



Beauty Like the Night

Joanna Bourne

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In the newest Spymaster novel, “master of romance and suspense”* Joanna Bourne offers a stirring tale of intrigue, espionage, and attraction.

Sèverine de Cabrillac, orphan of the French revolution and sometime British intelligence agent, has tried to leave spying behind her. Now she devotes herself to investigating crimes in London and finding justice for the wrongly accused.

Raoul Deverney, an enigmatic half-Spaniard with enough secrets to earn even a spy's respect, is at her door demanding help. She's the only one who can find the killer of his long-estranged wife and rescue her missing fourteen-year-old daughter.

Sèverine reluctantly agrees to aid him, even though she knows the growing attraction between them makes it more than unwise. Their desperate search for the girl ?unleashes treason and murder. . . and offers a last chance for two strong, wounded people to find love.

**New York Times* bestselling author Teresa Medeiros

Beauty Like the Night Details

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From Reader Review Beauty Like the Night for online ebook

Em says

I've given this 4.5 stars at Romantic Historical Reviews

The *Spymasters* series is one of the best historical romance series ever written. If you've read them, you already know they're wonderful; if you haven't, they're awesome and you should read them IMMEDIATELY. Each book works as a standalone, although they're linked and it very much enhances your reading experience if you're familiar with Ms. Bourne's world. Her characters are complex, dynamic, flawed men and women who fall for each other against the backdrop of politics and espionage, and they're wildly addictive, exciting and romantic. I've fallen in love with nearly all of her heroes (Oh, Adrian Hawkhurst. Be still my heart.), and her heroines are equally compelling. In **Beauty Like the Night**, we revisit Séverine de Cabrillac, whom we first met when she was a young girl fleeing the bloody French Revolution in **The Forbidden Rose**. Séverine – Sévie – has tried to leave the world of spying behind her and now works as a private investigator. But after she meets Raoul Deverney, she's drawn back into the intrigues of British Intelligence and a past she's tried to leave behind. Although **Beauty Like the Night** isn't quite as good as I hoped it would be – it's a bit slow in the middle and I wish our principals spent more time together – it's still pretty great.

Asleep in her room late one night, Sévie abruptly awakens certain she isn't alone – but she isn't frightened. Life has shaped her into a brave, intelligent and supremely capable woman who's more than capable of defending herself from anyone stupid enough to steal into her bedroom. She's right; she isn't alone in the room, but her guest makes it clear he has no plans to hurt her. In fact, he appears to know exactly who and how dangerous she is and wants Sévie to tell him where she's keeping Pilar, a twelve-year-old girl who's been missing since her mother – his wife – was killed three months ago. The handsome stranger (is he French? Spanish?) makes it clear that although Pilar is not his daughter, he's anxious to find her – and an amulet that went missing at the same time. Sévie is curious about her enigmatic intruder who's convinced she has information about the murder, the missing girl, and the amulet – but she can't help him. She's never met Pilar or his ex-wife Sanchia, and has no idea where the missing amulet might be.

Raoul Deverney knows Séverine de Cabrillac. She's the same woman – a spy – he encountered a decade ago in Spain and he's never forgotten her. Sleep tousel, beautiful, dangerous – she coolly denies knowing Pilar, Sanchia or anything about the missing amulet and he wants to believe her. But ever since he discovered the words 'amulet' and 'de Cabrillac' scratched into Pilar's bed frame, he's certain she must be involved somehow despite her denials. Séverine obviously doesn't recognize Raoul but is curious about his identity, and he refuses to give her any clues about who he is or how they might know one another. Reluctant to leave, Raoul vows to himself he will find out just how she's involved in his wife's murder, and he can't resist a quick caress of her soft cheek before he retreats to the window and vanishes over the edge.

When Raoul next appears – he's silently slipped into Sévie's locked office – she's frustrated by his ability to get past her defenses (personal and professional), but she isn't surprised to see him. He wants her to help him find Pilar and the missing amulet, and though it's obvious neither completely trusts the other, Sévie agrees to help him anyway. She has suspicions about just who and what he is, but she keeps them to himself: Raoul is a mystery she plans to solve as she finds Pilar. Oh reader, these first meetings between Sévie and Raoul are so delicious... and fortunately for us, they characterize the duration of their relationship. From the moment Sévie spots Raoul in her bedroom, they're captivated by each other – held in thrall whenever the other is near. Every interaction between them is thick with tension, and the torturous slow-burn of their relationship/courtship – both of them trying to deny the attraction between them... well, it's a it's a wicked, wonderful pleasure as Ms. Bourne forces them to work together to figure out just who murdered Sanchia and

what happened to Pilar and the amulet.

Although the chemistry and sexual tension between Sévie and Raoul are highlights of **Beauty Like the Night**, what elevates this rather complex tale of espionage over other similarly excellent spy novels is the group of secondary characters that comprise Sévie's world. As Sévie and Raoul pursue clues in their case and try to fight their growing attraction and affection for each other, their investigation dangerously intersects with another one led by the Head of British Intelligence (and Sévie's brother-in-law) Adrian Hawkhurst (Hawker). Via her childhood as the adopted daughter of Doyle, and close relationships with the spies who comprise its highest echelon, Sévie is privy to the details of British Service's investigation. She's intrigued by links between the two cases and how Raoul might be involved, but Hawker and Doyle – shrewd, intelligent, and fiercely protective of Sévie – are suspicious of her charming, mysterious, and obviously enamored client. Though Sévie pretends disinterest in Raoul around them, it's clear to the two men – who play at being detached and dispassionate observers of Sévie's investigation/client/potentially disastrous affair that there's more to Raoul and the relationship than Sévie lets on. Their involvement in her case, and vice versa, adds a nice levity to the novel and the intense relationship between the principals.

It's impossible to say more about the investigation at the heart of this love story without spoiling it, so I won't; suffice it to say Ms. Bourne cleverly and brilliantly connects the dots of the slow burn romance between Sévie and Raoul, their mutually dark pasts, and a deadly betrayal that linked them long ago. As the case evolves, we slowly learn more about Raoul – where he came from; how he acquired his extremely lethal skills – and as the cases coalesce, neither Sévie or Raoul can fight their mutual attraction. Both principals are damaged, but find solace in each other. That succor – along with their intense physical attraction – eventually helps them overcome their distrust of each other enough to believe in a future together. Sévie and Raoul are dynamic, dangerous and riveting individual characters and as a pair... well, it's a terrific match-up. And contrary to my early expectations – that Sévie would outshine anyone she was paired with; or that Ms. Bourne couldn't possibly deliver another hero as deliciously wicked, lethal and sexy as Hawker – I fell hard for the enigmatic Raoul. I liked him. Big time.

The combination of engrossing plot, engaging principals and secondary characters, and a delicious slow-burn love affair results in another wonderful addition to the *Spymasters* series. Though it isn't my favorite, (that honor is reserved for *The Black Hawk* (duh!)), it's yet another terrific addition to Ms. Bourne's catalog, cementing her status as one of my favorite historical writers of all time. My advice? You should read it (and the other *Spymasters* novels if you haven't) right away.

Jess says

Joanna Bourne just writes so beautifully. This was a book worthy of Sevie. I wish that we'd gotten more of the women from earlier in the series, but Doyle and Hawker were pretty adequate substitutes. I'm sad that there won't be more in this series, but I'm so glad that I picked up *The Spymaster's Lady* all those years ago, because book to book, this is probably my favorite romance series of all time.

Joanna Loves Reading says

"One did not, he suspected, write poems to Séverine's eyebrows. One slew dragons for her, or stood slightly to the left, holding her spare lance and buckler, while she did the slaying."

I am a fan Joanna Bourne's books. She writes intrigue better than anyone in HR, IMO. The attraction and romance is wonderfully done, against a dark intrigue-filled setting. This book features plenty of Doyle and Hawker, who have been great characters throughout the series, including their own books. They are part of the reason this succeeds as a series. Séverine, the heroine, is the adopted daughter of Doyle and Sister-In-Law to Hawker. She is very much respected by them and the men around her and is ultimately in charge of her own destiny. No one tells her what to do. She is strong, competent and scares scary men. Simply amazing. Still, Bourne shows us her vulnerability, that she can be scared also. Because she was the focus of the story and a kick ass heroine, I think this is my new favorite Bourne book. Wow, I am in awe of her and it.

In spite of how awesome the heroine is, Bourne creates Séverine's perfect match in the form Raoul. About 2/3 of the way through the book, I wondered, knowing what I knew of the hero, if I should like him. Facts on paper suggested I shouldn't, but I was distracted by the compelling characters and story that it was the first I thought of it. Then he started concretely proving himself. He is a very sexy, compelling hero, and a perfect match for Séverine.

I highly recommend this book. It was a very satisfying read, and I am sure it is one I will be re-visiting.

Mandi Schreiner says

Favorite Quote: Hawker muttered distinctly, "Another corpse. What is it about today?"

To say I love this series is an understatement. Joanna Bourne can write a sentence like no other. Her words fill me up and her characters are so clever and engaging and I'm greedy for all of her words.

Joanna Bourne has created a cast of characters so rich and vivid, that I hang on every detail. But I'm selfish. I want each book to be about Hawker. Or Doyle. Or even Pax. I crave a glimpse of these past characters on each page - and she lets us see them again in this book. I found myself not as attached to Raoul in this one. He is a lovely man. A thief, a wine maker, a man with many, many secrets (don't all of her men have secrets?). But my history is with Hawker, Doyle and that gang. I felt a little snobbish towards Raoul, poor guy. He doesn't deserve my quick judgement. I can't help it and I fully admit it. Even though Raoul didn't steal my heart, this is still a lovely book with action, adventure and the most clever of characters.

Severine is Hawker's sister in-law for those that follow this series and her adopted father is William Doyle. Spying is in her blood, to put it lightly. She is now a retired spy (but really, are they ever truly retired?) and works for Military Intelligence, solving murder mysteries and the likes. But when a man enters her room in the middle of the night, demanding to know the whereabouts of his daughter and an amulet, Severine knows her days of spying are not quite over. This man is Raoul, and he wants answers.

Raoul is not a brute by any means. He is quiet, sly, and even though he shows up with a knife, Severine quickly becomes more enamored by the missing girl and amulet, than any threat he poses. Her craving for a mystery outweighs her fear, and she finds herself meticulously going over his apartment, finding clues on how the girl went missing and how the murder of the girl's mother happened. All the while, pulling herself into a tangle of secrets and danger. Hawker and his crew in the British Service get pulled in, and an adventurous mystery unfolds. I won't go into the many details of the mystery but it plays out well and gives us lots of adventure.

There is also a lovely romance:

"I won't kiss you," he said. The tip of his finger slid to rest gently, just barely tugging on her bottom lip. "But damn, I want to."

"We will not indulge in that."

"No."

"We will not begin the lightest flirtation." She'd step away from him. In a minute. "I don't sneak into corners and kiss men at parties."

"Wise policy."

"I don't kiss men like you at all." But she ached warmly everywhere important when she said it. She ached significantly.

"You're wiser than I am," he said. "That's something else I admire." He went back to outlining her lips with his finger. "I've changed my mind about a kiss. Have you?"

"Yes." Only a whisper, but that was enough.

So romantic. I enjoyed Raoul and Severine together a lot. They fit well - both with that drive to find answers and so clever - they outwit each other. Severine can be dressed to the nines undercover in a ballroom and still knee a bad guy in the balls, pull a knife on him and have him dragged away, all while the ton dances around them oblivious to her skills. She is bad ass.

I enjoyed this book, with the mystery of the missing girl and other bad guys who are targeting Raoul. And Raoul is dashing and mysterious himself and makes for a fun hero.

But my attention would always go back to Hawker and Doyle - their extremely understated, clever banter wins me over every single time. Hawker and Doyle will forever have my heart. But Raoul and Severine definitely caught my eye.

Grade: B

Alyssa Grace says

3.5/5 stars

Maybe it's because I've come to expect more from J.B., but this latest instalment in her Spymasters series ended up kind of underwhelming. Something happened, then some other things happened, and in between there was a lot of intrigue and sexual tension, and then the story was over. In short, *Beauty Like the Night* represents **the best that a formulaic Regency novel can offer without defying genre conventions**. I feel that some of the previous books have been far bolder when it comes to putting new twists on the Regency, especially as one of Bourne's hallmarks--the integration of sociopolitical factors from the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars--felt missing, or at least greatly diluted, in this one.

I probably would have enjoyed BLtN more three or four years ago, when I first picked up a J.B. novel. Now, having read the rest of the series, it feels **largely derivative of her better titles**, especially *Rogue Spy* or *The Black Hawk*. One thing I've noticed is how similar all of her heroines are. You could exchange Sévie's inner monologues for those of her sister Justine or the completely unrelated Camille and see virtually no difference. Part of the reason is the abundance of

I'm not kidding, the flowery language is **everywhere**. And it's not necessarily a bad thing: If anyone has mastered the art of flowery prose, it's Bourne. There aren't any particularly cringeworthy metaphors, which is impressive when every other line is a comparison to leaves in the wind or a reference to classical canon. Still, the sheer *amount* of it is rather excessive: I found the style novel and even enjoyable in my first *Spymasters* novel, but it's gotten a bit grating by the sixth.

Story-wise, it's really nothing special. I was disappointed not to see Justine. It seems that Bourne is insistent on always writing out the heroines of other novels--while Adrian and Doyle get to play major roles in every book, the only times the leading women appear outside of their own books are Sévie (in her sister's story), Justine (very briefly in Maggie's story) and Maggie (very briefly in a couple of the other ones). Maggie and Justine's reason for being absent through the entirety of BLtN just seem too contrived not to be an excuse to have them gone. Pity we didn't get to see any sisterly interaction, especially when Justine's one of my favourite heroines in the series. *shrug*

Alright, now on to my big high point of the book. (Low-key spoilers ahead.)

Pilar. Frickin' Pilar. She is the reason I keep wanting to bump my rating up to 4 stars. Quite frankly, I'd gladly read a story about Pilar alone, who manages to be more compelling than either of the romantic leads and deliver the novel's best plot twist. While Sévie and Raoul are running around picking locks and kissing, this girl is getting things done. Plus she's a tough soul who grew up young, scrappy, and hungry, aristocratic blood be damned.

Pilar book? I can hope.

Bj says

4.5 "A Love Interconnected by Espionage" Stars!

Why did I wait so long to discover this series? Being a lover of historical romance and mystery/suspense, *Beauty Like the Night* satisfied my desires on a number of fronts. I also really enjoyed Ms. Bourne's talented writing and witty repartees between the hero and heroine. Now I simply must go back and read or listen to Ms. Bourne's *Spymasters* backlist titles!

For those who are wondering if this story can be read as a standalone, it definitely can. As you can surmise from the opening paragraph of this review, this is my first foray into the *Spymasters* Series and I had no difficulty following both the romance and suspense plots which seemed to be fully contained within this book.

Sèverine de Cabrillac, the "daughter" of a British intelligence agent and friend of many other spies has grown up learning the spy trade. "Adopted" after being left an orphan by the French revolution, Severine has her own list of spy accolades now. However, in an attempt to "settle down" and lead a less dangerous life, she has turned her specialized talents to work for those needing an investigator to find justice.

Her latest assignment, is finding a lost daughter and amulet for Raoul Deverney. Raoul has his own clandestine background and Severine instantly starts to question what this proclaimed wine merchant's true career is. Should she trust Raoul? Just what is the truth? Moreover, when a series of dangerous events, including a murder plot involving a famous British military commander is uncovered, it seems like too much

of a coincidence for the events not to be interconnected somehow, but just what is the connection?

But its not all intrigue and danger where Severine's and Raoul's relationship is concerned as they seem to have a chemistry laden attraction to one another. Is it purely physical attraction or something more? Moreover, could there ever be a HEA for a potentially politically mismatched couple such as this?

There is one aspect of the plot which I think could have remained a mystery longer, but there are also a number of suspense and mystery plots weaved in which are not uncovered until later in the story. The romance also takes a while to develop, but once it does it adds a heated element to this intriguing romantic suspense title.

All in all fans of Ms. Bourne's, as well as, historical romantic suspense enthusiasts in general will not want to miss Beauty Like the Night.

Source: Review copy provided for review purposes.

Brandy Painter says

Holy dialogue, Batman! This book was full of some of the best examples of banter I've ever seen. Nearly every page was one I wanted to reread. If possible, I would have jumped in just to take a bath in the words. It was that good. Sevie is wonderful. Her story was well worth the wait and I really enjoyed learning about how she became a spy, the work she did, and her relationship with Doyle. (Which is just fabulous-I'm trying to think of any other historical romance that does a father/daughter relationship half so well.) Raoul is exactly a perfect match for Sevie. He is smart, witty, and content to fall in step beside her (or even behind her) and allow her to shine. Their chemistry is great, and it comes out best in their conversations. There is nothing I like more in a romance than smart characters being truly smart and being able to snark off each other while they do it. And while the majority of the great dialogue in the book comes from conversations between Sevie and Raoul, there are also some truly great banter sessions between Doyle and Adrian. And then there's Adrian and Raoul. And Doyle and Adrian and Raoul. I just want to have books where these people talk to each other to continue forever.

I did hate that Maggie and Justine were gone, but kind of understand why they needed to be for much of what was amazing about the plot to actually happen. It was amusing to see how grumpy both Doyle and Adrian were without them as consolation.

ALL of Doyle and Maggie's children are amazing and we need more of them. Also Felicity. And of course Pilar. There is like a whole new generation of characters in this novel I want stories about now.

Also that tidbit about Lazarus and tiny Sevie was spectacular.

I do feel like this is best enjoyed if you've read The Forbidden Rose and The Black Hawk first. (But why wouldn't you want to do that? They are amazing.)

Karen says

Somehow I knew that I would love Séverine's book. And it's interesting how the addition of a tragic and brave 12 year old child can change the dynamic of the story so completely. Loved the characters in this one. And in my experience any hero with the name "Raoul" will never fail to melt my heart.

Geri Reads says

4.5 stars!

Loved this cleverly written historical romantic suspense by Joanna Bourne.

Sèverine de Cabrillac was a former military intelligence who is now using her "skills" as an investigator. As intelligent as she is beautiful, Sèverine is one of the most interesting heroines I've read in a long time. Drawn back into the world she tried to leave behind, Sèverine must confront the demons of her past at the same time help Raoul Deverney discover his estranged wife's killer and his missing daughter.

The characters, the dialogue, the plot just works seamlessly. This is the first book I've read from this author and my first historical-suspense in general, and I got to say that I've become an immediate fan.

Clever and interesting, *Beauty Like the Night* will draw you in from the very first page. The romance between Raoul and Sèverine was lovely and interesting. My only gripe is that the hero isn't as interesting as the heroine. But that said, Sèverine more than made up for it. She's a very interesting and unique character.

I highly recommend this book.

ARC provided by the publisher.

Caz says

I've given this an A- at AAR, so that's 4.5 stars rounded up.

Beauty Like the Night, the eagerly awaited sixth book in Joanna Bourne's widely acclaimed *Spymasters* series, tells the story of Séverine de Cabrillac, whom we first met as a very young child caught up in the revolutionary terror of late eighteenth century Paris in *The Forbidden Rose*. Ten years after being brought to England by William Doyle, Sévie ran off to war where she joined Military Intelligence and gained an impressive reputation as a spy, a woman who took many names, who wore many disguises, who was always frighteningly effective. Returned to London and now in her late twenties, she operates a small investigative agency – and is still frighteningly effective. But her involvement with politics and espionage is far from over, as is shown when she becomes involved in the hunt for a murderer, a missing child... and a traitor.

Séverine's reputation for getting results as an investigator is every bit as remarkable as her reputation as a spy. Clever, uncompromising and tenacious, she is known to never back down or be frightened off, and it's said that once she is involved with a case, it's as good as solved. Her name and reputation are partly responsible for leading Raoul Deverney to her bedroom late one night, when he casually requests the return of a twelve-year-old girl named Pilar, who has been missing since the murder of her mother – his wife – some three months earlier. The girl is not his daughter, but she has in her possession, an amulet, a family heirloom he is anxious to recover. Séverine knows nothing of the girl or the amulet and is, not surprisingly,

rather alarmed by the sudden appearance of a man bearing a knife at her bedside. Yet nothing of this shows in her demeanour as she coolly denies all knowledge of both girl and amulet, assessing the intruder and deducing he's either mad or deadly – quickly realising he's not the former. Their discussion ended, he disappears into the night, but not before he has promised they will meet again – and ventured a brief touch to her cheek, which Séverine finds oddly unsettling.

Raoul Deverney is well acquainted with the name of de Cabrillac and has no doubt that the woman he encountered in Spain a decade earlier could have committed or been involved in the murder of his estranged wife. But would she be party to the kidnap of a young girl? He can't be so sure about that. Yet his search of his late wife's apartment revealed the words 'amulet' and 'de Cabrillac' scratched into Pilar's bedframe – so there's no question Séverine is involved in some way. He just has to work out how.

That first, late-night encounter between Raoul and Séverine sets the tone for their interactions throughout the story. Both are cautious, fiercely intelligent and almost terrifyingly capable; they don't trust easily or often and find the strong attraction that sparks between them to be a major inconvenience. But it's impossible to ignore. The sexual chemistry between the pair is delicious and understated, which makes it even better; there's no overdone mental lusting, just a simmering attraction that builds inexorably as they join forces to investigate murder and treason.

Readers of the previous books will already know that Séverine is part of the inmost circle at the top level of British intelligence, very much one of a close-knit family united by bonds of friendship and loyalty, if not by blood. Her brother-in-law is Adrian Hawkhurst (Hawker) and her adoptive father is William Doyle, both of them incredibly shrewd, intelligent and dedicated men who do what must be done to protect England from the threats it continues to face. Some of my favourite parts of the book were the interactions between Hawker and Doyle and I loved those little touches that reminded me of how far Hawker has come from the scruffy, teenage street-urchin of *The Forbidden Rose*. It's obvious that these two know each other so well that verbal communication is almost unnecessary – although Hawker's never going to shut up so that won't happen! – and that they would do anything for each other. It's a wonderfully written friendship/familial relationship (they've always been like father and son) that gladdened my heart whenever they appeared on the page. Their relationship with Séverine is equally well-done; they are protective and want to be even more so, but recognise that she can take care of herself and would not thank them for their interference, especially when it comes to her complicated relationship with a certain handsome former freedom-fighter and possible traitor.

I liked both central characters very much. Séverine is an admirable heroine, confident in her abilities yet not oblivious to the fact that her way of life can be a dangerous one, and Raoul is the sort of hero I always fall for. Intelligent, witty and coolly competent (because there's nothing sexier than a man who knows what he's doing!), he's perfect for Séverine and it's clear that theirs is a meeting of understanding as well as hearts, and that they will go through life as equals. If I have a complaint it's that he's probably TOO perfect – but I was so charmed by him that I really didn't care.

The historical romance sub-genre is littered with spy stories, and some of them are very good. But then one reads a book by Joanna Bourne and the difference between 'good' and 'great' is brought into sharp focus. It's not just that Ms. Bourne's writing is sublime, the relationships are well-developed and the characters are attractive and well-rounded; it's her amazing subtlety, her ability to convey things that aren't said, and the way she imbues her characters with incredible spirit and intelligence but allows them to be vulnerable, too. Séverine is tough and capable, but she is haunted by some of the decisions she made during the war, most notably the one which ultimately led to the death of the young French officer with whom she had fallen in love. And when Raoul – who is every bit as formidable as Séverine (and possibly more so in some areas) – realises that Pilar was shamefully neglected, his wilful blindness is brought home to him and he is assailed by the guilt which ultimately drives him to find her.

The story is insightful and intelligently written, boasting an engrossing plot, a well-developed cast of

secondary characters and two compelling and well-matched principals who thoroughly and obviously relish the challenge to their wits and their hearts presented by the other. It is perhaps not as high-stakes as some of the earlier books in the series, but it's no less enjoyable for that; there are still plots to be foiled, evil-doers to be defeated and truths to be uncovered – and I was glued to the story every step of the way.

Beauty Like the Night is a great read and a terrific addition to what is easily one of the finest series of historical romance novels around. Unlike most of the earlier books in the series, this one can work as a standalone, although I think readers will get more out of it if they're familiar with the other stories and characters – and if you haven't read them, my advice would be to do so at once. You're in for a rare treat.

kris says

Séverine de Cabrillac is a private investigator in London when Raoul Deverney climbs through her window, tosses a knife in her lap, and accuses her of kidnapping a child and stealing an amulet. Sévie is not amused. After agreeing to look into the murder/kidnapping/theft, she realizes that her boner for Raoul is horribly distracting. She is even more not amused. Raoul, meanwhile, goes about his cat burglary business and flirts with Sévie and develops boners of his own.

They do it (ON THE JOB, GET IT GIRL), find the killers and the missing child, resolve some light treason and decide to live happily ever after.

1. JOANNA BOURNE GODDAMNIT.

2. I enjoyed this: I liked the coiling of Sévie's attraction to Raoul; I liked their banter; I liked how easily they fall into a partnership of compatible skills and strategic planning. Bourne manages the compatibility elements with such stark competency that it's kind of boggling. That scene while they're breaking into Hayward's office! Talking through the case, and working together, and having a quickie, and then going right back to stealing papers—I couldn't stop reading, or grinning.

3. That said, the ending felt extraordinarily abrupt and kind of underdeveloped. I didn't quite believe that the villain was intelligent enough to complete all the plots and plans that he'd allegedly put into place; I didn't quite understand why, after gleefully discussing the trial for treason, a cover-up was needed for the villain's murder; I didn't quite believe that Sévie would fall into marriage quite the way she did.

It rather felt like a chess match: you're given the initial board layout and then the final checkmate, but how all the pieces came to be where they are is a mystery that you can solve on your own. Unfortunately, I'm not quite sharp enough to make all those leaps and so I was left confused and sad and wanting more.

4. I would have loved more of Raoul convincing Sévie into marrying him with many logical leaps and conniving plots and sly comments. And Sévie shutting down all his arguments until it descends into sexually frustrated makeouts.

5. THIS QUOTE: *That was the story of her life. It mostly boiled down to she was lucky not to have been shot.*

Lisa - (Aussie Girl) says

Not quite as good as some of the other books in this series (there was a whole lot of backstory concerning

both the major characters which would have been better told in a separate book) but still Joanna Bourne does have a lovely style of writing.

Is this the end of this series? I hope not there seems to be a new generation of little spies waiting in the wings.

3.5 stars

Giedre says

3.5/5

“That was nicely done, by the way. I am filled with fear and respect.”

“You’re filled with lies.”

“That too.”

Sadly, the long awaited new instalment in the Spymasters series does not live up to its predecessors (specifically, the last three books). Bourne's prose is lovely as always, but I had a hard time engaging with the romance between Sevie and Raoul. Mostly because Raoul did nothing for me. Dare I say, he was kind of bland. Sevie was the star of the book for me. She and the combination of Doyle and Hawker, two of my series favourites, somewhat made up for the romance. Overall, if not as great as expected, *Beauty Like the Night* is more than enjoyable.

Jaya says

4.15 stars

Bourne never disappoints.

Piper says

This was a perfect ending to the Spymaster series (or perhaps it's not the end?). I loved Raoul and Sévie ♥♥♥ and was very happy that Doyle and Hawker were in this book as well. I do wish that Adrian and Annique had been present in some of the other books other than their own story. Perhaps Ms. Bourne will write a 7th book that will grace us with their presence. I really do like her writing style which mixes romance and suspense. Each book was very well written IMO.
