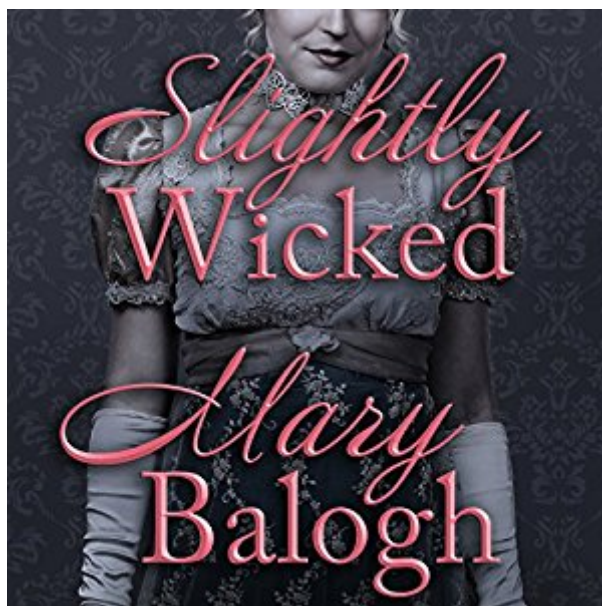


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Slightly Wicked: Bedwyn Saga Series, Book 2



Synopsis

With his laughing eyes and wild, rakish good looks, Lord Rannulf Bedwyn is a hard man to resist. To Judith Law, a woman in need of rescue when her stagecoach overturns, Rannulf is simply her savior, a heroic stranger she will reward with one night of reckless passion before she must become a companion to her wealthy aunt. Imagine Judith's shock when the same stranger turns out to be among England's most eligible bachelors, and when he arrives at Harewood Grange to woo her cousin. Certainly, they had made no vows, no promises, but Rannulf never did forget his uninhibited lover - nor did she forget that one delicious night. And as scandal sets the household abuzz, Rannulf proposes a solution. But when Judith refuses to have him - in love or wedlock - Rannulf has only one choice: to wage a campaign of pure pleasure to capture the heart of the woman who has already won his.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This was my favorite for a 'fun' read. The heroine Judith seemed to me to be the primary focus of the work, rather than Rannulf, which was a little disappointing since I prefer stories of "heroes". Judith's character is a typical & standard character - a penniless middle daughter of a lower member of the gentry with a spoiled only son who hasn't a clue about life and is bankrupting the family. She is sent off to be a poor relation/unpaid servant in an aunt's household that consists of the quintessential ton females and males- scheming, self-centered and soulless. One of the things which makes this a memorable story is the one character "flaw" Judith has; an inherited acting talent

acquired by her grandmother that no one in the family wants known about. Although she is paired with Rannulf - the "fun" member of the family that looks like a viking warrior & who also has been "wandering" through life not certain of where he fits in or what his destiny holds, there are large segments of the story that do not include him except as a support character. They met when her coach has an accident and he rescues her. She pretends to be someone she isn't in a last ditch try to create a positive memory that will carry her through the long years of spinsterhood she foresees as her future. A fantasy week-end neither expects to continue beyond the moment. The fun begins when it is made known that Rannulf is the man chosen by his grandmother to marry Judith's self-serving cousin. There are four different stories working through this one chapter- Rannulf & Judith, Judith vs her Aunt and Cousins, Judith & reckless brother and Judith allied with her grandmother, the actress, which leads to complex interactions, a steady pace and jumping from one situation to another- although for me, much of the story line was predictable. Another of the things that made this a fun read were the facets of Rannulf's life the writer lets us see. His acceptance of his unsettled lifestyle; his ability to find humor in some weird situations; his personal knowledge that something out there is waiting for him, he just has to find it; and his strong sense of right and wrong, of self and of family support which is characterized through Ms. Balogh's work. I adore "bad boys" who make real "good men".

I've been a fan of Mary Balogh's work for some time now and have read several of her books because she can generally be relied on to write emotionally satisfying books. The first book in the Bedwyn Saga, *Slightly Married*, was quite good with a nice mix of tension and romance between an angst ridden war hero and a strong, assertive, self-possessed widow living in straightened circumstances. In fact, I so enjoyed the first book, I quickly bought this book, the second in the series about the 6 Bedwyn siblings. Oh, how I wish I could say that I enjoyed this book as much as the first, but I cannot. The hero was fairly well adjusted if a bit aimless and undisciplined. The heroine, was too willing to accept the judgements, strictures dictates and demands of others, especially those of her father and her aunt. Yes, I understand that times were such that women had almost no personal or political rights, but they had still voices and some marginal degree of self determination. Any woman who is willing to have a consensual sexual encounter over a period of 2 days with a total stranger is surely capable of being more assertive with those who treat her like a disliked poor relation and glorified servant. There was nothing in the dialog that convinced me of the 'chemistry' between Rannulf (Ralf) and Judith. There was little in the action that created tension and for this reader, the near absence of tension resulted in boredom. The resolution to the bit of

tension around Bran, Judith's brother, was too easily handled and quickly forgotten. I found Ralf entirely too willing to allow Judith to run from him time and time again without so much as cross word or hurt feelings. Finally, I wearied of Judith's self-flagellation over the problems she encountered. Many of her problems were not of her making but she persisted in blaming herself. That is a trait that I cannot abide. Bottom line: I found this book very "putdownable." Had this book been the first in the series, I'm fairly certain I wouldn't not have moved to the second book. Whether or not I read the third book in the series is still up for debate.

I've been in "Reader's Desert" lately, began searching backlists and happened upon this one I hadn't read. Nice find. Judith is on her way to life as a poor relation. Rannulf is on his way to visit his grandmother who is backing him into a marriage he doesn't want. Rainy, muddy, stagecoach overturns, along comes a knight who carries Judith away for a day and two nights of fantasy. She's now Claire Campbell, actress, and he's Ralph. After their dreamy interlude, it's back to the real world. They're both shocked to find they are now neighbors and the chick who Rannulf's grandmother has lined up for him is Judith's relative. There have to be a number of twists and turns enroute to an hea. Otherwise, there would be no story. And the story was entertaining. I liked it. Enjoy your reading! :)

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