



Lady Derring Takes a Lover

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A mistress. A mountain of debt. A mysterious wreck of a building.

Delilah Swanpool, Countess of Derring, learns the hard way that her husband, "Dear Dull Derring," is a lot more interesting—and perfidious—dead than alive. It's a devil of an inheritance, but in the grand ruins of the one building Derring left her, are the seeds of her liberation. And she vows never again to place herself at the mercy of a man.

But battle-hardened Captain Tristan Hardy is nothing if not merciless. When the charismatic naval hero tracks a notorious smuggler to a London boarding house known as the Rogue's Palace, seducing the beautiful, blue-blooded proprietress to get his man seems like a small sacrifice.

They both believe love is a myth. But a desire beyond reason threatens to destroy the armor around their hearts. Now a shattering decision looms: Will Tristan betray his own code of honor...or choose a love that might be the truest thing he's ever known?

Lady Derring Takes a Lover Details

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Author : Julie Anne Long

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From Reader Review Lady Derring Takes a Lover for online ebook

Tina says

Not my favorite Julie Anne Long book, but I'm excited to continue reading the rest of this series. Review to come.

Jenny says

Cute, although I had a little bit of difficulty keeping track of some of the side characters.

Michelle says

Pub date : Feb 2019

Loved it! I can't tell you how many times I sighed with pleasure over the awesomeness of this book!

Memorable for me:

*The growing friendship between Delilah and Angelique and how they become stronger allied together despite how they are connected

*The cute way Tristan, with his deadpan humor, teases his lieutenant over his sweetheart

*The thrilling chemistry between Delilah and Tristan, especially when they first meet, both struck by the other, and then him being called out for his mansplaining

*The magic that is Ms Long's swoon-worthy dialogue

* The comic gold of the bumpkin asking for the Vicar's Hobby

* The constant threat of the musicale

This is a reread for sure. Highly recommended!

Kathleen says

I love the relationship between the women that's forming with this first book in the series, but as far as the romance goes, this was more of a slow burn than I typically like. Overall it had a great cast of secondary characters and just enough of a mystery subplot. The epilogue was a great setup for book 2, and I'll definitely be reading that one!

Sher♥ The Fabulous BookLover says

OMG she's writing historicals again!!!!??

Joanna Loves Reading says

UPDATE: And now we have a cover! I like it, maybe not love, but it looks sweet. I have also seen a February publication date as opposed to a March one as GR has.

PREVIOUS: Look it has a title! And it's new series, not just an add-on to the Pennroyal Green series. I must find out more!

I was just looking at JAL's book list and this was there. I hope this is not a joke! Has anyone heard anything about it?

WhiskeyintheJar/Kyraryker says

I received this book for free in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

No one, particularly not her late husband, had ever valued her for wits. Oh, but she possessed them.

Starting off the Palace of the Rogues series, *Lady Derring Takes a Lover*, is a magnificent return to historicals for Long. The first thirty percent of the book was perfection with our heroine Delilah being told by her solicitor that her late husband was in massive debt and eventually winding up going into business with said late husband's mistress. Their Grand Palace on the Thames boarding house becomes the setting for smuggling intrigue and romance.

"Derring never laughed at my jokes. But I laughed at all of his, even though I didn't find him amusing. He sulked if I didn't," Delilah said. "It's a small but killing thing, isn't?"

Delilah and the mistress, Angelique, start off very wary of each other but with fantastic telling some truths and learning lessons story writing, Long gives us a female relationship that you will ship hard. This tandem of women from different social levels and impoverished by the same man bonding together was just brilliant. Long played them off each other beautifully, they had their separate strengths and weaknesses but ultimately, their hearts beat for the same reasons. If looking for a immensely satisfying female relationship in your romance, this is it.

"I am the king's favorite hunting dog."

Our hero, Captain Tristan Hardy, is all that is strong, contained, and eventually burning. Delilah and Angelique start off with more of the focus and are so strong, that Tristan ended up a little bit to the edges of the spotlight. It takes a little bit before Tristan and Delilah really get going, around 40%, which I know will make some antsy, but while their time seems a bit shortened by how full this first in series book is, they tended to make the most of it. From the first time Tristan sees Delilah, to the mandatory drawing room nights, and finally to the last 10% of their story, they had chemistry. Tristan might not have felt as fully fleshed out as I like, but let me tell you, the man can grovel/make things right with the top tier of romance heroes.

The notion of seducing her made him breathless, because he thought it was both possible and inadvisable for a dozen reasons.

While Delilah is living at and running the boarding house because it was the only thing not repossessed, Tristan arrives there because he is the captain of the blockade. His investigation into a cigar smuggling ring has led him to believe Delilah's husband was involved, along with The Palace of the Rogues, renamed The Grand Palace on the Thames by Delilah and Angelique. I thought the cigar smuggling investigation worked to get these two together but it moved very slowly and tended to feel almost ignored at times, not the strength of the novel. It is obvious the history of the former Palace of the Rogues is going to be the plot thread stringing the series together as we get a couple hints and clues here that will probably add to the building of an eventually completed puzzle (series).

It was nearly as much a collision as a kiss, at first, fierce and hard, as if they were both intent on punishing themselves and each other for wanting this.

Long did a great job interweaving secondary characters to create a full ensemble cast but I did think it took away from time I would have preferred to go to Delilah and Tristan. I loved Tristan's relationship with his Lt., providing a wonderful showing and not telling insight into his personality and character, wouldn't change a thing about Delilah and Angelique's friendship, but a very small secondary romance and some other minor focuses on characters could have been taken out. There is some on fire commentary dealing with women's rights but I did almost cringe at a very close to feeling forced mansplaining moment. There is some definite first in a series fullness happening here but again, Tristan and Delilah's moments are impactful when they have them.

“Oh, now I see. You’re that Captain Hardy.”

The beginning was 5 stars, the middle 3.5ish, and the ending brought it back to 5 stars, for me. All in all, I was highly impressed with this first installment and am dying to read the next in the series, which I think will be about Angelique and a mysterious stranger that arrives late in the story. A brilliant female friendship, a loaded chemistry couple, and an ensemble cast that pulls you into their world, don't miss this one.

“Know that I am at your mercy, now and forever.”

Christie«SHBBblogger» says

Niki says

Newly widowed Delilah Swanpool, Countess of Derring is shocked to find that her dull late husband has left her with nothing but a mountain of debt and a rundown building near the docks. She realizes she never really knew him and he certainly didn't know her. She isn't even hurt by the revelation of his mistress' existence. Delilah soon realizes she not only has no money, she has no idea who she truly is behind the proper lady's facade she developed during the six years of her marriage. Delilah forms an unlikely alliance with Mrs. Breedlove, her husband's mistress, and the two turn Deliah's dilapidated building into a respectable boardinghouse in the hopes of establishing their independence separate from any man.

Captain Tristan Hardy has risen from the streets of St. Giles to a position of power and authority in the King's navy. Tristan's mission is to rid England of smugglers, most specifically the violent gangs who terrorize and threaten those who will not help or hide them. When unique, traceable contraband cigars lead

Tristan to Lord Derring, he is disappointed to learn that the earl has died and is curious about how his widow was able to afford the refurbishment of her boardinghouse on the docks, much less why she would remain there rather than live with family. Suspicious of her potential knowledge of, or even involvement in her late husband's smuggling efforts, Tristan takes a room at the boardinghouse in an attempt to learn more.

There is an immediate connection between Tristan and Delilah and not just a physical awareness; though he wants to run, Tristan is inexorably drawn to her and decides that her bed may be the best place to learn the secrets of a suspected smuggler.

Tristan wound up being a very sweet and romantic hero and Delilah was a very likeable heroine. The two do have an instant connection of lust, but they also come to know each other as friends and develop a real relationship. I really enjoyed this one and would recommend it to others.

I received a complimentary ARC in exchange for an honest review. Thank you! All thoughts and opinions are my own.

Emilie says

I thoroughly enjoyed this book and could find no serious flaws in it, and I cannot remember the last time I read a historical romance novel about which I could say that.

Lady Derring finds herself a penniless widow, the only thing to her name a warehouse on the Thames. She decides to take on a surprising partner and open a boardinghouse to support herself. Unbeknownst to her, her late husband was a person of interest in the investigation of a smuggling ring, and so the King's Agent Captain Hardy finds himself scoping out the boardinghouse and keeping an eye on Lady Derring and her associates. The two grow closer and the mystery unravels.

The story was really good, the characters were believable, and their actions rang true to me. The chemistry between the hero and heroine was great. I enjoyed Lady Derring, and while she was perhaps a bit naive, she was not annoyingly so. Her dogged optimism was endearing. Captain Hardy was a great male protagonist, and the supporting characters were well developed.

This book was also quite humorous, and I found myself chucking several times. It has been quite a while since I've read a book and not said to myself, "Why did she do that?" or "That makes no sense!" or "Yeah, right, that's totally unbelievable!" or something along those lines. I was very pleasantly surprised by this book, and would definitely recommend it to anyone who enjoys historical romance. I will be looking forward to the next book in the series.
