so whatever he can do so he doesn't have to scrape and bow to anyone. And if that includes fleecing the idiots with fat pockets, so be it.

While the two men argue and try to outwit one another, the arc from the last book is churning along. It might seem slow in spots, but I think it might've been the parts where introspection was given from either man's POV. The men can't deny their lust and act on it rather quickly. And it never fizzles out. They just kept getting better and hotter. Hints: big guy bottoming and hate sex! Wherever the two had sex, floor, backroom or bannister...it scorched.

While Nathaniel is steadfast in getting the rightful heir in place, he can't help but see the good in Justin. Obviously so as Lazarus is the first man in over five years that Nathaniel ever looked at in passion. The author didn't make Nathaniel's past lover, Tony feel like a silent partner that kept a noose of grief around the neck. But the pain of missing his lover definitely came across.

Justin is amoral and doesn't give a fuck what anyone thinks. It was love at first read once I got to delve into that criminal mind. Lying, deceitful, always thinking twenty steps ahead, tricky as hell. That's Justin and more. He's so multifaceted. And underneath the cunning exterior with the eyes that never missed anything, is a damaged man who just needed someone to understand him.

"I hate what you do, and I kneel at your altar anyway."

"Then you're a fool. I lie and cheat and I'm so jealous of a dead man I could die myself-"

The mystery is coming to a head. A lot of truths were finally uncovered, there is still the suspect from book #1 running around. What is the motive. After finishing, it doesn't seem to be over. I can't believe the hints to the next lead was there in book #1. And I can't wait for #3 to be out - the protagonists (Mark which already knew and his love interest will be very, very interesting.) Their history seems like it might possibly explosive.

As for *An Unnatural Vice*, I enjoyed this even more than book #1 just for the pleasure of reading Justin.

Highly recommended especially for readers who love devious characters!

A copy provided via Netgalley for an honest review.

Vivian says

Men on opposite sides.

Nathaniel Roy and Justin Lazarus are two miserable bastards that don't really evoke sympathy at the onset of the book. Possessing diametrically opposed viewpoints of the world it makes for an interesting discussion as the book progresses. I can't say that either character is endearing, but the gulf between the two has a bridge and it is traversed as they begin to understand the basis for each other's stance. But, I just never felt invested in either one.

While I enjoy Charles' writing this lacked the depth of historical data of Charles' "Society of Gentlemen" and the drama of "A Charm of Magpies". I suppose Victorian England has never been my favorite period so this might not have been as good a fit as the others. But, it was Justin's similarity in character to Jonah from "Jackdaw", which makes for a flawed protagonist. You can understand their decisions, but it's hard to admire them. In fact, the interaction between Ben and Jonah in "Jackdaw" is quite similar to Nathaniel and Lazarus, here.

Ultimately, the one thing that annoyed me most, and I was wondering as the available pages left to read dwindled, that it literally ends with a *To be continued*. There is a major plot point that is left dangling while the characters' romance seems to be wrapped up. I did not find the series arc plotting as seamless as "Society of Gentlemen".

Enjoyable read, but not compelling as I put it down many times without a problem.

~Copy provided by NetGalley~

Erin ? *Proud Book Hoarder* says

I think this is supposed to be a trilogy like Society of Gentlemen was. The first book, An Unseen Attraction, introduced endearing, naïve Clem who found his love interest and also showed his other friends, part of a close group of likeminded individuals (like Society of Gentlemen.) Besides being historical, that's where the

similarities seem to end.

While I enjoyed the first of the series, this one was even better. K.J. Charles gave one character a truly horrible, detestable profession and made him a major character and love interest. Without guilt he plays on people's grief and emotions as a spiritual medium. The book showcases his life and his growth and his realizations, as well as opening his heart to possibilities of an actual relationship. On the other hand you have the character Nathaniel, Clem's friend introduced in the first book, who is hurting from a tragic death of the man he loved years before and has made it a mission in his life to end con artists through his journalistic pen. He has a strong moral compass, perhaps a bit too rigid, but after meeting and knowing Justin he starts to see how destitute and desperate the poverty-stricken have it.

The two having professions that didn't complimented each other to that degree was interesting enough, but once you throw in the differences with their class, history, outlook and upbringing, you have even more of the opposites attract mentality. At the core of the story is a continuing mystery from the first book - the man who tortured the grumpy boarder is still around and still searching for evidence to hide a secret. Justin and Nathaniel find themselves in genuine danger as they must escape the city for awhile and find each other, but they also have to solve this crime before its the death of both of them.

The third friend in the series, Mark, will probably be the focus of the last story. I have a feeling who his romantic interest will be from the end of this one. That will turn out interesting. I like how the author takes unconventional heroes with tragic pasts (but no angst) or some kind of difference and gives them normal lives. Clem was a little slow-witted, Justin has a checkered history, and Mark is an amputee with a serious and jaded outlook.

As always K.J. Charles writes well with evenly-flowing rhythm and dialogue, and her characters and plots are different enough from each other that they're not formulaic. There's more than unrealistic steam, there's actual heart and realistic bonding with her characters. Besides that, there really is steam when it's needed, it's just made more plausible and enjoyable because the emotional connection has taken place first.

I was happy to take yet another trip to Historical London through the author's talented imagination - thanks to Netgalley for this one in exchange for an honest review.

CrabbyPatty says

An Unnatural Vice is the second book in K.J. Charles' Sins of the City series. The two books occur pretty much concurrently and you really need to read An Unseen Attraction first.

Nathaniel Roy is an impressive man - wealthy, handsome, sure of his position in the world and absolute in his convictions. Formerly a lawyer, he is now an investigative reporter and he's got his sights on Justin Lazarus, a despicable low-life spiritualist who calls himself the Seer of London. Nathaniel is confident that Lazarus is nothing but a scam artist ... until he attends a seance and Lazarus gives him the name "Tony" - Nathaniel's beloved gentle merry-hearted partner who died unexpectedly 5 years ago, leaving Nathaniel mired in grief.

Every morning Justin Lazarus awakes - in his own bed, alone and *safe* - is a luxury. To say he's known hard times is to trivialize his rise from the gutters, solely by the strength of his will and intellect. He's got no sympathy for the gullible sheep who come to him for spiritual guidance "beyond the veil."

Lazarus and Nathaniel despise one another, but their unresolved sexual tension positively electrifies their interactions. And when the men first fuck ("one of the better fucks of the nineteenth century") it's accompanied by endearments such as fraud, prick, bloody liar and "you self-righteous piece of shit."

But soon they are thrust head-first into the Talleyfer inheritance mystery (begun in *An Unseen Attraction*) and are forced to leave London and hide away in Nathaniel's country estate to escape a truly frightening murderer who cuts off fingers and pulls teeth to get information.

Their interlude away is beautifully nuanced as K.J. Charles slowly reveals Lazarus' background and we begin to see how these two dissimilar men may be perfect for one another. Like its predecessor, *An Unnatural Vice* solves a bit more of the underlying mystery of the Talleyfer heir, and it appears that the third book in the series (*An Unsuitable Heir* to be published October 3, 2017) runs concurrently with much of this book.

I think this is the best book of the series so far, I definitely recommend it and can't wait for the final book in the series!

I received an ARC from the Publisher, via NetGalley, in exchange for an honest review.
Review also posted at Gay Book Reviews - check it out!

Nenia ? Queen of Literary Trash, Protector of Out-of-Print Gems, Khaleesi of Bodice Rippers, Mother of Smut, the Unrepentant, Breaker of Convention ? Campbell says

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California is having a devastating heatwave statewide right now, so it was nice to pick up this book with its icy looking cover and Gothic, foggy London setting, while trying to ignore the scorching temperatures outside. I *almost* wanted to reach for a scarf. K.J. Charles was that convincing in her narrative. (Maybe her next story will take place on a cruise ship in the Arctic - *please*.)

Sins of the Cities is K.J. Charles's newest series. I wasn't a huge fan of the last one (*AN UNSEEN ATTRACTION*) because something about Rowley's and Clem's stories just rubbed me the wrong way. Their characters felt wooden, the romance felt tepid. I ended up giving the book 3 stars, but it was a generous three that was more of a 2 in fancy dress. Still; I've never found fault with Charles's writing, so when this book went up, I immediately applied for an ARC, hoping the series might be redeemed.

AN UNNATURAL VICE is *so* much better than *AN UNSEEN ATTRACTION*. I found both characters fascinating. Nathaniel is a moralistic journalist who is the son of an archbishop. He's is planning on exposing Justin, a cold-reading medium, as a fraud for taking advantage of people's grief for financial gain. This hits him especially hard, for personal reasons due to his own tragic history.

But this being a romance novel, the two of them are basically thrown together when they get involved in matters of inheritance involving the Taillefers (Clem's family, from the previous book), and the ever-thorny problem of murder. Justin has information taken from one of his clients that people are willing to kill for. And since he comes to Nathaniel for help, Nathaniel ends up getting sucked in, too.

AN UNNATURAL VICE had everything that UNSEEN ATTRACTION lacked. Both characters had great chemistry (including one of the best hate-sex scenes I've read in a while), that developed along with their characters as the story went on. Justin starts out as a despicable, selfish, enterprising character, but he's also still very nuanced, so even though I didn't like him at times, I never hated him and it was easy to understand why Nathaniel ended up falling for him when he did.

With such a bright star, it's easy to eclipse the other characters and that's sort of what happened to Nathaniel. He's your typical good-guy hero, marred only his tragic past and a bit of a penchant for rough bed sport (although nothing too spicy - 50 Shades of Gay, this is not). I thought the romance and the mystery were well-integrated, and the author had clearly done her research on cold reading and sleights of hand, which I really enjoyed because I wrote a paper on that very subject in college.

Thanks to Netgalley/the publisher for the review copy!

3.5 stars

Caz says

The feeling that washed over me when I finished **An Unnatural Vice** isn't one I experience all that often, but I suspect we all know what it is; that wonderful sense of awe and sheer elation that settles over you when you've just read something incredibly satisfying on every level. A great story that's excellently written and researched; characters who are well-drawn and appealing; a book that stimulates intellectually as well as emotionally... **An Unnatural Vice** has it all and is easily one of the best books I've read so far this year.

The *Sins of the Cities* series has been inspired by author K.J. Charles' love of Victorian Sensation Fiction, stories full of intrigue, murder, blackmail, missing heirs, evil relatives, stolen inheritances... I'm a big fan of the genre, and I absolutely love the way the author has brought its various elements into play in terms of the plot and overall atmosphere. The events in **An Unnatural Vice** run concurrently with those of book one, *An Unseen Attraction*, so while this one *could* be read as a standalone I'd definitely recommend reading the series in order.

Handsome, well-educated and wealthy, Nathaniel Roy trained in the law, but now works as a crusading journalist, dedicated to exposing social injustice and waging campaigns against industrial exploitation. His editor has asked him to write an article about the mediums who prey on the wealthy, and as part of his research, he arranges to attend a séance held by the so-called Seer of London, Justin Lazarus. Highly sceptical and determined to expose him as a fraud, Nathaniel is nonetheless fascinated by the man's skill at

what he does while being frustrated at not being able to work out how the hell he is manipulating the various objects in the room without touching them. Worse still, however, is the unwanted spark of lust that shoots through him when he sets eyes upon the Seer for the first time, a visceral pull of attraction he hasn't felt in the almost six years since he lost the love of his life; and the way Lazarus seems able to see into the very depths of Nathaniel's soul is deeply unnerving and intrusive. He hates it at the same time as he is fascinated by the things Lazarus tells him and finds his convictions shaken and his thoughts consumed by the man over the next few days.

As far as Justin Lazarus is concerned, the gullible and credulous who make up the bulk of his clientele get exactly what they deserve and he refuses to feel guilty over giving them what they want – deceit and lies and sympathy – while they watch the people around them steal, whore or starve in the streets. But a sceptic like Nathaniel Roy represents the sort of challenge Justin can't pass up; he isn't surprised when the man requests a second, private, meeting, and he uses it to push all Roy's buttons, opening up the not-fully healed wounds of his grief while playing on the lust Justin had recognised at their first meeting. The air is thick with suppressed desire and not-so-suppressed loathing as the two men trade barbs and insults – and even Justin recognises that this time, he's probably gone too far and made an implacable enemy.

Mutual enmity notwithstanding however, Nathaniel and Justin are destined to be thrown into each other's orbits once again when Justin receives a visit from two men who are trying to locate the children of a woman named Emmeline Godfrey who, they tell him, had been part of their "flock" until they ran away aged fourteen. Justin recalls the desperate woman who visited him a year earlier asking about her twins, and the men want him to find them. Sensing an opportunity, Justin puts on a show without telling them anything and thinks that's that – until he remembers seeing an advertisement in the newspaper offering a reward for information about the same twins, giving Nathaniel Roy's name as the person to contact. Always on the lookout for a way to make money, Justin decides to approach Roy with what he knows – but their discussion quickly descends into an erotically charged slanging match in which the mutual lust and hostility that has hung in the air between them since their first meeting boils over into a frenzied sexual encounter. Despite having been turned inside out by "*one of the better fucks of the nineteenth century*", Justin is still keen to focus on what he can get for his information, while Nathaniel just wants him gone, berating himself for having been so damned stupid as to have let things go so far.

Readers of the previous book will recall that Emmeline Godfrey was the name of the woman the now-deceased Earl of Moreton married in secret some years before contracting a later, bigamous marriage. This means that the male twin is now the rightful earl, but with money and estates at stake, someone is going to great lengths to silence those who could reveal the truth – and now, Justin Lazarus has unwittingly put himself in the firing line. A solitary man who has built a life in which he answers to and depends on nobody, Justin has no-one to turn to when he finds himself on the run from the men threatening him – no-one, that is, apart from the man who despises him and has sworn to expose him as a fraud – Nathaniel Roy.

On the most basic level, this is an enemies-to-lovers romance, but in the hands of K.J. Charles it is so much more than that. Nathaniel is a man who is going through life by the numbers and doesn't quite realise it; frozen by grief, he doesn't expect ever to feel love or desire again and certainly not for a shifty bastard like Justin Lazarus. Nathaniel finds it difficult to understand why a man gifted with such perspicacity and insight would choose to make a living by cheating the weak and vulnerable; but when Justin turns to him for help and Nathaniel glimpses the clever, amusing and desperately lonely man lying beneath the tough, prickly exterior, he is unable to deny the truth of his feelings any longer and admits to himself that he is coming to love Justin in spite of everything. Justin is unapologetic and suspicious at first; born in a workhouse to a mother he never knew, his has been a hard life and he's done what he had to in order to survive. He's made something of himself through hard work, quick wits and sheer strength of will and doesn't want to be beholden to anyone. He tries to push Nathaniel away and dismisses his assertions that Justin is a better man than he believes himself to be, but Nathaniel's obvious belief in him gradually starts to break down his emotional barriers. The chemistry between the pair is off the charts, but amid all their snarling, vitriolic

banter, come moments of real tenderness and understanding and watching these two damaged and very different men fall for each other is gut-wrenchingly beautiful. By the end of the book there is no doubt that they are deeply in love and in it for the long haul.

The writing is exquisite and the book is full of incredibly evocative scenes, whether it's the descriptions of the thick, poisonous pea-souper that envelops London or the excitement of the opening séance, which is a real tour-de-force. The mystery of the missing Taillefer heir is smoothly and skilfully woven through Justin and Nathaniel's love story and the ending brilliantly sets up the next book, *An Unsuitable Heir*, due for release later this year. But while the mystery is certainly intriguing, the real heart of the book is the complicated, messy but glorious romance between two bitter enemies. **An Unnatural Vice** is a must-read and I can't recommend it highly enough.

Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

4.5 stars

Excellent, excellent, excellent! This book is simply K.J. Charles doing what she does best.

I'm a huge K.J. Charles fan, but I was a little worried about this series. I'm not a huge fan of suspense and mystery, and the fact that the stories in all three books link together in a "to be continued" kind of way worried me. I wasn't crazy about *An Unseen Attraction*, but the characters in *An Unnatural Vice* just spoke to me.

I am loving **enemies to lovers** more and more, and here we get the intense combination of combustible sexual attraction along with strong hatred, and the result is *explosive*.

Justin was **simply glorious**. I love a flawed character, a scrappy character, and Justin did what he had to do to survive. He was fierce and so, so bright, and I just adored him.

Nathaniel was also a wonderful character. I have a soft spot for second chances at love after a partner has died, and I felt the love Nathaniel had for Tony alongside his growing affection for Justin. K.J. Charles crafted him perfectly. Plus, bonus points for making him big and hairy (*grins*).

The plot was exciting, in fact, a bit too exciting for my tastes. Like I said, suspense isn't really my thing, and I liked the moments when the two were figuring out their relationship more than the moments they were fighting for their lives. Gulp.

I'm hoping and praying that this series keeps getting better and that book three will floor me. I know K.J. Charles can pull it off.

Sofia says

This book is like a *Fast and Furious* action movie - from the first kick of the ball, the action on the ground moves so fast that I was left breathless at the end whistle. Whilst craving for more as we are now in the middle of the story and I do want to read the end bit yesterday before tomorrow.

A'la Charles this story has become quite intricate, tangles within tangles. I was indeed happy to have deduced a solution to a particular tangle before the reveal. Felt like a feat.

Over all considering the two parts of the story An Unseen Attraction and this one, I like how Charles is building up the story, the different perspectives being given, the different people, the different romances and sincerely hope that the finale will be as good as these two. The story deserves it.

An arc gently given by publisher/author in return for a review.

Andrea says

ALL THE FREAKING STARS I CAN GIVE!!!

Justin and Nathaniel might just have replaced Julius and Harry from A Fashionable Indulgence as my favorite couple. And I love those two idiots to pieces! But these two just resonated with me on a more personal level (mostly because Justin might be even more fucked up than I am, and I could totally emphasize with the poor thing), and oh the feels....

Anyways. This book picks up right where An Unseen Attraction left off (in fact, the beginning of this one takes place at the same time): the Taillefer family is still in shock after the last Earl died, looking for his true heir, and generally being all around unpleasant to poor Clem from book #1. Trying to find the late Earl's first wife's twins is proving very hard for the gang, and things are not made any easier by the appearance of one Justin Lazarus, a medium who goes by the sobriquet "The Seer of London", who was the last to see the Earl's wife before she died. Trying to wheedle some money out of the family in exchange of information, he did not expect to be drawn into the mayhem this case proves to be. He and Nathaniel, who is representing Clem as his lawyer, have their work cut out for them, and try to find the various blackmailers, torturers, and killers who are involved in this case, all the while fighting their unwanted attraction for each other...

I absolutely LOVED Justin and Nathaniel. Both on their own and together. I mean, medium and agnostic lawyer? You can imagine the fighting and the bickering just by that, right? Now multiply that by about a hundred, and you have the most intense and fun rivals-to-lovers story I have ever read.

"You're a rogue." Nathaniel's lips felt stiff. "A rogue, a cheat, and a liar." "I said it before: I'll tell you the truth if you will." ... "Bloody liar," Nathaniel told him hoarsely. Lazarus bent, biting at his ear and neck, making Nathaniel writhe. "You self-righteous piece of shit." Nathaniel grabbed his hair. "Just admit it." "I will if you will." Lazarus's hips ground against his. "Prick."

So yeah. There was hilarious, intense sarcastic bickering (my favorite!). But there was also so much more to these two.

On the one hand you have Nathaniel, son of an archbishop, who lost his faith when he buried his lover. At the beginning of the story, he sets out to write an exposé about mediums and their filthy tricks, appalled by the idea that someone would chose to make a living by lying, cheating, and stealing from the bereaved. He is fascinated by Justin and his tricks very much against his will, and his struggle to decide how to deal with the fact that he is falling in love with someone who basically does everything he detests for a living (and to make that distinction between who Justin is and what he does) was so intense and lovely! I loved seeing him reluctantly accepting his feelings.

And then there's Justin. Oh, my sweet, precious Justin. Born in the gutters and raised by a medium who caught him stealing from him, he has learned the hard way never to rely on anyone, never to accept help, and to always look for strings. Accepting the fact that someone just might love him for who he is proves to be his toughest challenge yet. I loved this prickly little shit to pieces. He was adorable, sarcastic, and so incredibly

sweet underneath it. Or, in Nathaniel's words:

Justin was a damaged man, with a tangled mess of pride, ruthlessness, obstinacy, and a resentment grown like brambles around his heart and soul. This would never be easy ... but it would be worth every scratch and gouge for those precious moments when the brambles parted, letting him through.

snifs

Where was I going with this again? Oh right. Those two are freaking awesome together. That's all I wanted to say :D

This series is not really my favorite though. I don't really care much for drama (and it takes a very skilled writer to make me not totally hate it, so hats off to Ms. Charles!) and the idea that the drama is stretched out over three books made me very reluctant to pick this up in the beginning. But I shouldn't have worried. If anyone can manage to make me tolerate drama by wrapping it in a wonderful atmosphere, it's this author. I admire her for the way she brings Victorian London to life: just the idea of making one of her heroes a medium (and doing very impressive research!) is such a wonderful change, and. Oh just read it yourself. I seriously need to stop gushing!

So to sum up. Impressive research, a wonderful atmosphere, hilarious and intense bickering, adorable characters... What more could you possibly want?

I'll leave you with one of the many, many, passages I highlighted (seriously, it feels like I highlighted most of the book):

"Justin, I love you. For yourself as you are; for who you once were and who you could be; and because you have much the effect on me of about three stiff drinks, all the time. And I'd count it as a privilege to accompany you along the path you've chosen to walk. To light your way, if you want to call it that, until you realize you're perfectly able to do that yourself."

~Mindy Lynn~ says

4 spiritualism stars!

I enjoyed this one much more than I did the first one which I can only hope will get even better with the last book in the series.

Justin Lazarus was by far the most interesting character so far in this series. I really enjoyed the back and forth bickering between him and Nathaniel. These men didn't know if they wanted to fight or strip down and get their sexy on. Sometimes they ended up doing both. There was no lack of steam in this book. The sexual tension was strong as was the chemistry. Nathaniel and Justin were such opposites you would think they wouldn't fit, but they did. Opposites attracting and all that. But man these guys knew how to push each others buttons.

Justin hasn't had an easy life and has had to do a lot of unsavory things to become the Seer of London. But he won't apologize for it. Even if he want's to be someone Nathaniel could be proud to be with. Nathaniel has had a privileged life being the Bishops son. He has never want for anything and can't even fathom what life must have been like for Justin. And although Justin's career choice is one Nathaniel detests, he see's beyond that to the man Justin truly is and he wants him.

This book had a great mix of mystery and romance. We learn a lot more in this book. Some of the mystery is

solved but the more important mystery of who is behind it all has been left open. I can't wait to read the next book.

Happy reading dolls! xx

~I RECEIVED AN ARC COURTESY OF NETGALLEY IN EXCHANGE FOR AN HONEST REVIEW~

K.J. Charles says

The second book of my Sins of the Cities trilogy that begins with *An Unseen Attraction*. In which the plot thickens, and so does the atmosphere.

Justin Lazarus, the Seer of London, is a fraudulent spiritualist, plying his trade on the grieving and gullible. This puts him on a collision course with Nathaniel Roy, investigative journalist. But the men are linked in a number of ways they don't expect. As both family secrets and blood continue to spill, and the worst fog of the nineteenth century closes in on London, the professional liar and the seeker after truth may have to make common cause to survive.

I love Victorian Sensation novels. I love all the trappings: family secrets and wild coincidences and huge casts and outrageous villainy and aristocratic families and sordid rookeries and grotesques and pathetic fallacy (which means, in case you were wondering, the thing when the weather behaves in an artistically suitable fashion). I am totally going for Victorian Sensation in this book, which also contains the single worst, most amoral, reprehensible, stone-cold git of a hero I've ever written. I had a huge amount of fun with him and this series; I hope readers will too!

Oh, and this is probably the point to say that neither the vice of the title nor the sin of the series title are what you may be thinking. :D

Ariana says

Absolutely stunning!

An exceptional enemies to lovers romance.
These two guys REALLY loathe and despise each other when they meet.

Nathaniel is glorious: a man of stature, honest, good, upstanding and gorgeously hairy (sorry, my mind just went off tangent there *G*), and he has barely recovered from the death of his long term lover. He hates what Justin represents: "the exploiter, the liar, cheat, kiter, and fraud".

The thing is: **Justin** really is all that. For the first third of the book I couldn't help despising him, too. The man has no conscience and is by all means a "callous, moneygrabbing liar". And he is quite happy to identify himself as such without any remorse. The fact that he lacks a "moral or social responsibility" doesn't bother

him.

So why on earth is Nathaniel attracted to the man? How can he square what he knows about the man with what he feels when he sees him?

KJ Charles explores **the dilemma of their relationship** beautifully, delicately and in heart wrenching depth. (and I just revelled in her beautiful writing!)

Did she succeed in changing my mind about Justin? Of course she did, and in a most brilliant way.

For Justin is “better than what he does”. He has never experienced goodness, has never been granted affection, has only ever known survival. But, like Nathaniel we can see there is so much more under all the layers of cynicism: his dedication for his “familiar”, his weariness at his profession, his deep vulnerability ... just - he is “frightened to hope”.

Together, **Nathaniel and Justin are explosive** – both are determined, strong-willed men, neither easily willing to give in to the other – the way this translates into their love making needs to be seen to behold. Hot! is all I say here.

This **absolutely amazing love story** between two most unlikely men, combined with the **mystery plot** continuing from book 1 make An Unnatural Vice a gripping, exciting and totally captivating read. Couldn't put it down and can't wait for Pen's story in book 3!

Highly recommended

Chelsea says

4 hearts!

Well Nathaniel and Justin couldn't have been more different from Clem and Rowley and as such we got an entirely different type of story! Where Clem and Rowley were all sweet explorations and careful considerations, Nat and Justin were all hateful fucks and shoving their opinions in each other's faces.

When we get down to brass tax, Justin is a liar who literally doesn't give a shit about anyone or anything other than himself and the two girls who live with him. Nathaniel has a very strong moral compass and generally believes he's right about most things. These two clash!...to say the least and you can *feel* it on page. Their fight, anger and passion towards each other is so obvious it's hard to see how they'll come together... and when they do... Wow.

Anger-fucking at it's finest!

It surprisingly doesn't take too long for Justin to need Nat's help and for Nat to give it freely, which was the last thing Justin expected. They start to get to know each other and it is lovely to see. I think I would've liked more of this scattered throughout the book though. By the time we get to the 'getting deep' stages of their 'relationship' it's all in one clump and became a little slow....if it was more evenly spread this would've been a 5 heart read!

The mystery that started in Book 1 continues and develops more. I felt there was definitely more mystery and less relationship in this book compared to the last one, which was also a little downer for me.

This was a great addition to the overall trilogy though and I'm super excited about this new heir and can't wait for book 3!!!!

See the other Unicorns review over in the blog ??

Laura says

4.5 stars

Thank you very much to Random House Publishing Group – Loveswept for providing a copy of the novel in exchange for an honest review.

Every time I read a new K.J. Charles book I always think she can't possibly do better than her previous novels, and I am always, happily, proved wrong. *An Unnatural Vice* was no exception, featuring an insidious murder mystery, a crafty fraudster, a crusading gentleman journalist, and a passionate romance – this book was impossible to put down.

As usual, Charles' Victorian world-building was true to form and so historically accurate I briefly blacked out from the sheer joy of reading such a factual novel. I love how precise and detailed she is, from the correct usage of slang, to comprehensive research about real-life events, to the inclusion of 18th century magic tricks (that she refuses to explain how they were done, but, whatever). Charles even compiled a mini bibliography at the back of the novel for anyone interested in learning about Victorian mediums and spiritualism, and the terror of the London fog (most of which my knowledge only comes from watching Netflix's *The Crown*, so thank you for that).

Justin Lazarus is, hands down, one of my favourite K.J. Charles characters – he is now amongst such greats as my angel Dominic Frey, gruff Silas Mason, foxy David Cyprian, and gentle-giant Richard Vane. Every character Charles brings to life is so distinctively individual. They don't feel like characters on a page – they feel like real life people. Each one has idiosyncratic personalities that the reader can't help but fall for. Justin, albeit a pessimistic fraudster who makes a living off the grief of the wealthy, doesn't believe he is worthy enough of a loving relationship, and doesn't want to risk anyone seeing 'behind the veil' as it were, to who he truly is inside. Despite having an amoral viewpoint of the world, Justin goes through some exquisite growth in the novel and comes to understand that living life with no holds on you is actually no way to live.

Nathaniel is the other protagonist, who we were introduced to in *An Unseen Attraction*, the first book in the Sins of the Cities trilogy. Nathaniel is still grieving after the death of his lover years ago, and he has invested himself in exposing Justin as a fraud, because the man preys on people at their most vulnerable. Like Justin, Nathaniel goes through wonderful development as he comes to terms with the fact that maybe his moral compass might be a little too inflexible and he has his eyes opened to the realities the London poor actually live through.

I simply adore the enemies-to-lovers trope and have been patiently waiting for K.J. Charles to try her hand at it. Not only do Nathaniel and Justin verbally clash, they come from two completely different worlds: Nathaniel hails from a wealthy gentile family – his father is even an archbishop – while Justin hails from the gutter and has had to experience many horrors just to stay alive. Their fights were suffused with genuine contempt, sexual tension, and seething anger – it was amazing. The two protagonists, despite practically hating each other, also perfectly complimented one another which made for some hot and tense sex scenes,

but just as many loving and romantic scenes too.

Like Charles' incomparable *Society of Gentleman series*, the *Sins of the Cities* follows three different couples over three novels, with one plot line interweaving between the books and bringing the characters together. In this series, that plot line is the search for the missing earl who was alluded to in the first novel and Justin and Nathaniel find themselves unwittingly caught up in the search as dangerously unhinged people come to town, believing that Justin, as the Seer of London, can find the missing earl, Repentance Taillefer.

Charles has set up the last novel in the series perfectly, and I am honestly annoyed at how many months stand between me and the answers I desperately need. I can't wait to learn more about Mark, Nathaniel's friend, who will be one of the protagonists in *An Unsuitable Heir*. That's what I love about K.J. Charles' books: there's a books for everyone: whether you're looking for a sweet, uncomplicated romance (Clem and Rowley, *An Unseen Attraction*), a devastating love affair (David and Richard, *A Gentleman's Position*), or an intense, intellectual meeting of the minds (Dom and Silas, *A Seditious Affair*), K.J. Charles has it all. I look forward to reading about Mark and Pen in the next novel, and am impressed by Charles' decision to focus on an amputee as a love interest – I don't have to tell you how rare it is to read a romance novel where the love interest isn't 'tall, dark and handsome.'

An Unnatural Vice is a well-developed, entertaining romance that left me breathless. K.J. Charles has yet to disappoint me and I cannot begin to explain how excited I am for the final novel in the series. Keep these historical romances coming, Charles!
