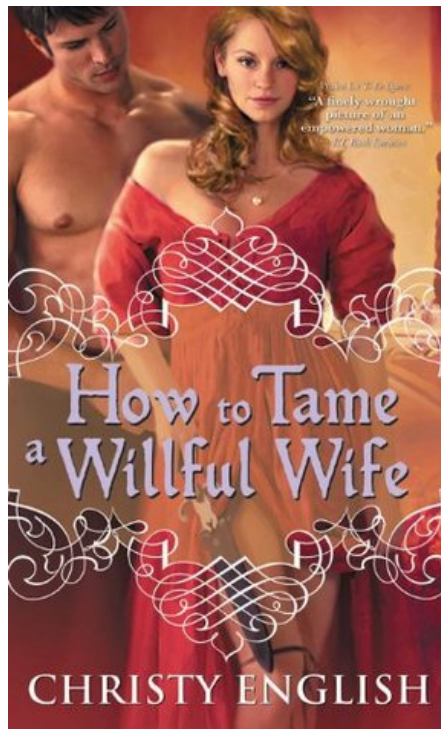




How to Tame a Willful Wife

Christy English

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Anthony Carrington, Earl of Ravensbrook, returns from war to marry his commanding officer's daughter. A man of fiery passion and strict self-control, Anthony expects a biddable bride who obeys him without question. But Caroline Montague is no simpering miss; she rides a war stallion named Hercules, fights with a blade, and can best most men with both bow and rifle. It's a duel of wit and wills in this charming first book of a new series.

How to Tame a Willful Wife Details

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From Reader Review How to Tame a Willful Wife for online ebook

Elis Madison says

This one's a pretty good revisitation of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, which just happens to be one of my favorite plays, exactly because it's so obnoxiously *not* politically correct (although I think the Bard intended Kate's last monologue to be delivered with sarcasm, so maybe he *was* a little bit of a feminist).

Anyway, given the source material, you can probably guess the character makeup. Caroline Montague's a willful vixen who (gee I wish they could find a better way to show us that Regency gals are hoydens) wears breeches and fights with swords and knives and outshoots men at the archery range. Anthony Carrington, of course, is a domineering putz who intends to "tame" her so that she's a "proper" wife (read meek and docile and pretty much having the personality of a hairpiece, but nice window dressing). Her ever-loving pop is auctioning her off to a bunch of wealthy suitors in exchange for enough dinero to keep the family estates out of the crapper.

The the first couple times this pair connects, the hero's so abrasive that I expect, when Caroline learns that he's the guy her daddy's chosen, that she would go to Daddy (who does kinda like her even tho he's treating her like a heifer at a cattle auction) and beg him to pick *anyone* else. But she's not *that* much of a willful gal, apparently, because she's all, "I'll do my duty."

Plus, all Anthony has to do when he does piss her off is stick his tongue in her ear and she's all

They marry and he takes her to his country place and installs her there and after a pretty good series of romps, during which she falls in love, he packs up and heads for London, where he has "business." Well, he does. He's doing *something* for the Prince Regent. But there's also the other "business."

He gets the "genius" idea to buy both of them the same jewelry—the ho gets a black pearl and the wife gets a white one, but otherwise, same setting. You can guess where that's headed.

There are lots of contretemps over Caroline riding in breeches, fighting with swords, keeping knives on her person. What she doesn't know is the reason her "free" behavior threatens him. Seems he had a very spoiled, hoydenish sister who hooked up with his worst enemy. The guy "besmirched" his sister for a week or two and then dumped her—if it weren't for the Regent's help, Anne would be ruined. As it is, she's hiding away at, well, a hideaway. And the schmuck is still lurking about, looking for other ways to mess with Anthony's life. You can probably see where that's going, too.

OK, so it's a bit predictable. Still very nicely written, with an interesting take on Prinny, and, other than the HEA is a bit too easy (view spoiler) the story really had me engaged.

Christy English says

Read it many times, because I wrote it. I love Caroline and Anthony, and I hope you will too.

Blodeuedd Finland says

There is a difference between a book not working and a book not working, or is there? Well here the book was well written, it could have been really good, but I hated the characters and that ruined it all for me.

First we have Lord Ass Hero. Sure he fits his time and is perfect for that with his constant "Obey me! You are my wife." But I do not read romance for heroes that are correct for their time. I read it for romance and he did nothing romantic. He saw her and lusted for her. They were to be married 2 days later. He wants to tame her and then when he has her he wants her to be a bit willful. He knows he owns her, that she is his property, he is jealous and a dick.

Our Willful Heroine is willful at first, but then enters magic penis and that is long gone. Yes she hates him (but he sure is pretty!), and then he touches her and she forgets all about that and becomes a Sex Goddess. And every time they argue it ends with sex, he kisses her fiercely and she melts. She stops being willful and becomes a simpering mess. She also has a few TSTL moments.

Oh and I hate this trope: There is a secret, it could be freaking vital for the other person to know it. But the person knowing the secret does not tell it, here it is Ass Hero. He just tells her that she should obeyed him and do as he tells her.

So sadly this book did not work for me, and it was a shame cos it was good. I just could not stand the characters.

Amanda Ryan says

Redonk Nutshell: Misogynist marries an independent woman and enters a war of wills

It's tempting within the first few chapters to give up on this book. It's hero, Anthony Carrington, is an ass of the highest degree. Or at least he makes himself out to be. His wife to-be, Caroline, is an independent woman who has no problems defending herself (literally – she was trained in knife fighting) and figuratively. Anthony is insistent on having a cultured, staid, and biddable woman for a wife, and he makes it clear from the get-go that this is what he expects of Caroline. Why Caroline, you ask? Because her father is a close friend and the match is best for everyone. Or so at least all the men have decided. Caroline enters into the marriage willingly, and cleverly...I have to give the woman credit. Her husband is bear of a man with his expectations and she finds a way to quell him while sneakily still getting her way.

And of course, amid all this headbanging frustration is a crazy attraction. Anthony wants this woman in his bed, stat. Caroline is innocent, but no innocent, if you get my drift. She's new to marital relations but she's a quick learner. Folks, there is A LOT of sex in this book, mostly because these two vent their frustrations with one another by having crazy sex. It's a playing field on which they're both on even ground. They use it to

deal with each other, though over some time they begin to realize they have more than their lust in common and they start to connect outside the bedroom. But when Anthony's stubbornness leads him to withhold information for Caroline's "benefit," their volatile relationship hits the rocks.

This was a crazy read. I had moments of wanting to strangle Anthony for being such a stuffy asshole, but luckily for him he managed to find a woman that could handle him appropriately, loosen him up a bit. Caroline is no saint, but she was more of one than I could have been had I been stuck with handling Anthony. Ms. English puts a new spin on Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* and she does it well. It's difficult to make such an unlikable character, well, likable while still having a realistic turnaround. I look forward to reading more in her Shakespeare in Love series.

Jenny Q says

Anthony Carrington, Earl of Ravensbrook, is doing his former commanding officer and close friend a favor by marrying his daughter and saving the family from bankruptcy. But he's not pleased to discover that his bride-to-be was not raised to know her place as a lady of society. No wife of his will be out riding stallions, competing in archery competitions, and taking fencing lessons! She'll have to be tamed if she's to take her place by his side in London, and he's not looking forward to the task. But once he has a moment alone with the tempting beauty, he decides that taming her may be a rather delightful endeavor, and that he is exactly the right man for the job.

Caroline Montague is not happy at being forced into marriage with a man not of her choosing, but she loves her father and is prepared to do what she must to save him from ruin. Unfortunately, her new fiancé rubs her the wrong way from the moment she discovers him waiting for her in her darkened bedroom. His invasion of her privacy and ridiculous assumptions about marriage and her role in his life light a fire in her, but his handsome looks and commanding presence also light a fire in her, of a very different sort indeed.

After a quick engagement and a hasty wedding, Anthony and Caroline are off to his country estate in Shropshire, where they spend their days butting heads and their nights exploring every inch of each other's bodies. The passion between them is intense, and despite Anthony's efforts to curb her wild behavior, Caroline finds herself falling in love with him. But is his interest in her purely sexual? Why does he keep her secluded on his estate? Why won't he take her with him on his business trips to London? Why won't he open up to her about his past and his feud with the dashing Lord Carlyle, who seems to be genuinely concerned for Caroline's welfare and happiness? Anthony's keeping secrets. And because he is, Caroline feels entitled to keep a few secrets of her own. While the cat's away, the mouse will play...

Meanwhile, Anthony thinks he's doing the right thing by keeping his young wife safe and ignorant of the darker aspects of his life. But he doesn't realize he is undermining her trust in him and jeopardizing the shaky truce of their newfound wedded bliss. And there are also some outside forces working against our couple. Anthony has a bitch of a former mistress who is not happy about being let go after ten years of faithful service. And the more he warns Caroline away from his enemy Lord Carlyle, the more leverage Carlyle gains against him. And you just know all of that is going to hit the fan in epic style at the Twelfth Night ball where Anthony is finally going to show his beautiful country bride off to the Prince Regent and the rest of the London ton. It's a train wreck waiting to happen and I couldn't turn my eyes away from it!

I really enjoyed this romance. I'm not normally a big fan of storylines where the hero sees the heroine for the first time and vows he will have her in his bed at all costs, and that's pretty much the way this one starts out. But it ended up working really well in the long run. I liked both of the lead characters--they were very nice

foils for each other. There's a big age difference between them, and I thought it was handled very realistically. There is a lot of good, angst-y tension, and the story zips right along, interspersed with quotes from *The Taming of the Shrew*. It's pretty sexy too :) I thought it was a very good start to Ms. English's Shakespeare in Love series, though I did feel like the storylines involving Anthony's sister and his best friend were introduced only to be left hanging, I'm assuming (and hoping) that's because we'll be seeing them again in stories of their own. It's been twenty years since I saw a production of *The Taming of the Shrew* and I don't remember much, so I can't judge how well the story does or does not follow the theme, and *How to Tame a Willful Wife* is light on the history, but it is a very satisfying romance, and that ending--oh! The reader has to wait awhile for Anthony to finally come to his senses, but when he does, it's totally swoon-worthy! Fans of Regency romance should really enjoy this one.

Jill says

3.5 stars

Caroline Montague is young, beautiful and about to be married off to a man with enough money who can pay off her father's debts. Anthony Carrington, Earl of Revensbrook is rich and titled. He has great respect for Caroline's father. They have fought together on the battlefield and Baron Montague has twice saved Anthony's life. It's a perfect arrangement.

Based on Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* and set in 1816, Caroline is spoilt, headstrong and independent. She has been allowed the liberty to indulge in unladylike behaviour. She can best most men in archery, swordplay and knives. She rides astride in breeches. But she's also aware of her place in society and the expectations placed on her by her family to marry well.

Anthony is very much a man of his time. He is the husband and therefore in charge. He orders Caroline about. He shares little with her concerning his family or business. He is the quintessential male aristocrat. He demands her obedience. Their marriage is nothing more than a business arrangement to pay off debts and produce an heir.

You will not be my partner, Caroline. You will be my wife."

"I thought they were one and the same."

"You thought wrong."

And yet the passion between them is undeniable. Anthony is delighted to share the marriage bed with an ardent and willing lover.

Ms English has not folded and given the hero 21st century sensibilities. Anthony says over and over that Caroline is his wife, and therefore his property, and she is to obey him. Consequently he does come across as an unbending autocrat and not a particularly sympathetic or likable hero. Some readers may find this unyielding arrogance too much in a romance hero. Nonetheless I did like that it read authentically.

On the other hand, Caroline the heroine was really quite delightful. Though based on *The Taming of the Shrew*, she was not really shrewish, just strong and self-reliant. And she bristles under Anthony's heavy hand and domineering ways.

The idea alone of basing a historical romance on *The Taming of the Shrew* is brilliant. However, what let this

down for me somewhat was the prose. It's all very technically correct but reads rather flat and emotionless. There's a very formal tone which leaves the flow of words a bit dry. Ms English is the author of previous historical fiction and I wonder if this background may account for the lack of fluidity that I normally associate with historical romance.

The other quibble I have is, I was expecting a bit of humour in this novel with the unbending Anthony up against the willful Caroline. Unfortunately, this didn't happen and it could have brought a much-needed lightness to the story line.

Nevertheless, *How to Tame a Willful Wife* is an enjoyable historical romance based on a great idea.

Steam: 3.5

ARC courtesy of Sourcebooks (Casablanca) via NetGalley

SOS Aloha says

'Men have forgotten this truth,' said the fox. 'But you must not forget it. You become responsible, forever, for what you have tamed.' Antoine de Saint-Exupery, THE LITTLE PRINCE

Christie English describes HOW TO TAME A WILLFUL WIFE as a retelling of the Taming of the Shrew where it is the wife who tames the husband. My Shakespeare is sketchy at best ... I just enjoyed this story! Baron Montague is a generous man. He has gone broke caring for the soldiers under his command from the continental war against Napoleon. He has indulged his only child, Caroline, thus cultivating her independent spirit. His men have taught her how to fight. And now its time for her to wed for a large dowry, to save her father and his men.

Baron Montague accepts the suit of another military man, Anthony Carrington, the Earl of Ravensbrook. Ravensbrook is looking for a wife, and he is captivated by Caroline's beauty, but it is his loyalty to her father that he accepts her questionable reputation as a spirited lady at 18 years old. Ravensbrook believes he can "tame" her to be a dutiful wife. But he soon discovers that she is resistant to his commands.

Caroline and Ravensbrook are physically drawn together after their wedding. As their battle of wills commences, they slowly fall in love with the other. Their union is tested by Caroline's recklessness, resulting from her inexperience with the ton. Likewise, Ravensbrook's unwillingness to confide in Caroline almost derails their fragile peace. Yet they individually realize that giving an inch results in miles of happiness for their future.

English, an Shakespearean actress, hits the mark with the playful banter between the hero and heroine. English also captures how both struggle with society's strictures during the Regency Era – they clearly want to be unfashionable and love their spouse. English excels with passionate scenes between the newlyweds – the fact that they are husband and wife makes it that more fun!

I can only find one fault with HOW TO TAME A WILLFUL WIFE – I would like to know more about Ravensbrook. English delivers secondary characters who fill in the spaces ... and tease us with books to

come in the future.

Recommended read for fans of the Shakespeare's comedies and the Regency Era.

I received an ARC from Sourcebooks for this review.

Tara Chevestt says

Not a bad novel. I didn't love it, won't read it again, and I'll divulge my reasons, but for those seeking a fun historical romp with a ton of sex, this would be your cup of tea.

It's a "retelling" of sorts of the Taming of the Shrew. There's even a funny moment when the play itself is mentioned.

Caroline is "sold" to the most worthy bidder for her lovely hand. She marries Anthony and gives him heirs and he pays off her family's debts. But in the process, he wishes to tame her. If he has his way, the girl who rides astride wearing breeches and throws knives in the house will be no more.

At first I found her amusing and cute. She does stand up to him...but from the moment he first beds her, she becomes...eh, not that strong. In actuality, the worst rebellion she does is continue playing with knives behind her husband's back. Their whole marriage, the conflict they face, the plot, is really just a lack of communication.

The story began to grow repetitive for me after a while. He struts and says, "You are mine. Obey me!" She makes a remark back. They have sex. She gasps beneath him. He leaves. She plays with knives. He comes back. "You are mine. Obey me!" She makes a remark back. They have more sex. She gasps beneath him. He leaves. She plays with knives...

They never really talk, just have lots of sex or have a brief power struggle. Until the end when finally, the misunderstanding/lack of communication is revealed.

I was expecting more humor in this, so I'm somewhat disappointed, but I believe people looking for a lot of sex and a mega alpha male will love it. Personally, I hate alpha males, especially ones that don't change enough in the end. And I thought him really stupid. Whereas I got he had to be a jerk to go with the theme here, forbidding your wife to play with knives AFTER she fends off an attacker with one is just....dumb. I never grew to like the guy.

<http://www.bookbabe.blogspot.com/2012/...>

Stephanie says

Christy does it again with this wonderful re-telling of, "Taming of the Shrew." This is one romance novel I couldn't put down! I normally don't read romance that often and this story was wonderfully told! I have enjoyed every single one of Christy's novel and I knew she would be fabulous. Wonderful character building and the story-line was fast-paced, entertaining, engrossing, and a delight to read! I really enjoy reading

stories with strong female characters and this story gives you that. This is quite simply the best of the best. A must read!

Stephanie?

Layered Pages

Kathleen says

Story Rating 3 Stars

Character Rating 3.5 Stars

Romance Rating 4 Stars

Heat Level 3.5 Stars

Overall Rating 3.5 Stars

I love a book where the heroine is strong and likes to wear men's clothing while riding astride on a war horse. Lets not forget that Caroline can best most men in archery and use a dagger to protect herself. This is what had drawn me towards this book. While each of these things were used during the course of this book, I wished there would have been more of it added.

I liked the hero Anthony fine but wished he would have explained a few things to Caroline so that she understood what was going on.

We do have a villain in the book also. He had done some terrible things before this story had taken place and I was disappointed that near the end, he had just not been mentioned and never paid the price for the horrible things he done. I felt this book could have used a bit more excitement using this villain to try something evil would have added to this story.

There was plenty of sex/love scenes in this book but for me I wished they were done hotter, LOL.

I did like this book and I do plan on trying more of Christy English's book's as they are released.

ARC provided courtesy of Sourcebooks via NetGalley

Caz says

When I saw this was a "re-working" of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, I was intrigued but knew I would have to Approach With Caution. The play has fallen out of favour in recent years because of the misogynistic views it displays which, regardless of how they were seen by contemporary audiences, are not to modern tastes. A "reworking" as a piece of romantic fiction therefore has one huge problem to solve, namely how to make the hero attractive to the reader while retaining those controlling and unpleasant aspects of Petruccio's character so as to remain reasonably faithful to the spirit of the original.

Unfortunately, that problem is not resolved in this book.

Anthony Carrington is, we are frequently reminded, the most beautiful man in existence. He is also arrogant, possessive, domineering and controlling - very apt considering upon whom he is modelled. But in order for

him to function as a romantic hero, he has to have a few redeeming qualities, or the reader has to be able to see some developments in his character throughout the course of the story to indicate that he is capable of self-reflection and change; that there is at least the possibility that he and his lady-love will continue to be happy after the story has ended. Sadly, I didn't feel there was much - if any - character development in Anthony. Indeed, he has a massive (and highly irrational) fit of jealousy towards the end of the novel and there is no real indication that he is never going to display such distrust of Caroline again: and so I found it really difficult to believe there really is a HEA for them. His redeeming feature seems to be that he's a red-hot sex-god between the sheets (or up against the door, wall, on the table, the rug or in the carriage) but while he's sexy as sin, he's not the sharpest tool (!) in the box when it comes to matters outside the bedroom.

I'm sure that, at the time the novel is set, it was quite the done thing for a woman to obey her husband without question - and that's what Anthony expects. It's unpalatable for the modern reader although certainly it's in keeping with Anthony's role as the Petrificio of this story. But the thing is, the only reason for the withholding of any explanation for his instructions is because Caroline NEEDS to be ignorant of his reasons in order for the plot to work. And to make it even worse, Anthony tells Caroline his orders are to secure her own safety - but he won't tell her what he's so desperate to keep her safe *from*!

As to Caroline, she's not really all that "wilful". She's headstrong and used to doing as she likes - but then so are thousands of other romantic heroines. She's not happy at being married so quickly or at her husband's high-handedness but at the first sign of a disagreement or indication they should actually *talk* he's only got to touch her or look at her and she melts into a puddle of goo and they end up shagging each other senseless instead!

There were a couple of times where she acted stupidly and with complete disregard for her own safety, simply to assert her independence which made ME want to smack her, so at least there were times I could sympathise with Anthony!

I can forgive much in a romance novel in terms of the storyline if the characterisation is good and can care about the people I'm reading about. But in this book, there was no depth to the principals and although backstories were hinted at, these were not explored sufficiently enough to explain their motivations.

On a more positive note, the writing was generally good (although there were certain repetitions which began to get irritating after time) and the sex scenes were pretty hot. But overall, I don't think this "re-working" worked.

With thanks to the publisher and NetGalley for the review copy.

Cynthia McArthur says

I grew up reading Regency Romances. I forswore them years ago for "serious" reading. But I must tell you, I couldn't resist this book. I like Christy English's style, so I had to give it a go. And I loved it! Truly, it is the best Regency I have read! I won't go too much into the story, but I will say that the characters were wonderful, well-written and likable, even in their worst moments. Christy's imagery was beautiful, and that is so important in an historical story. The story was spicy and sweet and entertaining. I whole-heartedly recommend this book. (By the way, when I say it is a spicy story, I mean habanero spicy!)

Crystal says

This review was first posted at Reading Between The Wines Book Club

Okay, first let me start off by saying that even after taking advanced English classes in high school, I have never read *Taming of the Shrew*. Don't throw rotten tomatoes at me yet though girls! I know it's a master piece in literature, so bad Crystal, no cookie for you! That being said, I can honestly say that if Shakespeare's piece is as entertaining as this book was to me, well then I might have to go read some Shakespeare. That's a HUGE concession from me girls, cause reading thee's and thou's is kind of like getting teeth pulled at the dentist to me. However since this book is suppose to follow the theme of Shakespeare's work, well I might just have to go check that out.

Caroline Montague is the apple of her daddy's eye. After the loss of his other children, her father had atendency to indulge her in practice's that were not acceptable for women to engage in, such as fencing, archery, knives, and riding her horse astride as a man would. Because of financial woes her father is dead set on making an advantageous match for her, and Caroline is dreading what her father will come up with. Little does she know she's headed for a dominant man who is determined to tame her wild tendencies so that she will be a proper little wife waiting for him at home. That man is Anthony Carrington, Earl of Ravensbrook. And little does Anthony know, but he's got his work cut out for him if he wants to make Caroline what he would consider more biddable. (Good luck with that buddy. I've got two words for you. Ready for them? You're Screwed.)

I LOVED Caroline! A strong willed, stubborn heroine is my favorite kind to read. Especially for this time era. Caroline's character certainly doesn't disappoint in that department. And this book has devious characters, nice plot twists, and enough humor to keep you turning the pages well past any burnt midnight oil. It's a five wine glass toast all the way and I hope all of you ladies rush out to get it even if it's just to enjoy Caroline trying to throw knives at her future husband!

Lisa says

Anthony Carrington, Earl of Ravenbrook, is ready to take a bride and have his heirs so he expects his bride, the one he paid for, to do what he says and enjoy her life in the country while he can still entertain in the city. Caroline Montague is not that woman. She likes to ride astride in breeches, fence and takes lesson in handling a dagger, which is never far from her side. She cannot believe the man her father has picked out for her, a man that can not accept her as she is but she knows her duty and marries Anthony in just two days time with only their smoldering desire for each as a bridge. Together, they burn up the sheets but Antony's controlling ways are still a major issue between them so Caroline struggles to find a way that the can be happy together beyond the bedroom. Just as they seem to be finding that place, they travel to London for the Prince Regent's ball and Anthony's mistress causes havoc and it forces Caroline to get help from the one man Anthony despises, Viscount Carlyle. Will this be the final, willful act that pushes Anthony and Caroline to the breaking point or can Anthony find a way to accept Caroline as herself while letting go of his jealousy?

I really liked this book. Caroline was a delight to read...bold, courageous, feisty, passionate and ready to protect those she loves without hesitation. Anthony was a bit harder for me to warm up to and I'm not sure I completely did. He is bossy, controlling, arrogant, very jealous yet honorable, kind and finds ways to stand up to Caroline like know one has before. He wants a proper wife all the time and Caroline only is when society dictates it and this infuriates him. I enjoyed the bantering between our couple and they certainly knew how to set the pages on fire with their passion. I wish there had been just a bit more back story with Anthony's past or how he came to be such good friends with the Prince Regent or more with the incident

involving his sister (but she may have her own story so the author may be waiting until then). I also thought Anthony overreacted a bit to Caroline's interactions with Carlyle, especially considering he refused to tell her the truth about the past and the reasons for his hatred of the man, and then his resolution with her didn't seem quite right. Still, I liked the romance and it read very well and quickly and I will read more from Christy English. This was a novel full of sass, steam, stubbornness and love and is a pleasant way to spend an evening in front of the fire. 3 1/2 stars

Review copy provided by Sourcebooks via Netgalley

Jess the Romanceaholic says

Started off strong, but our heroine was of the Harlequin Presents model -- that is, whenever she goes to stand up for herself, our extremely virile hero gives her a smouldering look and she immediately is overcome with lust and falls into bed with him.

Don't get me wrong, I like a good steamy novel, but sometimes sex just isn't the answer.

Plus, I REALLY don't like when the mistress/ex/whatever is still in the picture. :-/

Not bad, and it certainly had its redeeming qualities, but the ex and the hormonal weakness of the heroine together just didn't do it for me.

3.5/5, full review to follow.
