



Desert Rogues Part 2

Susan Mallery

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Susan Mallery's Desert Rogues Watch how passions flare under the hot sun for these rogue sheiks! Part 2 includes The Prince & the Pregnant Princess, The Sheik & the Princess in Waiting, The Sheik & the Princess Bride, The Sheik & the Bride Who Said No, and The Sheik and the Virgin Secretary,

Desert Rogues Part 2 Details

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From Reader Review Desert Rogues Part 2 for online ebook

Chelsea R Ortiz-Gonzalez says

Virginia says

The Prince & the Pregnant Princess (5 stars)

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Cleo Wilson didn't expect to be seduced by a prince when she helped to reunite her foster sister with her biological father, let alone become pregnant. Now said sister, Princess Zara of Bahania, is getting married and Cleo needs to find a way to get through the wedding festivities without the royal family discovering her secret. Bahanian law states that all children of the royal family must remain within the country, and while Cleo knows that her past of living on the streets and her present as night manager of a copy shop hardly qualifies her to be a princess, she is not giving up her child.

Prince Sadik of Bahania was enthralled by Cleo when she first visited his country and furious when she refused to become his mistress and fled back to the United States. When she returns, he cannot resist seducing her again, only to discover that she is hiding his heir. Given the choice between marriage to Sadik and leaving her child behind, Cleo weds the prince who says he will never love her. She tries to get used to life as a princess and to accept a marriage built on passion and respect, but her unrequited love eats away at her.

It's funny how people are always dissatisfied, and women in particular often think women completely different from them are prettier. Zara thinks she is scrawny and unfeminine, Cleo thinks she is short and plump, and they each think the other is the epitome of beauty. *Random note: why is Sabrina suddenly a brunette instead of a redhead?* Sadik is an intriguing mix of charm and arrogance, although he occasionally slips into male chauvinism (not so charming) courtesy of his upbringing.

Their wedding night made me cry, but the morning after made me smile. Sadik's ever-present enthusiasm about their child was fun to witness. It was a little strange that he didn't notice her mood right before the big climax after having been so attentive throughout the pregnancy, but I can do a little rearranging in my head to justify it. King Hassan's evolution (I prefer to think that he is growing as a person, rather than behaving inconsistently) with regard to his daughters is also satisfying - I loved how he handled things with Cleo at the end.

The Sheikh & the Princess in Waiting (4 stars)

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Emma Kennedy met and fell for Reyhan in college, but she didn't know he was Middle Eastern royalty. Out of the blue, an employee of the US State Department arrives at the door of her Dallas apartment to issue and "suggest" she accept a two-week invitation to Bahania where she is shocked to encounter the man she thought had made a fool of her with a fake marriage.

Meanwhile, Reyhan has thought that Emma rejected him when he returned to claim her after a family emergency. He hates that his desire for Emma, and later her rejection, weakened him back then, and even still she seems to hold him prisoner. He's determined to get the king's approval for a divorce, but Emma starts to think marriage to Reyhan might be worth the risk.

I like Reyhan, but his angst over being weakened by love seemed overblown and dragged out. He has a happily-married brother and two happily-married brothers-in-law who could all give him some positive examples. His pain came from living without Emma, which he was setting himself up to repeat. I really liked Emma, who is intelligent and brave, without taking stupid risks. I would have preferred that Reyhan actually take some time to get to know Emma again; I'm not so sure they had enough time to really know each other before and the passing years have definitely changed her (for the better). (view spoiler)

The Sheikh & the Princess Bride (5 stars)

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Billie Van Horn is usually treated as one of the guys because 1) she's a kick-ass fighter pilot/instructor and 2) she works with her overprotective dad and brothers. If a man isn't turned off by the first, he tends to get scared off by the second. Prince Jefri of Bahania meets Billie during his work establishing a joint air force with El Bahar and the City of Thieves. His royal pride is stung by repeated defeats at the hands of the beautiful Billie, but he is also intrigued and attracted.

Meanwhile, King Hassan has decided that it's time for Jefri to marry again (his first marriage having been a disaster). The youngest prince of Bahania hasn't met anyone particularly compelling up until this point and is more interested in the air force project than a bride search, so he agrees to an arranged marriage and pretty much forgets about the whole thing. In Billie he finds not only a gorgeous woman, but someone strong and independent, who shares his passion for flight. When Jefri's fiancée arrives unexpectedly, things appear impossibly complicated, and heartbreak all around seems inevitable.

I loved Billie, and while Jefri had some bad moments, he easily overcame them. The plot was plausible (you know, for a world where you're dealing with sheikhs) and the characters were relatable. We don't get inside Doyle's head, but we get more depth from him than the other non-perspective characters. It seems like a waste to have past primary players in the book without leveraging their actual histories and personalities, but it's a short book. I'm happy with the resolutions all around.

Note: Wasn't Jefri supposed to be about 16 during The Sheikh's Secret Bride? King Hassan makes a comment to Liana about his youngest son "just starting to appreciate the gentler sex"... There's a 4 year gap in the publication dates, but Jefri is 29 in this book, so I'm going to chalk that up to a consistency error.

The Sheikh & the Bride Who Said No (4 stars)

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Ten years ago, Daphne Snowden broke her engagement to Crown Prince Murat of Bahania three weeks before their wedding without a word of explanation. King Hassan has decided that it is time for his last single child to marry and has tapped Daphne's beloved niece Brittany for the job. While Daphne was willing to incur royal wrath and the rejection of her family to avoid becoming Murat's bride and future queen, she is willing to do anything to spare Brittany the same fate. Murat insists that he will marry a Snowden, whether it's Brittany or Daphne.

Murat was enraged and humiliated by Daphne's defection, and forbid that her name be spoken. The unexpected opportunity to conquer her is irresistible. Once he overcomes her defiance, Murat is certain that Daphne will make a good queen, a great mother and a pleasing wife. Once he is victorious over her, he is certain his life can return to normal. But Daphne left 10 years ago because she did not want a marriage without love, and that fact has not changed.

Murat and Daphne make such an interesting pair. I enjoy their repartee and the way that they understand each other (except when it comes to their relationship). (view spoiler) I would think Cleo would be more sympathetic to Daphne than she comes across, but maybe she has been happily married for too long to remember. (view spoiler) The plot device for Murat's epiphany was clever, but so much about the end of the book felt awkward to me. I really liked both of the characters, and I was happy that they found their HEA, but overall it was a bit disjointed for me.

The Sheikh and the Virgin Secretary (4 stars)

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Kiley Hendrick had worked for Prince Rafiq of Lucia-Serrat as his personal assistant for years in Los Angeles, watching beautiful women drift in and out of his life. When she discovers on the day before her wedding that her fiancé has been sleeping around like it's an Olympic sport, she decides she needs revenge in order to get on with her life. Said fiancé always seemed exceptionally jealous of Rafiq, so the obvious (to her) solution is to initiate an affair with her boss.

Kiley is certainly not his usual type, but Rafiq enjoys her company in the office and is intrigued by her honesty about her motives. He had always thought her attractive, in the abstract, but when he learns that she's a virgin he is stunned by the intensity of his desire to claim her. They agree to a three-month affair, but it's not a surprise that unusual circumstances have unusual results.

I swear, I'm a feminist, but I love it when the hero gets possessive. To be clear, that's not the same as controlling, and it doesn't work if there isn't exclusivity (but we're safe from that in Harlequin Land). This book has some seriously sexy scenes. The set-up is pretty interesting - it's unusual for the woman to initiate, and even more so for her to be unaware of her attraction to her boss. Her reaction to the typical prince speech ("I'm a prince. I honor you with my proposal, but I will never love you because that would make me weak. blah blah...") is different, and I admire her ability to stand up for herself to her ex and Rafiq's mother. It makes her perfect for Rafiq, but I kind of have a hard time believing she's real.

The epilogue was a nice thought, but the name-dropping from other books in the series felt sort of forced. It didn't really add anything, but it wasn't annoying enough to ruin the book for me.

note, The Prince & The Pregnant Princess mentions that the crown prince of Lucia-Serrat is a handsome widower with 4 sons and King Hassan's cousin. Apparently this is Rafiq's father, but it seems strange that Sabrina would try to hook Cleo up with someone with sons that close to her age. Also this book has him being married to the mother of most of his children for 15 years, so I'm going to attribute this to another series inconsistency

Sarah says

VERY GOOD! Loved the stories, and the theme!
