



# Upon a Wicked Time

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*He was her ideal husband, and she should have been his perfect bride...*

Tessa Astley is everything a duke should want in a wife. A breathtaking beauty with a reputation that is positively above reproach, she desires nothing more than the love of her husband, the man she's long pined for.

Only Jered Mandeville doesn't want a soulmate, just a proper duchess hidden away on his country estate to beget heirs. He certainly doesn't see a place for his sheltered bride in his decadent life in London.

Tessa won't let her fairy tale slip through her fingers. She'd do anything to win Jered's heart. So Tessa starts a campaign to win her husband's heart by invading his home, his reckless adventures, and his bed—all to prove to her cynical duke that even a happy ending can be delightfully wicked.

## Upon a Wicked Time Details

Date : Published February 23rd 2010 by Avon (first published December 1st 1998)

ISBN : 9780380795833

Author : Karen Ranney

Format : Mass Market Paperback 384 pages

Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Historical, Regency

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# From Reader Review Upon a Wicked Time for online ebook

## Carrie Olguin says

Loved it! The Rake and the innocent whose love and persistence strip the hero's hardened shell that covers the suffering, wounded little boy hiding inside and then heals him.

Through an arranged marriage the innocent Heroine marries a duke (a man who always gets his way, pure alpha male), knowing who he is and how he lives his life. Even though she knows he may never learn to love her as she loves him, she is determined to be part of his life as a friend and companion.

The hero is determined to teach his bride her place in his life, a very small place, that will not interfere with the wicked entertainments he enjoys. He plans for her to stay in the country, demure and bidable, taking care of their children, while he remains in town with his mistress and friends.

But the heroine's innocent, ardent and enthusiastic surrender on their wedding night stirs frightening feelings inside him. The next morning, he flees to London.

She follows (under the pretence of begetting an heir), becomes a stalker, finding him at his various entertainments, trying to convince him she is a suitable companion, a life long friend he can trust and rely on. She will not be ignored and left in the country to die of loneliness.

She tries to understand him and shares with him what she discovers about his behavior - which stirs his long buried conscience and emotions, which infuriates him.

The heroine is a delightful mix of curious innocence (she asks interesting questions) and a girl blooming into womanhood (makes shocking statements to gain the hero's attention). To secure her man, she risks everything, her heart, her reputation, her future, even her life.

Every time they draw close, the hero pushes her away. Angry with the burning attraction between them that he cannot ignore, he tries to destroy the innocence burning in her eyes, tries to prove he is unworthy of her adoration, tries to shame her, horrify her, make her leave him alone. As time passes, she creeps into his thoughts, burrows under his skin. She makes him feel, reflect on the past, question who he is and how he behaves. Basically, she frightens him on a very intimate level.

She endures his rebuffs (and wicked behavior), time and time again, swallowing the hurt his actions cause while giving herself freely in bed.

Few heroines have the courage or perseverance to tame a hardened rake. This heroine gives her all to understand the man she loves, to heal his wounded heart and save him from himself.

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## Amy says

[never seems all that concerned about

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### **Susan (susayq ~) says**

2.5 stars. I know what you're thinking...why didn't you care for this book? It was the hero, Jered. I HATED him. He was cruel, arrogant, unfeeling and insolent. All towards his wife. I mean, what kind of man doesn't get rid of his mistress when he gets married and then kisses said mistress in front his wife? What kind of man brings his wife to a seedy tavern to have her witness...I can't even begin to describe what he made her witness, YUCK! In my opinion, Jered never redeemed himself properly enough for Tessa to be with him in the end; saying "I love you" doesn't redeem him. He didn't even properly apologize for all he put Tessa through.

Now Tessa...she was AMAZING! In her naive innocence, she followed her new husband to London and invaded his escapades. This is a woman who showed up in the middle of her husband and friends robbing a stage coach (Hubby is a Duke. Did he NEED to rob the coach? No, he did it for fun). Tessa is a woman who went to the theatre, saw her husband there with friends (and dates for friends and him) and proceeded to tell him (and the rest of the audience) what she thought of the cheap date and how he should use his cock (her words, not mine LOL) Finally, Tessa had enough and Jered got what he wanted - Tessa to leave him alone. However, something happened to Tessa and it made Jered realize he loves her. But when his plan to woo her after her recovery failed, Jered retreated to his former jerk-self. Tessa called him out on it and he attempts to change AGAIN and everything is hunky dory for them. UNBELIEVABLE. And Jered still sucks.

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### **Patrizia says**

Una bella storia, avvincente, tesa, adatta per chi ha bisogno di un sano periodo di letture 'di evasione'

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### **Jessica says**

Overall, I was a bit disappointed with this book. I generally like Karen Ranney, which provoked me to pick up this title but for a multitude of reasons, was not particularly pleased with this one. Her plot line is insufferable- I could not become excited at anything. Her characters were stubborn to a fault; I doubted happiness to ever speckle their existence. I read romance to be happy and this one made me decidedly unhappy. I have a few quotes that at least intrigued me and will take those away. Other than that, not one I would recommend to regular romance readers.

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### **Yuni says**

One thing for certain, I hate Jered. I don't understand his actions. To make his wife go back to country, he shows his mistress in front of her and what? flirt (I'm trying to be nice here) with a waitress publicly? I don't care you are a duke or what but you are stupid!

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### **Lady Darcie Guenon says**

Tessa Astley is the most amazing heroine I have ever read. Her determination to win the love of Jered Manderville is truly amazing. Tracking him down at the race track, visiting his mistress, being outspoken and having everyone's attention on the two of them is super fun to read about.

All Jered wanted was for Tessa to stay in the country and leave him alone, but as fate would have it he ends up with a woman who would have none of that. Now as he tries to battle his determined wife, he has to battle his growing feelings that he didn't want in the first place.

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### **L8blmr says**

I love it when a book gives you more than you expected from it! I picked up this one as a "light" read while I work my way slowly through "Lover Enshrined" and "The Fiery Cross" (savoring every word). Well, this book was no lightweight! Yes, the formula is an old one, but not often done as well as Ranney wrote it. We have a jaded, rich, and insufferably arrogant duke who wants a meek, obedient wife to bear him an heir. Instead, he gets the young, outspoken, and eternally curious virgin with stars in her eyes who has loved him forever. Of course, they are well-matched in bed, but nowhere else. Wonderful dialog between the two, and internal musings that develop the characters in a mature and sophisticated fashion, without being pseudo-intellectual or wordiness for show. Add some humor, adventure, and hot bedroom scenes, and you can't lose. There are some erotic settings and coarse language (as our hero strives to demonstrate his depths of depravity), so be warned if these offend you. If you enjoyed Katie MacAlister's "Noble Intentions", you'd probably like this one, too.

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### **Kassie says**

Nice read but damn! Jered was annoying to no end and that ending was so easy it made me cringe. But overall... it was okay.

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### **Salina says**

This book made me so very angry. I hated the "hero" (in quotes because he is in no way heroic). He was a jerk bordering on psychopath throughout the entire book. He does terrible things to the heroine and obviously has no respect for her as a person. The heroine was the worst though. She puts up with all of this and just keeps coming back for more and then she decides she is "in loooooove" with him for no reason I can see but the crush she had in him as a teenager. The book tries to resolve all of this and have the "hero" confront his behavior but this really fell flat for me and seemed like they were looking for an excuse for his terrible behavior.

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### **Su says**

Not bad at all. I like Karen Ranney's writing style. Except this one became quite repetitive towards the end.

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## Sandra Walker says

Good book, though I would have shot the duke if he treated me like that.

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## Blackjack says

*Upon a Wicked Time*, Karen Ranney - I loved nearly all of this book and had just a few minor quibbles with it at the very end, which I'll get to. This book is dark and even Gothic in atmosphere and tone, emotionally intense and absolutely riveting. The basic premise is of a lovely young woman, beautiful inside and out, and her unconditional love for what she believes to be an honorable though jaded man. Tessa is not blind to Jared's notorious reputation upon marrying him at the start of the novel. She's part of the ton and has heard the whispered gossip of his escapades with his equally notorious "friends." She simply believes that love will conquer all and her stubborn adherence to this maxim places her in grave danger while also assuring her, paradoxically, the happy ever after she craves. Her parents serve as examples of a passionate and lively marital counterpart to hers and Jared's marriage. But Jared's parents too serve as a less fortunate role model to the young couple. I found it interesting that both sets of parents play such a pivotal role in this drama.

I viewed this book as almost two distinct parts: the marriage before Tessa's tragic accident and the marriage after it. Prior to the tragedy, Jared is a fascinating contradiction of a jaded and somewhat corrupt nobleman. He's intent on preserving the privilege of his status as an aristocrat and as a man entitled to all the attributes a married male peer can claim, including mistresses on the side and a solo life in the city with a countrified wife tucked away for his convenience. On the other hand, Ranney does such a deft job of showing Jared's frustration that his wife appeals to him on levels he cannot even put into words. He's sexually enthralled by their nights together and he's steeped in admiration for her endearing qualities. In short, he's falling in love very early in the book, and almost no where have I read such an extreme example of someone kicking and screaming their way into love and happiness. His fight to keep Tessa at a distance is discomforting to read, though I did note that the tender and affectionate moments between them equal the amount of times he's a true bastard to her. Ranney's plotting is quite skillful. Jared's act that puts Tessa over the edge and sets calamitous events into action brings an abrupt halt to the first half of the book. The second half is Jared's reform, but it's also Tessa's awakening to her own needs and past behavior.

Unlike many readers, I didn't feel impatient with the first half, but I did grow a little impatient toward the end with Jared. My other quibble is that I don't know if I fully understand self-destructiveness in people. I know addicts that seem bent on self-destruction and on a cerebral level, I can even sort of understand their addiction. But I do not fully grasp, or perhaps sympathize is a more apt term, the ways in which a person can knowingly throw their lives away. Jared is not an addict, but he is clearly self-destructive and unwilling to embrace happiness, and that was a concept difficult for me to embrace here. Nevertheless, this was a very compelling and exciting book. I loved it and thought about it frequently throughout the days that I was working and unable to return to it.

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## Everalice says

<http://leslecturesdeveralice.blogspot>

J'ai particulièrement apprécié l'aspect non conventionnel des héros : Jared est un vrai mauvais garçon, un de ces maléfiques héros que l'on adore détester et dont on ne découvre les clés que parcimonieusement, au

rythme de l'héroïne.

Quant à Tessa, quelle héroïne ! Ne vous attendez pas à une jeune pimbêche ! Malgré ses 19 ans et son âme de pure romantique, elle fait montre d'une sacrée force de caractère et fait feu de tout son esprit, de tout son humour et de tout son amour pour peu à peu effectuer un véritable peeling sur les sentiments et la personnalité de son époux. Loin de se satisfaire du statut de jument poulinère auquel son mari voudrait la cantonner, elle répète à l'envie, comme un mantra, qu'elle souhaite devenir son amie. A cette fin, elle se retrouve dans des situations impossibles jusqu'à l'humiliation suprême qui fait tout basculer. Quel détestable héros, ce duc ! Déterminé à prendre bêtement tous les risques, mêmes les plus insensés et les plus infantiles, odieux jusqu'à la nausée.

D'ailleurs, ce n'est pas un hasard, à mon avis, si Tessa est régulièrement sujette aux hauts-le-cœur ! Glacial et coupant, aveugle, arrogant et superficiel, bref, sa beauté mâle peine à rattraper ses lourdes et fréquentes erreurs de parcours et de jugement. Il m'a plu, pourtant. Juste grâce à l'incroyable talent de l'auteur dont la finesse d'analyse parvient à faire de ce débauché au cœur aussi noir que sa parure, un homme solitaire, mal dans sa peau et finalement, meurtri.

Alors oui, tout n'est pas rose entre eux, bien au contraire. On pousse de hauts cris d'indignation intérieure devant sa façon de traiter, par une volonté affirmée de mise à distance, sa jeune et adorable épouse, mais que cela fait du bien de casser un peu les codes alchimiques de la romance.

Le prologue de conte de fées nous promet monts et merveilles, quand tout le roman à la suite démontre que l'amour n'est pas un long fleuve tranquille, qu'il faut savoir combattre pour le mériter, en veillant aussi à ne pas se trahir soi-même. Mais le roman, dans un magnifique mouvement circulaire, se clôt sur la formule magique obligatoire dans le conte de fées. Et j'y ai cru.

Pas vraiment de grandes scènes épiques d'affrontements... Karen Ranney propose plutôt des situations délicates, difficiles, voire inconfortables, et un peu cruelles, pour faire de ce faux conte une histoire un peu noire sur les bords. Je n'ai pas pu m'empêcher d'évoquer Meredith Duran, à cause de cet aspect sulfureux des relations entre les héros, même si les dialogues sont moins mordants. Quelques passages flirtent avec le drame, et un parfum de nostalgie affleure régulièrement, notamment dans l'évocation touchante de l'amour du père de Jered pour sa femme. Dans cet incessant duel de volontés où l'indépendance de l'un fait front à l'ingérence affective et butée de l'autre, le couple merveilleux des parents de Tessa apporte un air rafraîchissant et optimiste, et de l'eau au moulin des tenants de la vision romantique de l'amour : complices, follement amoureux l'un de l'autre, ils tiennent une vraie place tout au long de l'histoire.

Le volet historique et culturel, très soigné et étayé de nombreuses références littéraires, a aussi participé à mon plaisir, tant est bien rendu, sans appesantissement superflu, le contexte de cette année 1791. Quant aux scènes d'amour, elles restent très sages, peut-être pour mieux nous faire sentir que là n'est pas l'essentiel dans l'épanouissement de l'amour, comme le comprend très vite Tessa.

Sans attendre grand chose de ce titre dont le résumé ne me parlait pas plus que ça, disons qu'il me semblait un peu bateau, j'en ressors convaincue de parfaire ma connaissance de cette auteur à la plume discrètement talentueuse, une auteur qui comptera à l'avenir dans ma bibliothèque.

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## Kesha says

The Hero, Jerod, was a grade A ASSHOLE. I cannot think of a worse Hero. To put his wife, Tessa, in her place he took her, unbeknownst to her, to a GANGBANG. Before the gangbang, he pulled the barmaids boob out and played with her nipple, while his wife was sitting with him. This was the 1800s and the wife was an innocent gently bred country miss. I liked the book, the heroine was funny and likable but she put up with too much before she called it quits.

