



Fortune Favors the Wicked

Theresa Romain

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In the game of seduction, everyone wins...

INDECENTLY LUCKY

As a lieutenant in the Royal Navy, Benedict Frost had the respect of every man on board—and the adoration of the women in every port. When injury ends his naval career, the silver-tongued libertine can hardly stomach the boredom. Not after everything—and everyone—he's experienced. Good thing a new adventure has just fallen into his lap...

When courtesan Charlotte Perry learns the Royal Mint is offering a reward for finding a cache of stolen gold coins, she seizes the chance to build a new life for herself. As the treasure hunt begins, she realizes her tenacity is matched only by Benedict's—and that sometimes adversaries can make the best allies. But when the search for treasure becomes a discovery of pleasure, they'll be forced to decide if they can sacrifice the lives they've always dreamed of for a love they've never known...

Fortune Favors the Wicked Details

Date : Published March 29th 2016 by Zebra

ISBN : 9781420138658

Author : Theresa Romain

Format : Mass Market Paperback 298 pages

Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Historical, Historical Fiction, Regency, Fiction

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From Reader Review Fortune Favors the Wicked for online ebook

WhiskeyintheJar/Kyraryker says

I read this for the Love square for Romance Bingo.

Benedict Frost currently lives on half pay after being forced out of the Navy due to an illness that caused his blindness. With a sister to help support, getting the reward put up by the Royal Mint for a cache of coins stolen would go a long way to solving some of his problems.

Charlotte Perry has lived the life of a vicar's daughter and a courtesan but has only ever wanted to be free and happy. With rumor of the stolen gold coins in her home town, she sees an opportunity to fund her escape. Benedict and Charlotte are both after the coin treasure but they might find a different treasure worth more than they could imagine.

Fortune Favors the Wicked is first in the Royal Rewards Duo but the next in the series, Fortune Favors the Bold, coming out February 28th, looks to be about Benedict's sister and be concurrently happening. We get a little look at Georgette and Benedict's friend Hugo and how their adventure starts here. I'm so looking forward to their story and how Georgette is going to ruffle Hugo's feathers. While I thought the search for the gold coins was mostly shoved to the side here and felt more like a colorful reason/device to get our couple together, I think the sense of adventure I missed in this one will shine brighter in the next.

"You are brave, Miss Perry."

"I am what I have had to be, Mr. Frost." Her hand turned beneath his, and for a second they were palm against palm. "As are you."

While I missed some of the adventure I thought would be more prevalent in this one, I was blown away with how emotionally engaging Benedict and Charlotte were. The quote:

"They slipped briskly into an intimacy from which they never recovered."

-F. Scott Fitzgerald

feels completely about this couple. The natural way Charlotte and Benedict interacted and came together reminded me greatly of Grace Burrowes' couples and the tone felt a lot like Marrying the Captain by Carla Kelly. Benedict was a lieutenant in the Navy and Charlotte a courtesan, not typical romance hero and heroine fare. I loved how the author had Benedict's blindness a part of him instead of a defining characteristic, it was simply who he was, not something that made him special. In a little bit of a different way, the author pulled off Charlotte being a courtesan the same direction, it didn't define her. These two were fully fleshed out characters that have me almost talking about them like they were real people and I find myself wanting to type I missed seeing more of their backstory lives, but it probably is my selfish need just wanting more of them.

In a room with a man who had ruined her and man who wanted revenge on her, there had also been a man who took her part.

Quite frankly, I could sit and listen to this couple read the phone book to each other. I savored their sexual teasing, humor, friendship, and love that radiated from their conversations. Benedict and Charlotte made this book for me.

I felt a little bit in the middle the story slowed somewhat and I think that was due to me wanting more searching or adventure in regards to the missing coins, it seemed that storyline was muddled and couldn't

find a way to work into the story even when it was supposed to be the catalyst for it. I do think if you look at it as more of a stepping stone to the next book coming out, you won't look for it the same way I did. I also thought the villain of this piece was not needed or needed to be more involved, the whole thing came off a bit obvious mechanism. With such a powerful connection between the leads, the usual romancelandia flare of treasure and villains maybe could have been replaced with more of Charlotte's parents' relationship issues, which were only able to be hinted at (who couldn't help but feel for anxious Mr. Perry and lonely Mrs. Perry). Although, I'm sure that kind of category romance would be harder to sell as I myself was drawn in by the lure of treasure.

This author is someone who only keeps improving for me and if you like Burrowes or Kelly, you'll definitely want to pick this one up. I can't wait for the next in the duo to be released.

Lauren says

Fortune Favors the Wicked

4 Stars

The small village of Strawfield becomes the center of attention when a coin from a cache of gold stolen from the Royal Mint is discovered in the possession of a bar maid. Amongst the treasure seekers who descend on the community are Benedict Frost, a former naval officer whose career ended following a devastating affliction, and Charlotte Perry, a vicar's daughter and retired courtesan with a troubling secret. As Benedict and Charlotte form an shaky alliance, others in the village are just as determined to beat them, with violence and murder if necessary...

Romain's writing and dialogue capture the nuances of the time period so well, and the pages simply fly by.

Each damaged in their own way, Benedict and Charlotte are very appealing characters and their banter makes for very entertaining reading. Their romance is sweet and charming without the silly misunderstandings and annoying secret keeping that might otherwise occur with this plot premise.

The treasure hunting/murder mystery plot is weaker than the romance, but still enjoyable. Some of the elements feel very contrived and the revelation of the culprit and the discovery of the treasure are anti-climactic. Moreover, the (view spoiler) is an unnecessary and distracting addition, and the resolution is not all that satisfactory as (view spoiler).

All in all, a very well written and engaging romance and the hints at the love/hate relationship between the couple in the next make have me eager to read it.

Pamela says

Love this author's writing, love the hero, love a lot of individual lines...but somehow these promising individual aspects of the book didn't add up to a great overall read for me. The story had issues with plot, structure and flow, and I couldn't connect with the heroine as much as I wanted to (which, to be fair, is probably my fault---I tend not to be a huge fan of current and former courtesans as heroines for whatever

weird reason).

sraxe says

“No, but I’ve run my hands over the most famous statues in Paris, and they do not come close to the beauty of your form.”

...“When you say such ridiculous, kind, flirtatious things to me, I cannot think what to tell you next.”

“So don’t tell me anything. ... I’ll tell you more of the—what did you call them? ‘Ridiculous and kind’ . . . no, I really can’t allow that, Miss Perry. ‘Truthful and truthful,’ maybe.”

I’m not sure exactly how to rate this. It’s not really a favourite of mine (and would qualify more as an “okay” read for me), but there were several things about it that I liked.

Benedict, a lieutenant of the Royal Navy, joins the fray of fortune seekers because he needs to up his sister’s dowry in order to entice suitors for her. He’d originally planned on doing so after selling off his memoir, but the publisher refused to publish it as anything but a fictional novel, unable to believe that a blind man could’ve experienced all the adventures that Benedict had detailed in it.

Benedict is also a former-manwhore H, which I usually wouldn’t bother with, former or not, but I was fine with it here. One, the heroine is no virgin and probably has an equal amount of experience, being a courtesan and all. And two, Romain has previously written a virgin H, so it’s not as if manwhores are all she writes. (And recently, too, because *To Charm a Naughty Countess* was published in 2014. I ain’t gonna count that for an author who writes manwhore after manwhore now, but happened to have written a virgin H like two decades ago.)

Another aspect of Benedict’s character is that he has dyslexia, which is what prompted him to leave England in the first place at the age of twelve. His parents owned a bookstore, which was hard for him because he had difficulty with the words on the page (which surrounded him because they lived above the bookstore). His parents didn’t understand that and just thought he wasn’t applying himself enough. Although with his blindness (which was due to an illness four years ago) he can’t read now, it’s quite an accomplishment that he’s able to write an entire memoir (with the use of a noctograph).

There were several aspects of how the author handled Benedict’s blindness that I liked. For one, this isn’t one of those ableist books in which the blind character miraculously gets their vision back. She also showed how Benedict has to deal with people treating him as simply a blind man and nothing more.

So followed hours of raucous, determined cheer, as strange voices overlapped and thickened with drink. Toasts to Nance, toasts to success in the hunt for the stolen sovereigns. Toasts to Mr. and Mrs. Potter; to the Bow Street Runner, Stephen Lilac, sent by the Royal Mint; to the coroner; to the vicar’s blind guest, even.

No amount of liquor could have made Benedict raise a glass to this last toast. “The vicar’s

guest is a writer,” he protested. “A lieutenant. A physician.”

But he wasn’t really any of those things; all were half-tried or abandoned. And so he had to accept the claps on the back, the slurred *welcomes* and *I don’t know how you manage its*. It had been rather horrible, smiling and laughing through such an evening.

Now people (only) see his blindness before they see anything else about him (and that’s if they *ever* do, that is), overlooking all that he is and his achievements while zeroing in on that single aspect of him. (Charlotte, however, notices more about him. And while she accommodates his blindness, taking the time to describe things to him and giving him exact directions when needed or asked, she never overburdens or babies him because of his blindness.)

And although he has difficulty establishing himself as a person and not simply as a blind man, he’s also mostly come to terms with that aspect of himself.

He placed his hands atop the smooth-worn wood of the worktable. “In my dreams sometimes I can see. Then when I open my eyes, ready for morning light, and there is nothing but blank, I wish I had not awoken. I wish it had never happened, that my life had never taken such a turn.”

She took one of his hands—then flipped it over and placed a slice of warm bread on his palm. “What do you do, then?”

“I get up and try to make my life take another turn. The alternative is passing time; wasting it. Waiting for death.” He lifted the bread to his lips. “That seems a terrible waste of such a handsome man who has learned so much.”

Although, like I mentioned above, he has to deal with people simply seeing his blindness and not him, he’s also come to terms with that part of himself. It’s not as if he can change it or make it better, so he tries to make the best of it. I liked his attitude (cocky or otherwise). It’s nice to read an H who doesn’t wallow away in self-pity because of some things that have happened to him. It’s not that I don’t think a person is allowed to mourn a loss in their life (and do so within their own time), but I’m so tired of the broody, emo asses whose fish died, so now they’re forever angsty and angry, and hateful and mistrustful of the world (especially women). It’s nice to read an H who, yes, is affected by his loss, but he hasn’t let that single thing become an all-consuming force in his life. (And this is not to shit on depression or disregard it and those who suffer with it and other issues, but those Hs are not written to be suffering from depression or some other disorder, so that’s an entirely different conversation, imo.)

Then there’s Charlotte. I thought Charlotte was pretty badass. In the beginning, I was afraid she was going to be a damsels in distress character, needing to be rescued by the hero.

With her free hand, she pulled the penknife from her left sleeve and pressed it to the heel of the man’s hand. “Do you like your thumb?” she said sweetly. “One of us is going to keep it. If you want it to be you, you’d best move your hand away at once.”

He tightened his grip, and a thread of blood appeared across his knuckle. “You bitch!” He gaped, releasing her to suck at his wound. “You bitch! You cut me!”

“You cut yourself when you tightened your grasp.” She looked at the knife in some disgust, then wiped the drop from its blade onto her sleeve and stowed it again. Thank goodness she’d worn her dark blue serge. “It’s a poor excuse for a man who blames a woman for his own faults.”

“Bitch whore,” he spat.

“Bitch *courtesan*,” she muttered. “It’s a completely different occupation.”

When he started to rise to his feet, reaching within his coat—for a blade of his own?—she declined to educate him further in the niceties of kept-woman vocabulary. Tossing a few coins on the table, she turned on her heel and left.

As I mentioned, I was afraid that when she was being accosted here, Benedict would immediately return and save her. But she saved herself. In fact, barring one occasion, she does so throughout the book. There aren’t many situations in which she needs rescuing, but she doesn’t need Benedict to come to her aid and protect her from all the evils of the world. (The one time she is rescued by Benedict is (view spoiler).) She has a knife and a sharp tongue and a quick mind, so she’s more than capable of caring for herself.

Like I mentioned above, she’s not a virgin. She’s a true courtesan who’s been in the game for the last ten years (not a pretend or new courtesan or other fake BS). She became a courtesan after losing her virginity at 18 (view spoiler)

What I really loved about the whole courtesan aspect was that she wasn’t shamed by the author or by Benedict for her past, even a little bit. She made mistakes when she was much younger, giving in after being flattered by someone who was of a greater status than her. She’s made something of herself in the years since. Like Benedict, she made the best of her situation. And I liked that the author wrote such a sex-positive portrayal of her. When she asks Benedict if he dislikes her having been with other men, he says no.

And then, in a rush, she blurted, “I was a courtesan in London for ten years.”

“All right.” He raised his head to kiss her. “That makes sense. I didn’t really think you’d been a traveling missionary.”

She permitted a quick press of lips, then pulled her face back. “That’s . . . does that not matter to you?”

“Does it matter to me that you are intelligent and intriguing enough to earn a living by fascinating men?” He let his head fall heavily to the mattress. “I admit, it does. I think it is rather wonderful.”

And later on, it’s brought up again...

She stood too, and Captain gave a whine of neglect. “Benedict, please recall to whom you are talking. I made my own fortune—and before you shudder with disgust, not entirely on my back.”

"I am not disgusted by anything you do. Or have done." This was perfectly true, and he hoped she would believe him.

And I loved this. This is from his POV, so I loved that it's not just lip service on his behalf while his thoughts tell the reader otherwise. He doesn't hesitate in his response, nor does it go through his mind to feel sad or anything. And I absolutely adored that the author wrote it like this, especially since it's coming from a guy who was rather promiscuous himself. (I absolutely hate when manwhore Hs feel relief or happiness when they realize the h hasn't been with others. Or when they feel sadness if she has. FUCK YOU.) Benedict doesn't care that she's been with others. And that's that. She did what she had to do to make the best of a bad situation, and I loved that she's not shamed for doing so. Like I said, the sex-positive portrayal was great.

Her not-virgin status also opened things up for her to be openly dirty-minded when it came to exchanges with Benedict, which I really liked, as well. Too many of the "maidenly" characters flinch at the utterance of a bad word, so expecting something like this from those characters is out of the question:

"The coverlet is patchwork, pieced in floral patterns and pale silks. The frame is the same dark walnut as the washstand, but in better condition. The knobs in here often get polished."

He had to work to keep a straight face. "Of the bedstead, you mean. Of course."

"Why, what else could I possibly mean?"

And...

"I was not in a panic," grumbled Benedict. "I was moving with an understandable amount of speed, considering the circumstances."

"I also saw Mr. Frost's stiletto," Charlotte said, setting Benedict to choking again. "This is not the blade he was accustomed to keeping about his person."

"I should say not," he murmured, and she had to elbow him and hide her smile.

As long as it's not overdone, I love when characters use double entendres. I find the sexual innuendo-laced exchanges to be super hilarious, especially when it's the woman who's throwing them out there.

While I loved that the heroine was a courtesan and that she wasn't shamed for having been so, it also led into a disappointment for me. For anyone who hates mentions of sexual pasts, this may be a book to skip. There are mentions for both of them not only having experience, but subtle mentions of said experiences. I didn't mind it that too much because they were both equal here.

However, two of Charlotte's past lovers do make an appearance in the book. Randolph, who's a marquess and her latest protector, and the man she's on the run from, is one, and Edward Selwyn, the man who (view spoiler), also make appearances. (Edward is a local in the small town, after all.) My irritation here had to do with the fact that, even though (view spoiler), they were shadows over the book throughout much of it. The reason Charlotte is even after the royal reward is because she's run away from Randolph and is leaving the

courtesan business. So of course he's mentioned time and again. And because Edward is (view spoiler), he's mentioned over and over again, too. And I hated that they were such a BIG part of the story.

I also don't get how, near the end, (view spoiler)

In the end, (view spoiler)

Anyway, a spoiler (sort of?) for the next book's pairing: (view spoiler) So I'm looking forward to that and I'm excited to see where that goes.

(Oh, one final thing...if animal deaths bother you, I'd avoid this book. (view spoiler))

Maureen Carden says

As I already wrote, possibly bet book blurb evah. Delightful, original characters. Witty and amusing. A fifth star honoring that Romain evidently recognizes there is more to sex than just the missionary position. Everything about this book was just delightful.

Wollstonecrafthomegirl says

I read this months ago and don't know why I didn't review it at the time because it deserved a contemporaneous review of all my thoughts. I glommed the whole thing in short order and, honestly, thought it was brilliant. A blind hero and a properly former courtesan heroine, which I normally dislike but here it worked. The writing was lovely and lyrical and beautiful, for example: "... silence drew out, long and soft, a woollen yarn of quiet." (46%). The characterisation was top-notch with some great secondary characters, including a non-annoying child. The story packed some serious emotional punch whilst maintaining a pleasing lightness. What dropped the rating down was the treasure plot line which I just sort of wish wasn't there at all and the sex which in the context of the story and the writing (and what I know Romain is capable of) was a bit of a disappointment. Nonetheless, this was great and I am eagerly anticipating book number two in this series.

Caz says

4.5 stars

Theresa Romain is a busy lady right now, having not one, but TWO historical romance series on the go. The first full-length novel in her ***Romance of the Turf*** series was released a couple of months ago (A Gentleman's Game), and now comes **Fortune Favors the Wicked**, book one in the ***Royal Rewards*** series.

I, for one, am only too pleased, because Ms Romain has become an auto-buy author for me over the past couple of years, so I'm certainly not going to say "no" to more of the warm, witty and clever stories which are her trademark. When I pick up one of her books, I know I'm going to get a well-written story that

features strongly-drawn, attractive characters that I can come to care about, and in which the romance is kept to the fore even as she makes good use of whatever background she has chosen to use.

Fortune Favors the Wicked sees a former courtesan and a blind ex-naval officer team up in order to try to discover the whereabouts of six trunks of newly-minted gold sovereigns that were recently stolen from the Royal Mint. Rumours have drawn them both to Derbyshire and to a village near the home of Charlotte Perry, daughter of the local vicar. Ten years earlier, Charlotte was ruined by the young man with whom she believed herself in love, and left with no other options, removed herself to London where she carved herself out a life as La Perle, a high-flying courtesan. But now, she has had enough of that life and is determined to leave it behind forever – hence her desire to find the missing coins and claim the reward, which she plans to use to look after her family.

Lieutenant Benedict Frost joined the Navy when he was twelve and travelled the world, but a severe illness four years ago left him blinded and unable to continue in his career. He now lives on half-pay and a pension in cramped apartments at Windsor Castle as a Naval Knight, but this has the downside of meaning he can never leave or get married, as if he does he will lose his home and his pension. He has worked extremely hard at learning to function without his sight, and, unlike the typically beastly, self-pitying, blind heroes so often found within the pages of romance novels, is charming, witty, sexy and completely adorable. Like Charlotte, he has family to take care of, in his case a younger sister for whom he wants to provide a decent dowry.

Benedict's good friend, Lord Hugo Starling, is also a friend of the Reverend Perry and has arranged for Benedict to stay at the vicarage while he is searching for the gold. This naturally throws him and Charlotte together and they agree to seek the treasure together – which has the added advantage of enabling them to explore the mutual attraction that sparks between them. Each can contribute different things to their endeavour; Benedict may not be able to see, but he is extremely intelligent, logical and notices practically everything, while Charlotte is equally clever, strong and very determined.

The search for the coins is an intriguing plot device, but is most definitely secondary to the romance between Charlotte and Benedict, which unfolds at a good pace and which is by turns funny, sexy and sweet. Benedict is refreshingly good-natured and open, and although I'm not normally a fan of courtesan heroines, there is something about Charlotte's underlying vulnerability that drew me to her. I also appreciated that she's a sexually active heroine who is not completely anachronistic. Both she and Benedict are very likeable and so wonderfully normal as to be rather extraordinary in a genre that is full of extremes; and their problems feel very real. Charlotte has been dogged by guilt for the past ten years; Benedict feels purposeless, but as they grow together they help each other to see that perhaps their perspectives are skewed and to find a way forward.

Fortune Favors the Wicked is a truly delightful novel and one I have no hesitation in recommending. It's beautifully written and perfectly paced; full of gentle humour, some not-so-subtle innuendo and a couple of truly engaging protagonists, it's the sort of book you want to cuddle up with and hug.

This review originally appeared at Romantic Historical Reviews.

Norah Una Sumner says

3.5 stars

So, this book was really hard for me to rate. Why, you ask? Well, this is one of those rare occasions where you love the characters, the story is very interesting and original and there's a lot of girl power but when you mix it all together...it's just doesn't "click" the way you thought it would. My main problem was the writing. I just didn't like it and it simply felt jumbled. I loved the main character Charlotte and her fierceness:

"You can't hide and pretend to be someone you're not, Pearl. You can never belong to anyone else."

"She set her jaw, refusing to flinch or look away. "Anyone besides myself, you mean? That's true. Though it was always true."

There is a bit of mystery, as well, which I definitely liked. And I really liked the supporting characters. Even though we only got to see a bit of Georgette, I am happy that she's getting her own book. She seems like an awesome girl.

Overall, this is a really nice book that has a lot of potential but wasn't a winner for me, unfortunately.

E-copy provided by the author/publisher in exchange for an honest review via Netgalley.

Sissy's Romance Book Review says

I received an eARC, from NetGalley and the publisher, in exchange for an honest review.

When you see Theresa Romain name you know that you are getting a different Historical Romance Read and that she will take you to different reading emotions.

Charlotte Perry wants to start a new life... to start fresh. So when she finds out that the Royal Mint is offering a reward for finding a cache of stolen gold coins, she goes forward to do just that. When the money she can do what she wants to with her life.

Royal Navy, Benedict Frost has been injured and this has hurt naval career. But then they both meet and become in twined in the stolen coins and each other.

Becca says

I read the free Chapter 1 excerpt for this novel and knew that I couldn't wait to read this novel. I was not disappointed!

As I have said in previous reviews of Theresa Romain's books, Romain has a unique writing style that she has honed in the course of her Matchmaker series and now perfected here. Romain's characters are normal. This is not a bad thing; in fact, it is the furthest from it. I love that her characters are so refreshing, fun, and easy to connect with. This talent for creating such characters is on full display in Fortune Favors the Wicked.

The set up for this novel is a treasure hunt. Who doesn't love a good treasure hunt? :)

Charlotte has returned home upon fleeing her latest "protector," a marquess with an overly possessive, violent streak. As you can probably gather from the previous sentence, Charlotte is a courtesan known as Le

Perle and has been a rather successful one for the past 10 years. Now returned home, she is simply Charlotte Perry, vicar's daughter, and pursuer of the treasure stolen from the Royal mint. She is desperate for the reward money in order to start fresh and take care of her family.

Benedict Frost is blind. However, unlike the stereotype in romance land, he is not beastly; rather he is polite, witty, and all around delightful. He has some really funny one-liners and I adored him. He is observant and deliberate in order to navigate life with his disability. Like Charlotte, he is also seeking the reward money in order to take care of his family.

Benedict comes to see the vicar (an acquaintance of a mutual friend) for a place to stay while he pursues the treasure. With both Charlotte and Benedict under the same roof, they slowly grow to know one another. Their relationship is a slow burn. Benedict is a balm to Charlotte's soul and the guilt she has carried around for 10 years begins to dissolve. They were very sweet together.

For the first half of the book, the treasure hunt takes a back seat. As Charlotte and Benedict team up, the mystery picks up. For those who are expecting an exhilarating ride, you won't find it here. The mystery wraps up quickly and neatly without a lot of drama. The novel is focused instead on the growth of the relationship between Benedict and Charlotte and their discovery of what they truly wanted out of life.

This was a comfort read for me. It wasn't fast paced, dramatic, or intensely sensual. It was adorable, steady, and gently humorous. Theresa Romain excels at creating playful stories with a lot of heart. She handles life's hardships with grace and understanding, and has you cheering for her characters as though you are their friends.

This was an excellent, character driven novel. I can't wait to read the second book in this duet.

herdys says

What to say about Theresa Romain that I haven't in the other review? I just LOVED this book.

I'm full of FEELS right now, so the most I can say is that I loved/adored/crushed on Benedict so hard. If Joss was a sweetheart then Benedict was a marshmallow. He and Charlotte were just perfect for each other and I enjoyed their interactions from the first page. Even when they had to be apart it didn't feel forced or like noble idiocy. This book wasn't as bittersweet but it still tug at my heartstrings. It just what Theresa does, I guess ^^

There is so much more that should be said about this book. How the heroine was a courtesan but the hero, not only didn't make a big deal, but also joked about it. How Charlotte didn't give a damn that Benedict was blind or didn't have a penny to his name. IT WAS JUST, UGH, PERFECT! GO READ IT!

Ps: I seriously cannot wait for the second book. That first chapter made want it so bad!

Caz says

I've given this a B+ for both narration and content at AudioGals, so that's a firm 4.5 stars.

I'm a big fan of Theresa Romain's historical romances and am a bit disappointed that so few of them are available in audio format. So naturally, when I saw that her latest book – **Fortune Favors the Wicked** – was going to be available as an audiobook, I jumped at the chance to listen to and review it. The story is just a little bit quirky, but at its heart is a well-written, tender and funny character-driven romance between a pair of slightly unusual but very likeable protagonists who team up to hunt for six trunks of gold sovereigns that have been recently stolen from the Royal Mint.

Charlotte Perry is the daughter of a country vicar who has, for the last ten years, made her living as a high-flying courtesan in London. Ruined at just seventeen and not wanting her family to suffer because of her, she opted to leave in order to make life easier for everyone. But now, she has returned to her small Derbyshire village, partly to escape the attentions of her most recent but abusive protector, and partly because she wants to secure the reward that has been posted for information leading to the recovery of the stolen gold. She plans to use the money to help her family, provide for her young daughter and, she hopes, to make a new life for herself away from London.

You can read the rest of this review at [AudioGals](#).

Sherwood Smith says

Copy received courtesy of NetGalley

A sexy Regency with far better period detail than most of the ones I've explored lately—the only oopsies had to do with the Royal Navy, and with the intricacies of booksellers vs printers vs copyright (and how, at that time, nobody would have cared if a blind man could have actually experienced the travels he wrote about or not; a great many travel books were fictionalized).

Romain gives us a courtesan, Charlotte, who has given up the life for reasons that are slowly disclosed, and Benedict Frost, a blind ex-Naval lieutenant, who meet in Charlotte's tiny hamlet, both intending to earn the reward for discovering who had stolen six trunks of golden sovereigns stolen recently from the Royal Mint.

The bare bones plot is similar to one of Georgette Heyer's less popular romances. I liked the main characters of this one better—Frost and Charlotte won me over with their banter, and I liked the way Romain developed their chemistry without constantly hammering the reader with it on every page, as if the hero's and heroine's constant state of arousal is the most important part of story.

Some fun side characters help flesh out the plot, including a Bow Street Runner who does *not* talk like a Pierce Egan character, unlike most of Heyer's Bow Street Runners. The Heyerian touch was there (in *ton* being used frequently, and other small points) but this story follows its own path rather than being a cardboard cutout of Heyer characteristic plots.

I loved the resolution, and the characterization of Charlotte's family was a high point for me. One character especially won my heart, so that the last line gained extra poignancy.

Andrea says

Buddy read with Lacey! Check out her review!

Lacey and I have been reading a good deal of Romain's books. We've come to love her mature characters, and her unique and relatively drama-free stories, and this one certainly didn't disappoint.

Benedict Frost, a Lieutenant retired from the Navy after he lost his sight, and Charlotte Perry, a former courtesan, meet while on the hunt for stolen coins which promises a substantial reward.

What I loved most about this book were the main characters: neither clung to the past or spend any time wallowing in self-pity. Instead they have both decided not to be defined by their past, and I loved that!

The only thing that bothered me a tiny little bit was the pacing: In the beginning, Benedict and Charlotte focus on the treasure hunt, when real life and a whole lot of issues intrude and the search for the gold becomes almost forgotten. Then the drama that seemed to threaten to overshadow everything else just gets resolved very maturely (which I loved, but it just felt a bit off to me to introduce an Evil villain who slashes faces in anger and stuff only so he can just disappear when he's not convenient anymore). And then... Well to me the story seemed to lose focus a bit. I didn't enjoy the last few chapters as much as I loved the beginning.

But still. This was awesome. I loved the unique storyline, the main characters, and I can't wait to read something else by this awesome author.

Mary - Buried Under Romance says

This story is quite interesting both in plot and in characterization (both the prior and end occupations). There are some complex elements that really make the story alive, instead of resolving things with a neat ribbon that modern historical romance often does...rather, I would say the conflict solutions are very contemporary of our time, and, well, made this reviewer really analyze a book for the first time in a while.

Full review to come.
