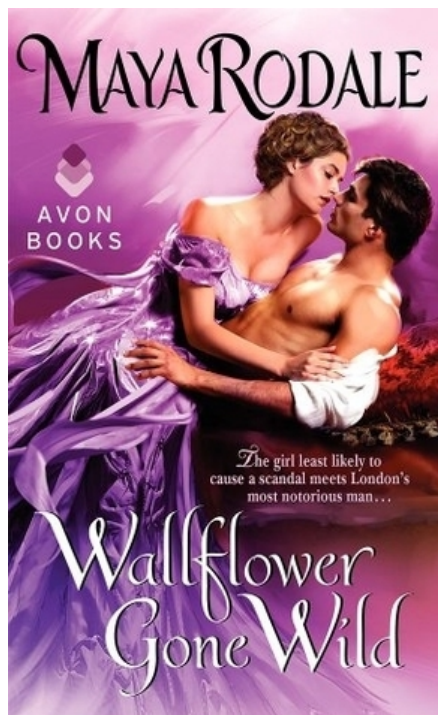




Wallflower Gone Wild

Maya Rodale

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Wallflower Gone Wild Maya Rodale

In the second in Maya Rodale's delightful Wallflower series, London's Least Likely to Cause a Scandal is taking Society by storm...

Being good has worked out very badly for Lady Olivia Archer. All she has to show for four seasons on the marriage mart is the nickname Prissy Missy. Her prospects are so bleak that her parents have betrothed her to a stranger with a dire reputation. If Phinneas Cole—aka The Mad Baron—wants a biddable bride, perhaps Olivia can frighten him off by breaking every ladylike rule.

Phinn has admired Olivia's poise and refinement from afar...qualities that appear to have vanished now that they are officially engaged. *This* Olivia is flirtatious, provocative, and wickedly irresistible. She's not at all the woman he bargained for, yet she's the only one he wants.

He's determined to woo her. She's determined to resist. But Olivia is discovering there's nothing so appealing as a fiancé who's mad, bad, and dangerously seductive...

Wallflower Gone Wild Details

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From Reader Review Wallflower Gone Wild for online ebook

Lexie says

This is more of a 3.5 for me. I honestly just got so tired of Olivia's insistence on 'misbehaving' and Prue's negativity.

+++

Right off the bat, I liked Phinn better than Olivia for the most part. Olivia spent so much time dancing around communication with him that it got to be tiresome. Her attempts at "wild behavior" to deter him got more ludicrous and quite frankly horribly reckless as the book went on. And I'm not entirely sure why. He did not, despite her belief to the contrary, act in a threatening manner. Oh he didn't bother denying the murder charges, but he believed he was the one who caused the murders, even if it wasn't directly.

And while I appreciate the fact Prue was trying to look out for Olivia, she was doing more harm than good.

Really what it boiled down to was that I was finding it hard to see what Phinn saw in Olivia and vice versa. Olivia spends the better part of the book convinced that he's going to kill her and rarely seems to soften towards him. Phinn, who seemed much more cerebral and in his head (which I appreciate in a hero), seemed awfully determined to remain aloof from Olivia. Even with his reputation I would have thought he'd be able to find some plain miss or merchant's daughter to marry if all he wanted was a quiet, proper wife. His insistence at courting Olivia as her behavior grew more reckless didn't speak well of his intellect...

At times the book was thoroughly entertaining; I found Phinn and Olivia to be at their best when discussing his projects. Though she was less than knowledgeable Olivia's interest in what he was doing was enthusiastic (when she let herself just be). It was good to see Emma again, I do think she wanted what was best for Olivia and she did counsel wisely (where as Prue was just...well in hindsight it made sense but at the time it was just awful).

As a Rodale fan this won't be as light-hearted or humorous as her previous books. Olivia is just too frustrating and the circles Rodale has them go in before they wind up together get annoying.

Angela says

In a historical romance I look for an interesting story, lots of dialogue and sexual tension. Unfortunately this book does not live up to my expectations. I have read many of Ms. Rodale's novels and really enjoyed them. After reading the last Wallflower book I was excited to read Olivia and Prudence's story. This book is Olivia's story. Olivia is scared of Phinn for more than 3/4 of the story (he is thought to be a double-murderer which he does not openly deny) and we are reminded of this time and time again. In order to "scare" Phinn off of offering for her, Olivia sets out to create scandal. I know she is a wallflower and creating scandal would be awkward for her but the scenes where she is "creating" a scandal come off as almost childish. Phinn is boring and definitely not assertive. I know some people like beta heroes but I prefer them to be more assertive than Phinn. I do like that he is intelligent and wants to make a difference in the world. He is not a dandy. That being said, because of Olivia's being scared to death of Phinn (she thinks he might kill her after they are wed) and Phinn's blasé attitude there is NO sexual tension. Isn't that a big part of romance books? Even after they come together as man and wife, she still has a little apprehension about his innocence. She does come to love him (and he her) and there is a HEA.

SPOILER One aspect of the story that really bothered me was Phinn's relationship with his deceased wife. He explains that he married her to protect his brother's (who was also murdered) reputation and that he did not even like her. BUT, he remembers all of the hot, angry sex they had and how that was a good part of their relationship. This was brought up more than one time. WHAT? I had a hard time with this part of the story. It was off-putting and almost made me put the book down. ***END OF SPOILER***

This all being said, I will read Prudence's story (the write-up for it sounds interesting).

Laura the Highland Hussy says

Review posted on Got Fiction? <http://www.gotfiction.com/wallflower-...>

Wow, do I have issues with this book. Well, one issue to be exact. So this is a Big Misunderstanding premise, and I'm okay with that plot device, as long as it isn't dragged on too long. This time, it was dragged on too long. Until the last pages, to be exact. And the worst part is that it might not have been able to be cleared up with one conversation since Olivia needed to trust Phin, I get that, but there could have been an attempt.

So this is a series where Ms. Rodale pairs each Historical novel with a Contemporary novella. This is the second book, and I like the Historicals better than the Contemps so far.

Quick and dirty is that Olivia is on her fourth Season, so her parents take matters into their own hands and agree to the Baron of Radcliffe aka the Mad Baron. Supposedly he killed his brother for the woman his brother was in love with and then took her for his own wife...and...dun dun dun...killed her! Gasp!

Obviously he didn't, but he never really tells that to Olivia, hence the Big Misunderstanding.

So Olivia decides to break all the rules. If the Mad Baron chose her because she's so perfect and follows all the rules, she'll show him how imperfect she can be as she breaks the rules.

The antics were fun for a bit, but it was too much. After a while it got old, like just grow up already! She acted like she was 15, rather than 22 (I'm guessing but 4th Season, usually debut at 18, 22 sounds about right).

But it isn't until 65% where we see Olivia turn around. It really bothered me. It's like a teenage gothic novel and Olivia doesn't grow up until then. That's when the actual romance begins. That bothers me a lot since, 100% of this book should have been the romance, not just the last third or so.

In that last third, we see the two of them still dance around the issues keeping them apart, and the whole ending felt rushed. We spent most of the book watching them run in circles.

***ARC courtesy of Avon Books

Molly says

This was delightful and fun - a better follow up to the first book in the series. This is truly lighthearted regency escape, full with humor, steamy moments and some sweet heroes. Recommend!

Tin says

In the second instalment of Maya Rodale's *Bad Boys and Wallflowers* series, Lady Olivia Archer is dreading the upcoming reunion at Lady Penelope's Finishing School, because she will be one of the very, very few graduates who have not yet married. It's one thing to be labeled a "wallflower" but it's entirely a different thing to be labeled a "spinster" and a "failure" -- but, just as she and her friends start thinking of an outrageous plan to get her married, Olivia meets Phinneas Cole, Baron Radcliffe -- and it's love at first sight for both of them.

I thought Maya Rodale's set-up for Olivia's story was exciting: she sees him from across the room and their eyes meet -- and then, sparks. Rodale captures the magical moment so vividly that I was swept away into the romance of the moment as Olivia meets Phinn for the first time. Then the author makes it even more exciting when, on the morning after, Olivia receives a proposal of marriage from a secret admirer, who turns out to be Phinn!

The Mad Baron -- who was indeed a corpulent elderly man with a dark scowl of disapproval -- loudly cleared his throat of phlegm. Olivia did not conceal her shudder of revulsion. The thought of sharing a bed with this man strengthened her resolve immeasurably.

She would *not* marry the loathsome man who looked so dismissively at her. She would not have him touch her. Honestly, she should have drenched a bottle of perfume on herself as well.

The other man -- his solicitor, presumably -- stepped forward and provided more of a heart-stopping shock.

She recognized his captivating green eyes and his mouth, which she had almost kissed.

The scar she had noted in the candlelight was far more foreboding in the daylight.

...

"Lord Radcliffe, may I present my daughter Lady Olivia," Lord Archer ground out. "I have no idea what has gotten into her. Or on her face."

But it wasn't the corpulent old man with the beady eyes who stepped forward. For a second Olivia felt relief. That is, before the truth of it dawned upon her.

Lord Radcliffe -- the man she'd presumed to be the solicitor, the man who was her handsome stranger -- fixed his gaze on her raccoon eyes and bowed slightly. A tremor of fear rocketed up her spine.

She had nearly kissed a murderer! Thank God she hadn't.

-pp. 38 - 40

It would have been fun to read this as a story of mistaken identities -- but, Rodale takes Olivia and Phinn's story in a different direction: Olivia discovers that Phinn isn't exactly "Prince Charming" but is actually known as the "Mad Baron" and rumoured to have killed his first wife. I have to admit I was a little surprised with Olivia's reaction to Phinn's proposal and I needed to see a clear reason why she would reject it without any serious consideration or thought. I worried for Olivia because I didn't think she knew what she wanted and what she was walking away from:

1. Is Olivia worried about Phinn's reputation as the "Mad Baron"? I think this is partly the reason for Olivia's reluctance, and Phinn didn't help clear this up by being deliberately vague about his role in his late wife's death. I would've thought that Emma's husband's trust in Phinn would have calmed Olivia's worries a bit (Phinn is helping the Duke of Ashbrooke build his Difference Machine) -- but Olivia was really, genuinely concerned about ending up dead. (A bit too extreme, IMHO.)

2. Olivia discovers that the reason why Phinn wants to marry her is because he thinks she's mild, meek, and biddable -- all the qualities that Olivia has been chaffing against her entire life. While she cannot deny her attraction to Phinn, Olivia does not relish the prospect of living the rest of her life as a well-behaved and proper lady.

Olivia's heart sort of broke with happiness for Emma that she should have the steadfast and eternal love of this man. And she was so glad that he was so good as to extend his kindness to her friends. And to her dismay, she was jealous. Oh, she didn't covet Ashbrooke, but she coveted the sort of love they possessed.

That was what she wanted. That was what she'd never have with the Mad Baron. Not when he'd spend all his time at work on his bizarre machines, leaving her to manage the servants and embroider. That is, before her [sic] murdered her.

- p. 137

I thought this was a very valid point for Olivia, and I saw how acting out scandalously would scare Phinn off, but I wondered if Olivia really thought beyond the outrageousness and see what damage she could do to her reputation.

Be careful what you wish for. Olivia and her friends had dreamed of making a match and getting married -- and, now, Olivia is finally getting her wish, but it is not without strings attached. He's handsome and titled, but he also wants her for all the wrong reasons. Instead of wanting to marry, Olivia is now scrambling to get out of marrying. There's nothing wrong with thinking and acting on her feet, but I worried about the long-term, life-altering implications of Olivia's decisions. (And I honestly thought all of her worries could have been addressed with a sincere, authentic conversation with Phinn.) I think this is something that Rodale wanted to address in **Wallflower Gone Wild**: Phinn and Olivia both struggled to express themselves honestly and took advice from everyone, which led to disastrous results. The message the author sends out is clear: what might have worked for Emma and the Duke of Ashbrooke would not necessarily work for Olivia and Phinn. (And Rogan's advice and "help" was not helpful at all.) In that, how our stories and relationships unfold are all individual and unique. It's when Phinn starts listening to his own heart that he's able to show Olivia the truth of himself.

While *I think* I understand the thesis behind **Wallflower Gone Wild**, I think the author could have done a better job of presenting Olivia's dilemma more clearly. (For the most part, Olivia's behaviour appeared a bit childish.) The middle part of the story was hampered by Olivia's indecisiveness, but the ending proved to be satisfying and enjoyable, thanks to Phinn and Olivia's epiphany.

Rules, rules, rules! She knew them all too well. They took up too much space in her brain. They kept her all bound up, restrained, and squeezed into the old of Proper Lady until she couldn't breathe. ... there was only one rule she abided these days.

Make your own rules.

With a smile on her lips, Olivia picked up her needle and selected a vibrant pink thread. She started to stitch and kept at it until Phinn arrived.

- p. 303

UniquelyMoi ~ BlithelyBookish says

Certain books are not suitable for ladies, for they might offend a woman's delicate sensibilities.
—COMMONLY HELD BELIEF, TO THE VEXATION OF CURIOUS MAIDENS EVERYWHERE.

I enjoyed this story, for the most part, but I do have an issue with it, namely Olivia and her over-the-top worrying and her utterly horrid attempts to drive Phinn away - who was actually the best part of the story. There came a point I wanted to shout at him that he deserves better than her and to run, far away, as fast as he could.

Sheesh!

Full review to come...maybe.

An ARC was provided by Avon Books.

Angela says

While the writing and story of the first Wallflower book wasn't brilliant, I was at least entertained by the chemistry between Blake and Emma and their flirtatious banter. Wallflower Gone Wild lacked all of that, leaving us with pages upon pages where nothing seems to happen.

While Olivia's resistance to the betrothal that's been forced upon her is understandable in the beginning, her fear and immaturity made me less than sympathetic to her cause as the story wore on. I didn't buy that she was this prim and perfect little miss all her life, and then suddenly is able to behave in scandalous (and ridiculous) behavior.

Phinn was a weak leading character. He doesn't stand up for himself, lets Olivia treat him badly, and refuses to dispel the rumors surrounding his previous marriage. The whole "mathematical genius" thing was a poor attempt at explaining his behavior.

With the weak characters and lack of story, this was a long, tedious read.

Lover of Romance says

Olivia is known as "London's Least Likley" and is known for her poise and following the rules and never stepping out of line, and what has it gotten her, unwed after four season. One evening she meets a man who sizzles her senses just from one look across the ballroom, and she almost kisses him in public. Afterward, she learns her parents have betrothed her to the "Mad Baron", Phineas Cole. She has heard many rumors about this Mad Baron, about how he murdered his wife. Phinn has admired Olivia from afar and knows that her genteel manner is just what he is looking for in a wife. What he doesn't plan on is for scandal after scandal to occur after he decides to marry her. Phinn has no idea what he did to her, but then he learns that she believes the rumors about his late wife, which he didn't ever think it had been gone around as much as it apparently had. Phinn is out to seduce his future bride and show her he isn't the monster she thinks he is, that he can love just as passionately as she dreams of.

Wallflower Gone Wild is the second installment in the Bad Boys and Wallflower series that is the most recent series done by Maya Rodale. I have enjoyed reading her others series and this is the first book I have been able to read from this series. I am a bit disappointed that I have yet to read the first book, especially after loving this title so much. There was so much emotion and drama played out in this story. I couldn't help but fall for this story. From the beginning I was fully engrossed in the story, the longest it took was just a couple of pages and I was hooked completely. Maya Rodale definitely knows how to deliver a charming love story and Wallflower Gone Wild is definitely a new favorite.

In this story we see two people that need each other and are each taught a humbling lesson about Trust. Olivia I liked from the beginning, and I loved how she schemed to make Phinn want to leave her, but all of her work and trying to create one scandal after another only tends to do the opposite reaction, Phinn starts to become more intrigued with Olivia. Olivia fears for her future with Phinn, but there is something so gentle about the way Phinn treats her and the way he is so patient, Olivia starts to slowly change her opinion of him. Despite the dastardly rumors that are flying around, she starts to realize she will have to trust in her true feelings about him, and not what other gossips say about him. Phinn is a scientist and could care less about public opinion, until he meets Olivia. Now he must prove to her that he isn't dangerous or a killer. I also loved seeing the close bond that Olivia has with her fellow friends, and it only made me more intrigued with reading the first book, after seeing her friend and her husband together.

Overall a charming romance that tied me up in knots (but in a very delightful way). Wallflower Gone Wild is packed with romance, desire, engaging plot and characters to worm their way into your heart. A HEARTWARMING TALE!!

Jill says

Am I the only one who saw some definite ties to Rebecca by Daphne du Maurier? One difference between the two was that i actually liked the heroine, so that's a plus. But the death of the first wife, her love of a relative, her supposed pregnancy, burning of buildings, she reminds him of her, and the list goes on—it all resembles Rebecca, but it seems that no one on goodreads figured that out as well. Weird!

Krissy says

The heroine really annoyed me. Plus the ending dragged on way longer than I felt it should have.

Jessica Grogan says

Recently decided to give a few authors I dismissed for having a "bad" book a second chance. In this case, at least, I'm glad I did. It was a fun and light read and I enjoyed every minute of it. Will definitely be checking out Prudence's story.

Becca says

Wallflower Gone Wild was my first read of Maya Rodale since I read her debut duo (and loved them). Her Writing Girls series didn't really appeal to me so I waited until reviews for her latest series came out to try again. Needless to say, I have now added her other Wallflower books to my pile. This story was not super historically accurate and had a more modern voice, but there was still enough focus on some of the strictures in society, a touching look at the harm of stereotypes, and a bubbly, fun writing style that I couldn't help but be drawn in.

Rodale explores two characters who have been stuck with stereotypes/nicknames that are both cruel and completely untrue to their natures. Olivia has been labeled as a Prissy Miss, despite her desire to have fun and connect with a man she can marry, while Phinn has been called the Mad Baron because of the mysterious and tragic circumstances that led to his first wife's death. The rumors for each have been burdensome. Olivia has been on the marriage mart for 4 years with no hope, while Phinn has avoided society all together. When they first meet, neither knows the other, and without the labels, the two share a moment of electric connection. Unfortunately, this doesn't last and most of the book then shows how the two of them struggle to connect despite the preconceived notions of the other (Phinn thinks Olivia is a proper, quiet woman, while Olivia thinks Phinn is a murderer).

There is an excess of drama on the part of Olivia as she struggles with whether to take heed of the rumors or to ignore them. In some ways, I understood her dilemma. One of the biggest things that bothered me about this book was how Phinn's temperament was fleshed out. In almost every way, he was NOT what society made him out to be. He wanted Olivia to be happy and he cared about her, even though he often bumbled in the wooing department. HOWEVER, the issue that bothered me was the unresolved presence of Phinn's "temper." He would have period where he would be overcome with anger and would lash out at people. Now, in this story, Olivia keeps him calm, but really, this didn't sit well with me and wasn't fully resolved. I felt like Olivia sometimes went into dramatics over her uncertainty with Phinn, but in this case, her fears were founded and this was my quibble with this book. He never showed any threat to Olivia, but the anger was *there*.

The quibble about the anger management issue aside, this was a fun book. The friendship of the wallflowers was really fun and I am excited to read about Prudence. The other character who dominated every scene he was in was the Duke of Ashbrooke. Good heavens. Amelia seemed a bit annoying, but the duke...man, I am going to read the first book just for him. It is never good for the hero when a secondary character makes more of an impression in a few scenes than the hero did the entire book. Ashbrooke oozed sex appeal and what he did at one point to save Olivia from herself, simply because she was Amelia's friend and thus he

cared, was awesome.

Anyway, this was a fun book and I will be reading the others. I think with Rodale, I will read the books whose plot lines interest me and avoid those that seem to gimmicky or not to my taste. I like Rodale's style so I think if I like the plot, the book will most likely work for me :) Yay for rediscovering a fun author!

Quinn's Book Nook says

Do you guys ever have these authors that you keep reading hoping to love, but never managing to? That is the way it is for me and Maya Rodale. I have read a number of her books, and while all of them have been enjoyable, none of them have really left an impression on me, and I always find them lacking that something that makes a novel extra special to me. But I keep trying more of her books, which is why I listened to *Wallflower Gone Wild* by Maya Rodale. **While this was a perfectly acceptable story, I kept waiting for it to become something special.**

Wallflower Gone Wild is about Olivia, a wallflower who has always done what is “right” but doesn’t have much to show for it. I must say that I could really relate to that aspect of Olivia’s life. I often feel like that. I have always done well in school, done well in college, gotten a fulltime job as soon as possible and have worked hard. I think I’m a nice person and I’ve never really done anything outrageous. And truthfully, I don’t think I could be any other way. But sometimes I just want to scream because I feel like I’ve done everything the “right” way, and still sometimes I feel like my life isn’t how I want it to be in some aspects.

So that said, **I could so understand Olivia’s frustrations with how her life is turning out.** And I can understand how she takes a certain opportunity to be a little wild, and behave not how a “proper lady” ought to. **But what I couldn’t understand was Olivia’s fear of Phinn, a.k.a. The Mad Baron.**

Phinn has quite the reputation. People believe that he killed his first wife, and this rumor is what terrifies Olivia, especially when her parents betroth her to him. Certainly I could understand Olivia’s initial fear. This fear is what sparks her to “go wild” as the title implies, and she stops behaving like the proper miss that everyone believes her to be.

However, it is quite obvious that Phinn is a nice and caring man, who would never deliberately hurt someone, let alone murder his first wife. Having suffered from unfair rumors herself, I thought Olivia should give Phinn the opportunity to explain these accusations to her. But she spends so much of the story being afraid of Phinn, that it really became frustrating.

So, while I could identify with parts of Olivia’s experiences so much, **this fear of Phinn that lasted until at least 85% into the story really brought this book down.** *Wallflower Gone Wild* was an enjoyable read, but it just wasn’t amazing. I wanted more romance, more connection between Olivia and Phinn.

Lorka says

Fluffy book gone wrong.

This book had a perfect storyline..... wallflower gets betrothed to a Mad Baron, who is a supposed murderer.

It would have been perfect, if the heroine had not been written with the maturity level of a 13 yr old. Really,

I think my own 14 yr. old daughter acts more mature than this Olivia girl did, from decision making skills to asinine conversations when with her girlfriends. Definition of TSTL right here.

Once Olivia is informed by her (desperate to marry her off) parents that she has been spoken for by the Mad Baron, she assumes the worst. Instead of even attempting to get to the bottom of any of the rumors surrounding the Mad Baron, she comes up with one stupid antic after another to get the Mad Baron to call off their engagement. The first antic in Chapter 3....(assuming you make it this far into the book) had Olivia's maid applying so much make-up on her face (to displease her intended) that she looks like a clown with horrible raccoon eyes. When she arrives downstairs to meet the Mad Baron for the first time, her parents gasp and become furious with her, but never insist that she return upstairs to wash her face... and they carry on with the tea party.

What happens next reminded me so much of why I disliked book #1 of this series. The author's writing style jumps all over the place. For example, the scene with the tea party I mentioned above, it goes on and on about how furious her parents were, how she knows she will get yelled at once she is alone with them... but you soon realize that the tea party must be over, because the next chapter starts with the Mad Baron suddenly at his buddy's bachelor pad, discussing his idea to get married to Olivia. So many scenes not completed in my opinion. I only assume book #3 will be written the same way....

Caz says

The heroine of this book, the second in Maya Rodale's **Wallflower** series is Olivia Archer, a young lady with a reputation for such unbending propriety that she has been nicknamed "London's Least Likely to Cause a Scandal."

Now in her fourth season, Olivia despairs of ever finding a husband. She has done everything expected of her, and behaved exactly as a well brought-up young lady should behave, and yet "being good" has got her precisely nowhere, and she is beginning to chafe against the constant strictures imposed by her overbearing mother.

Olivia's desperation is also felt by her parents who are, by now, anxious to get her married off, as is evident by her father's willingness to accept an offer for her hand from a man known throughout society as the "Mad Baron", who is believed to have killed his first wife. Not surprisingly, Olivia is aghast at the prospect, but her protests fall on deaf ears.

Lord Phineas Radcliffe is a widower and a young man of scientific bent who has come to London in order to work with the Duke of Ashbrooke (hero of *The Wicked Wallflower*) on building his Difference Engine. Phinn has also decided to look about for a second wife, and when, at a ball, he sees Olivia and hears of her reputation for propriety, decides he has found her. He can't deny that he's attracted to her physically, but it's also important to him that he finds a woman who will act with decorum, not cause any gossip or distract him from his work in any way.

Unfortunately, even six years after the event, the rumour that he murdered his first wife is still in circulation – a rumour that he refuses to deny outright, because he feels himself in some way responsible for her death.

Fearing the Mad Baron will marry her, carry her off to his creepy, tumble-down Yorkshire estate and then murder her in her bed, Olivia finally decides that as being a good girl never got her anything she wanted, she will behave so scandalously as to cause Phinn to re-think his intention to court her. Aided by her friend Prudence – and I found myself frequently asking myself what sort of friend Prudence was, given the things

she did to “help” Olivia in her quest to scandalise society – Olivia begins to behave outrageously; wearing too much make-up, getting drunk in public and wearing very revealing clothes – but no matter what she does, Phinn is undeterred. He realises that on the inside, Olivia is seething with frustration and resentment, and that she is trying to break free of her conditioning and find out who she really is. Even if she is not the demure miss he was at first led to believe, she is the woman he wants to be with.

Wallflower Gone Wild is a quick, undemanding read, but it lacks the sparkle and humour of **The Wicked Wallflower**. Olivia is a well-drawn character, a young woman who has spent her whole life being told that being good will ensure rewards, only to discover that life doesn’t work that way and realising she must strike out and “make her own rules” if she’s to have any chance of finding the happiness that has so far eluded her. I found that aspect of her character to be the most realistic and engaging, unlike the part of her that is quick to believe the worst of Phinn, and who spends most of the book being afraid of him – for absolutely no reason other than the rumours – to the extent that she carries a pair of scissors in her reticule in case she needs to defend herself!

There is also rather a lot of telling rather than showing when it comes to Phinn. Rumour has it that he’s a murderer, and we’re told he has a horrible temper – but we never see any evidence to back up either assertion. He loses his rag with a friend of his who has a talent for saying or doing exactly the wrong thing at exactly the wrong time, yes, but I think we’d all be capable of that! We never see Phinn as being anything other than solicitous and understanding towards Olivia, so all she has to go on are six-year-old rumours and the fact that he doesn’t want to talk about his past. He’s very sweet, is not especially confident with women, but is willing to learn how to be a good husband. He listens to Olivia and takes what she says seriously, he asks for her opinions and encourages her to make up her own mind about things – and he refuses to allow her parents to ride roughshod over her when she is unwell. I certainly don’t object to a geeky-scientist hero, but, dare I say it, Phinn is a little dull and when we finally discover the truth behind the scurrilous rumours...well, it’s somewhat of an anti-climax.

I know what I’m getting when I pick up one of Ms Rodale’s books, which are usually funny and full of great dialogue, even though she’s not the most historically accurate author out there. To be fair, however, I noticed fewer anachronisms in this than in **The Wicked Wallflower**. The writing flows well, and I can’t deny that I was engaged by the book, because I read it in two or three sittings in one day, but it lacks the author’s trademark humour and in the final tally, **Wallflower Gone Wild** is little more than an average read.
