



The Tracker

Mary Burton

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Nick Baron knew it was wrong to buy trust with a falsehood, but there was no other way. His reputation as the most dangerous bounty hunter west of the Rockies terrified even decent folks, not just the outlaws he hunted. So he sure as hell wasn't about to let a spitfire fugitive from a sporting house know he wasn't the U.S. Marshal he claimed to be -- no matter how appealing she was.

Especially when she held the key to his best friend's murder. And particularly when she'd not only shot him -
- but saved his life right after!

Things with Ellie Watson could get complicated!

The Tracker Details

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Linda says

2.5 stars

Nick Baron was *The Tracker*: a former soldier who was now a bounty hunter. A killer with a reputation. He had recently lost his closest friend to a senseless murder. He intended to find the men who committed the crime and bring them to justice. Then, and only then, would he retire and settle down to his long-dreamed-of peaceful life.

Ellie's home had been the Silver Slipper brothel for as long as she could remember. Her mother, a prostitute, had died years before. She *guessed* she was nineteen years old but wasn't really sure. What she did know was that her time living at the bordello was coming to an end. She had cooked, cleaned, mended and cared for the other women but she **knew** Miss Adeline was expecting her to 'make the move upstairs'.

She had just delivered a baby girl when the doxy died; the mother made her swear that she would raise her as her own. She needed to get out of town immediately. In a hurry, she stumbled upon Nick as he was searching for the men. Then she fled with 'her' baby in tow.

Weeks go by and she had made a name for herself. She was now the young widow and mother, Mrs. Ellie Watson: the much-admired cook for her new friend Annie's stagecoach stop. Annie had just left with her fiancée to visit her elderly parents some distance away. They were expected to be gone for about three weeks and had left her in charge. With no other people to assist her. (I know! It was a far-fetched idea.)

Unexpectedly, Nick Baron showed up. He was on the trail of Frank Palmer and looking for the stolen gold. He thought she was hiding something. Scared, she told him to leave. He told her he couldn't until she told him the truth so she shot him. Before he passed out, he told her a little white lie. He claimed to be a lawman; *now she had to save him!*

Like so many Harlequins, the story took place over a period of days. Though we are never given his age, I believe Nick was somewhere in his mid-thirties. He was a widower with a sad past. He was under the impression that Ellie was one of the Silver Slipper's working girls and she never told him anything different.

The story moved along at a steady pace. Initially, loneliness was what drew the two together. The age spread was another matter; I had some issues with it. That, and those tiny little white lies, that rear their head at the most inopportune times. I have read several of Ms. Burton's other Harlequin historicals and she favors writing 'cabin romances' featuring the relationship of the H and h at a secluded site. This one was no different.

Melanie says

Good

The books starts with a very interesting story line and then goes cold. Things finally get a little more interesting, but then the story ends abruptly, not leaving the reader with a "finished" ending. I wish I had read this book first, followed by the others because they were much better.
