



The Wedding Girl

Madeleine Wickham

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At the age of eighteen, in that first golden Oxford summer, Milly was up for anything. Rupert and his American lover Allan were all part of her new, exciting life, and when Rupert suggested to her that she and Allan should get married, just so that Allan could stay in the country, Milly didn't hesitate, and to make it seem real she dressed up in cheap wedding finery and posed on the steps of the registry office for photographs.

Ten years later, Milly is a very different person. Engaged to Simon - who is wealthy, serious, and believes her to be perfect - she is facing the biggest and most elaborate wedding imaginable. Her mother has it planned to the finest detail, from the massive marquee to the sculpted ice swans filled with oysters. Her dreadful secret is locked away so securely she has almost persuaded herself that it doesn't exist - until, with only four days to go, her past catches up with her.

Suddenly, her carefully constructed world is about to crash in ruins around her. How can she tell Simon she's already married? How can she tell her mother? But as the crisis develops, more secrets are revealed than Milly could possibly have realised...

The Wedding Girl Details

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Author : Madeleine Wickham

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From Reader Review The Wedding Girl for online ebook

BookCupid says

Warning: this isn't a chick-lit review. This book is a romance, written under Sophie Kinsella's pseudo.

Milly is a twenty-eight-year-old woman, just a few short days of getting married, who wants everyone to love her. And then the wedding photographer shows up with his seemingly recognizable face. He knows Milly's best kept secret. Killing him is out of the question, yet Milly needs to find away to shut him up before everyone finds out that she's not perfect.

Just knowing how funny Kinsella can be, I felt cheated. I wanted a dash of that humorist tone and crazy situations. But instead this is hard core drama that deals with LGBT themes, non-planned pregnancies, and falling out of love. All things worth discussing.. perhaps worthy of a book club.

Maile says

The biggest problem with Madeleine Wickham is that I continue to expect her to be Sophia Kinsella. While the two are technically the same person, each time I dive into a work published under the name Wickham I find myself missing the charm of a Kinsella book. It's become clear to me that Wickham's style is a bit darker than the lighthearted Kinsella I've grown to love. However the complicated plots found in a Wickham book do make for an interesting read and tend to be better than cookie cutter plots found in similar books of the genre.

In The Wedding Girl, I found myself very slowly being pulled in. In truth I started the book a handful of times before allowing the story to draw me in. I appreciated the changing point of views, while the book is written in third person, nearly every character gets their moment to be in the spotlight. Not only do we understand the motivations of the wedding girl herself, Milly, but we understand the motivations of characters around her.

It's likely that I won't be rereading this book any time in the near future. It was enjoyable, but lacking in the heart that makes chick-lit my not so secret guilty pleasure genre of literature.

An added bonus, for an American like me, was how utterly British some of the names were. It's rare that I read a book with main characters such as Milly, Isobel, Simon and Rupert.

Kru says

It was just OK, got a little too senti for a Sophie Kinsella style, but was a welcome break and liked it :)

Love Fool says

Engaged to Simon - who is wealthy, serious, and believes her to be perfect - she is facing the biggest and most elaborate wedding imaginable. Her mother has it planned to the finest detail, from the massive marquee to the sculpted ice swans filled with oysters. Her dreadful secret is locked away so securely she has almost persuaded herself that it doesn't exist - until, with only four days to go, her past catches up with her.

Suddenly, her carefully constructed world is about to crash in ruins around her. How can she tell Simon she's already married? How can she tell her mother? But as the crisis develops, more secrets are revealed than Milly could possibly have realised.

This was a quick read, which I think most chick-lits should be. I feel like at 18 I would too be young and stupid, willing to help out a poor gay couple. But, now being more than ten years older, I understand that it's not just helping out a friend, it will cause a mess in your life between paper work and status.

This was cute, fun, and a total plane or beach read. This is one of my favorite Madeleine Wickham's books, and yes, I know it's really Sophie Kinsella but I'm not really a fan of her as Madeleine Wickham.

And BTW, Milly's mom is my mom! Maybe that's why I felt like I could relate to this book.

Ciara says

it's really weird to me that like every single negative review of this book focuses on the "agenda" of featuring gay characters that don't all just die of AIDS or repent their sinning ways. people also complain a lot about the "swears". neither one of those things really bothered me. i was more concerned with the fact that it was kind of a crappy book.

the tagline in the blurb says, "it's a problem when saying 'i do' gives you deja vu!" so you can see what is coming. our protagonist, milly, is getting married shortly...but she's already married & no one knows.

the book opens with this previous marriage. milly was 18 & she made the acquaintance of a nice gay couple. one of them was american (the book is set in england) & was having mysterious visa issues (despite being a research fellow at oxford? i think they provide visas for that kind of thing), so milly agreed to marry him to help him stay in the country. there's a ridiculous scene in which throngs of tourists are photographing milly & her new husband, including a sarcastic young man with glasses. do people really do that? i've wandered past plenty of weddings in my day & i've never felt the need to gawk like that. they're not that interesting.

anyway, within two months of this silly marriage of convenience, milly has pretty much lost touch with the couple. she never speaks to her husband again...i fail to see how that would in any way help his bid to get a spousal visa, not having any relationship whatsoever with his erstwhile wife, but...whatever. i guess there's a lot i don't understand about british visa laws.

okay, fast forward ten years. milly is engaged to a nice young chap named simon, who is the only son of harry pinnacle, a multi-millionaire CEO of some kind of weird juice company or something. milly is 100% aware that she has been married before, & that she is not divorced. her husband sent divorce papers at one point, but she doesn't know if they ever went through. yet, she is permitting her mother to arrange a huge expensive society wedding. also, she is aware that her fiance doesn't really know her at all. she wears different clothes when he's around, & pretends to read the newspaper & enjoy sushi. he doesn't know that she actually doesn't pay attention to current events at all, & that she likes miniskirts & bright colors, & that she watches a lot of trashy TV. she figures she will just force herself to turn into the woman simon thinks she is once they are married.

so...milly's an idiot. it's already really, really difficult to give a shit about her idiotic dilemma.

you can guess what happens, right? turns out the wedding photographer was that sarcastic young fellow with the glasses who witnessed milly's wedding ten years before. & he recognizes her, because don't we all recognize random people we saw on the street once ten years ago? & he decides to antagonize her about her previous wedding. he's all creepy, saying shit like, "where's your first husband? have you told anyone you've been married before?" it's totally ridiculous because i think MOST people that have been married previously are fairly open about it with their friends & loved ones. there is absolutely ZERO reason for this random photographer dude to assume that milly has this deep dark secret she hasn't shared with anyone. but it's treated like just a matter of course--of course the photographer is the only one that knows! as someone who has been married & is not anymore, this really made no sense to me at all. why on earth would this photographer assume that milly hasn't told her mother about her previous wedding & that she is on the cusp of committing bigamy?

anyway, milly freaks & rushes to get advice from her godmother. meanwhile, there's this whole plot in which milly's parents' marriage is beginning to crumble, & her older sister is pregnant with a secret baby, even though she has no boyfriend that anyone knows about. can i just say that i guessed the father of the baby about twenty pages after that plotline was introduced? i guess it might qualify as a "twist," but when there are only a finite number of male characters introduced, it really wasn't that difficult to guess. the truth doesn't come out until page 280 or so, & you know they're not going to introduce a brand-new guy to be the baby daddy at that point.

anyway, tediousness transpires, milly's sister convinces her to try to track down her husband & see about arranging a divorce, & this leads to milly locating her husband's boyfriend from the time--rupert. the whole rupert storyline is the one that so many one-star raters found so objectionable. he used to be gay...but now he is married to a woman & living the life of a church-going anti-gay barrister. RABIDLY anti-gay. i think madeleine wickham basically modeled rupert's church after the westboro baptist church. are there really any english church-goers that hate gay people that much? it was weird. it seemed very un-english to me.

milly's all, "rupert, where's allan? i need a divorce?" & rupert's all, "don't tell anyone i'm gay," & milly's all, "dude, you totally need to tell your wife you're gay," & rupert's wife is like, "tell me what now?" & basically rupert's life is destroyed. he tells his wife he was in love with a man at one point & she almost pukes on him. for serious. he starts searching the city for allan & eventually tracks him down to a hospice center. one of the employees has a letter that allan wrote to rupert before he died. rupert's all like, "...AIDS, right? oh man. i sinned & now i'm gonna die," & the hospice dude is like, "um, no, he had leukemia."

anyway, the letter is all, "rupert, i still love you." & rupert decides he needs to be gay again. but he also has to tell milly that allan is dead & that she can get married. so he does. & milly's older sister struggled tediously with whether or not to have an abortion. it reads like an anti-choice pamphlet. it's all, "having the baby would destroy her relationship with harry. he made it clear he didn't want to be a father again. so she'd be on her own. no money, no man, no life. but not having the baby would destroy her." there's actually this awful, philosophical little aside about, "choice? isobel has a choice, all right. all modern women have choices. but she didn't really have a choice. she was enslaved by the maternal urges she never knew she had. could she really take an innocent life?" dude, what? those "maternal urges" are CLEARLY just hormones because there isn't a page that goes by where this character isn't drinking or smoking. i'm surprised they don't have her sitting passed out in a shooting gallery somewhere, having just injected listeria bacteria straight into a vein. or perhaps riding a horse & then enjoying a scalding hot bath.

anyway...the wedding is off because milly's crazy-ass godmother outs her bigamist ways to the priest (she

did it to get back at simon's father, who she went on a few dates with many years before...i know, it didn't make any sense to me either) & simon LOSES HIS SHIT when milly explains things to him. it's all, "how could he hear her make those ancient voews, knowing she had already shared them with another man?" i don't know, dude. people marrying people who have been married before DO IT EVERY FUCKING DAY though. also, the vows are not ancient. they date back to the middle ages, not the dinosaurs. i just feel the need to point that out, because the phrase "ancient vows" was used like 19 times in this book.

rupert rushes to tell milly she's actually a widow, simon apologizes to milly for his outrage, isobel's baby daddy proposes to her & starts coming up with baby names, simon re-propses to milly, & the wedding happens anyway, just like we all knew it would. & also, milly is like, "simon, i like cheap shoes & i watch crappy TV & i don't read the news," & simon is like, "it's okay. i know you anyway because i knew that after all of the stress of having to cancel your wedding & us breaking up & your godmother betraying you & discovering your sister is giving birth to a love child & that your parents' marriage is on the rocks & your dad might lose his job & you're a widow, i guess you might want a cigarette."

man. this was not good.

Nadja says

As usual with the Wickham books:

so many characters
so much drama
so unnecessary secrets

I'm glad this melodrama is over.

(Somewhere between 1 and 2 stars.)

Fernanda says

link review blog Secrets in Books:

<http://www.segredosemlivros.com/2013/...>

Resenha: Não tem como não se divertir com a escrita de Madeleine Wickham, mais conhecida também pelo pseudônimo de Sophie Kinsella. Antes de tudo, preciso dizer que me sinto extremamente culpada. Por que? Eu nunca havia lido um livro da autora, então podem me condenar bastante. Prometo, a partir de agora, correr contra o tempo perdido para ler todas as suas obras publicadas. A narração em questão revelou ser abrangente em diversos aspectos, e isso inclui não somente a trama em si, mas todos os personagens destacados, cada um revelando uma ousadia dinâmica e irreverente.

“(...) Allan levou-a até a estação, ajudou-a a colocar sua mala no compartimento de bagagens e secou suas

lágrimas com um lenço de seda. Em seguida, deu-lhe um beijo de despedida, prometeu escrever e disse que, em breve, se encontrariam em Londres. Milly nunca mais o viu.” Pg.13

A protagonista central se chama Milly, uma moça acomodada e um tanto passiva diante das pessoas ao seu redor. Acredito que a real intenção desta personagem foi destacar exatamente os seus pontos fracos e incluir, no decorrer da trama, as suas qualidades. Na verdade, ela é uma pessoa muito prestativa, quer agradar sempre a todos e as vezes tenta ser alguém que não é, dificultando os seus relacionados e as suas perspectivas diante das dificuldades da vida. Este enredo não possui somente uma moça em apuros diante de algo que está prestes a acontecer, e é justamente essa determinação que valoriza as cenas descritas. Há um envolvimento maior ligado a cada personalidade, o que justifica boa parte dos sentimentos dramáticos e inusitados.

“Simon pareceu satisfeito, e Milly não disse nada. Ele gostava de pensar que tinha essa sintonia com as emoções dela, que sabia do que a noiva gostava e não gostava, que era capaz de detectar seu mau humor. E ela adotara o costume de concordar com ele, mesmo quando suas afirmações eram completamente equivocadas. Afinal, era muito carinhoso da parte dele fazer uma tentativa. A maioria dos homens nem se daria ao trabalho.” Pg.60

Quem já não fez algo e se arrependeu no futuro? Dez anos atrás, Milly, sendo ingênuia e irremediavelmente romântica, resolveu ajudar um casal gay – Allan e Rupert – a ficarem juntos. Allan queria ficar junto de seu amado, mas para isso precisava estar legalizado no país, e foi exatamente por isso que propôs um casamento à Milly. Até aí estava tudo tranquilo – ou não. Será que a moça não pensou que poderia ser um problema se ela viesse a se casar no futuro? Ou que esse fato poderia causar consequências posteriores? Sendo jovem e inocente, ela acabou pensando apenas no presente e no fato de estar ajudando duas pessoas para não se separarem. O caso – complicado – é que agora Milly está prestes a se casar com Simon e para isso ela ainda precisa resolver essa pendência do passado, já que pela lei ainda se encontra casada.

“– Tudo se resumiu a três minutos em um cartório. Uma simples assinatura, há dez anos, perdida em algum documento que ninguém nunca mais verá.” Pg.115

Achei esse livro muito divertido de várias maneiras, é um exemplo de uma leitura dinâmica e rica em detalhes e até mesmo em gêneros. É também o tipo de história que te faz torcer pelo sucesso dos personagens, assim como faz refletir sobre assunto não tão triviais.

link review blog Secrets in Books:

<http://www.segredosemlivros.com/2013/...>

Nicole says

For something I thought was going to be fluffy chick lit, I was pleasantly surprised at how much depth there was to this book. (don't get me wrong; it's not Proust or anything).

Firstly let me say I get annoyed by 'literature snobs' who look down their noses at the 'chick lit' genre. Like in any other literary genre there is well written chick lit (CL!) and badly written CL. Sometimes I'm just in the mood for such a book and I think the reader has to accept the element of predictability. Yes, we all know our

heroine is going to get together with the man she at first finds unbearable, and there is going to be much confusion and misunderstanding along the way. We KNOW. But as long as I have fun getting there and it's well written, I'm happy. I've always loved Sophie Kinsellas books for doing this well.

So from Kinsella writing as Wickham I was expecting much the same.

I was pleased to find that there were quite a few turns of events in this book that I DIDN'T see coming.

Devils advocate says that perhaps that may be because they were a little far fetched?but it's not a reference book; disbelief needs to be suspended to a certain extent. And for once the heroine doesn't necessarily choose to ditch the 'too perfect' fiancé (not a spoiler, operative word is choose, and there are a few twists and turns before they either make up/break up).

There were also some unexpectedly weighty issues tackled in this book (albeit with a light touch, if that's not a contradiction in terms?) homosexual love, and the denial of same, bigamy, death, unexpected pregnancy, reinvigoration of tired love (and more) clearly none of these are examined that deeply in 366 pages though. There are some criticisms of this book of course, the main one being that most things are tied up a little too nicely at the end, but we like that, admit it! There are a few things which happen which realistically any family would take more than 12hours to suddenly be *fine* with, and the villain seems to be the villain and do their dastardly deeds for no apparent reason. There are hints as to their motivation, but it is never really explained. Also the church going anti gays are a lil bit too characatured.

Overall though I found myself reading way past a sensible bedtime to finish this book, cried a bit both happy & sad tears, and best of all raised my eyebrows a few times in surprise. Can't complain about that so...4 stars.

Cakes174 says

When I think of reading a Sophie Kinsella book, I normally imagine something light-hearted, funny and definitely entertaining. Now I completely understand the concept of branching out and writing different types of books under a pseudonym so I wasn't expecting something like her other books. In that respect, this book definitely met those expectations. Unfortunately however, I was also expecting something good (for lack of a better term) which this definitely was not.

I think it's safe to say that there was not one single likeable character in the entire book, which as you can imagine is quite a feat. They weren't likeable and they most definitely were not happy, which in turn made me feel pretty depressed. The main character, I found completely and utterly moronic. Why on earth would you, knowing your married, accept another man's proposal and then do NOTHING TO OBTAIN A DIVORCE??! The 'ignore a problem and hope it goes away' attitude is quite common with Sophie Kinsella heroines but it is normally carried out in a funny and charming way. Not this time though; I felt like physically shaking some sense into her.

I could rant for significantly longer and dissect each character's many issues (fiancé: whiny brat, sister: pregnant with child of man old enough to be her father, mother: obsessive, father: late-life crisis with work/marriage, actual husband: dead, actual husband's lover: wracked with guilt/grief, actual husband's lover's wife: borderline psychotic). Like I said, not a happy one in the bunch and I could carry on going but frankly I've wasted enough time on this book as it is. Sophie Kinsella: Please stick to your normal books and retire as Madeleine Wickham (who I can safely say I will never read anything else by)!!

Merand says

I am a fan of Sophie Kinsella's books, so when I found out that she was also writing as Wickham, I wanted to take a look. This was my first Wickham book and it was definitely different. Kinsella's books are fun and flighty, romantic comedies with little edge. I've often likened them to modern fairy tales and enjoy them very much. In this book, the very first difference was it was written in the third person with shifting view points as opposed to Kinsella's first person stories. The Wedding Girl took me a little time to get into but once I did, I found myself enjoying. I was impressed with Wickham's honest approach to some of modern society's big questions and while it wasn't heady or in-depth, she didn't shy away from looking into questions of marriage, fidelity, abortion, or homosexual relationships, and while I may not agree with her in everything, I appreciated her honest treatment as opposed to the supposition that life's questions only have one answer. Not as fun or flighty but still enjoyable, perhaps even more so for giving an edge to a story that could have been another comedic rehash. Do all of Wickham's books hold this edge? Perhaps not, but it was nice to see that she isn't just rehashing Shopaholic in every tale.

Elaine says

A week to go until Millie and Simon get married and final preparations are well underway for what promises to be THE society wedding of the year. That is, until a huge spanner is thrown into the works when Millie's darkest secret looks like being revealed. Ten years ago she did something rather foolish – she married an American friend as a favour, to help him stay in the country. She never told her family, and over time pushed it to the back of her mind – until now, that is.

I loved the characters, especially Olivia, Millie's mum. Knee deep in wedding preparations, she is SO looking forward to the big day – when she expects to shine as Mother of the Bride. It would have been very easy to turn Olivia into a caricature but she does have depth and despite her very in your face enthusiasm for the big day and her so obvious social climbing, knows that it is her daughters' happiness that really matters.

It seems that nearly everyone in the book has secrets that they have been keeping and dilemmas to resolve throughout the book and they all learn the lesson that whilst it is important to be honest with the ones you love, it is more important to be true to yourself.

Although I thought Millie was a bit of an idiot for doing what she did in the first place and then not making 100% sure that everything was sorted out afterwards, I really enjoyed reading this book. It is very easy to read, a book that you just want to keep on reading to see how and if Millie manages to resolve everything.

Rebecca says

I pulled this off a library shelf on impulse, expecting a light, fun read. Within a chapter, I had a feeling of foreboding. The heroine was flighty, immature, and not terribly bright, her fiance was stubbornly blind, and her mother was atrocious. I hated these people. I'd accidentally gotten myself mired in a brand-name dropping morass of people being shallow.

Fortunately, I was wrong.

Oh, the characters have flaws all right. But it turns out that the author knows what she's doing. People have

unexpected depths and problems beyond being idiotic. There's also hidden reserves of compassion and love. And the ending, while it has some schmaltz, also has an unexpected poignancy. This is a more complicated book than I'd realized, and I enjoyed it all the more for that.

The one big issue is that there is one character who turns out to be malevolent for reasons not fully explained. There are little hints, but given how well some of the other backstory is described, I kind of wonder if the author had intended there to be another big reveal of the character's past that gotten forgotten or accidentally edited out. As it is, the character in question does some horrible things that are never particularly justified.

That said, this is a more intelligent book than it needed to be, while still being rather compulsively readable.

kari says

This is a really good read and I'd have given it a five but I didn't care at all for the leading man, Simon. The way he was described he seems to be something of a short, stocky, nasty-tempered and controlling childish brat. This doesn't make me hope that he'll end up with Milly. In fact, I kept waiting for the hero to show up, which isn't good since I guess he was the leading man, but certainly not a hero. And I kept waiting for his conversation with his father, to have some understanding or at least a discussion of their past, but it never happened. Simon seemed to suddenly accept his father and that didn't feel authentic without some more interaction between them. One brief conversation wouldn't seem to be enough to mend their relationship. It would be easy to simply put this down as chick lit and while I definitely enjoy chick lit, there is a lot more depth to this story than that. There is a real heart to this story and an underlying theme of honesty, being who you truly are and living your truth. This was true for all of the central characters, each of whom isn't really being open with the people in their lives.

There were moments that truly wrenched my heart interwoven throughout and the various plots are excellently integrated.

Well done.

Cindy says

Is it me or do Wickham's main characters all seem like the same girl with a different name? She's slightly loopy and harbours some secret about herself that the guy is always completely clueless to. I didn't love this book. I didn't hate it. It was just "meh." Plus, there were a few really boring storylines that I didn't care for at all. It's odd that a book can be both predictable and ridiculously far-fetched at the same time, but her books seem to be just that. If you're really itching for some chick lit, read her first couple of Shopaholic books instead. They have the charm that this one lacks.

Mary says

As I read this book I kept thinking back to a communications class I took in college and Michael Medved. He did a study questioning whether media shaped the future of society with its messages or whether it merely reflected what existed already within society.

I truly believe that Madelaine Wickham thinks that this book is a pretty accurate reflection upon society and the struggles of human relationships in every stage. I don't know if she is accurate but I found myself thinking that I hope she isn't. I left this book feeling very grateful for gospel principles taught by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and for eternal covenants. And I felt overwhelmed with gratitude for such an amazing husband.

As for the book I felt like it had a story that was filled with such worldliness of a me me me generation and wickedness disguised as confusion. The apex of my discomfort came as I read "Pregnancy, they had been instructed at school, was akin to a nuclear missile-destroying everything in its path and leaving its victims to struggle through a subsequent life hardly worth living. It destroyed careers, relationships, happiness. The risk was simply not worth it...."

These sentences attacked the very essence of everything that I believe to be true and everything I value. And although I finished the book feeling lucky and grateful I can't in good conscience recommend this book to anyone in case she does influence the culture through her book.
