



Secrets of a Lady

Tracy Grant

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In the glittering world of Regency London, where gossip is exchanged—and reputations ruined—with the tilt of a fan, Mélanie Fraser is the perfect wife. Devoted to her husband, Charles, the grandson of a duke, she is acknowledged as society's most charming hostess. But just as the elegant façade of Regency London hides a dark side, Mélanie is not what she seems. She has a secret: one that could destroy her perfect jewel-box life forever . . . and the cost to keep it is an exquisite heirloom ring surrounded by legend and power. The search for it will pull Mélanie and Charles into a gritty underworld of gin-soaked brothels, elegant gaming hells, and debtors' prisons. In this maze of intrigue, deception is second nature and betrayal can come far too easily . . .

Secrets of a Lady Details

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From Reader Review *Secrets of a Lady* for online ebook

Julie says

I really liked *Vienna Waltz* and *Imperial Scandal* so I wanted to read more books by Tracy/Teresa Grant. *Secrets of a Lady/Daughter of the Game* was the debut book by the author. I think she wrote it close to ten years ago. The characters in this book, Charles and Melanie Fraser, are supposed to be the same characters in her newer books (*Vienna Waltz* and *Imperial Scandal*), but renamed Malcolm and Suzanne Rannoch. I was really excited to read about what happened to them as the books were not written/released in chronological order. However, I found *Secrets of a Lady* not to be as well written as the more recent books. Truly, that is not unexpected since she wrote it ten years ago. I would expect that her writing would improve over the years. My real problem was that I found Charles and Melanie much less likeable than Malcolm and Suzanne. I just couldn't wrap my head around the idea that these were the same characters. There were some similarities, but Grant's more recent writing made Suzanne and Malcolm much more approachable and sympathetic. I was rooting for Suzanne and Malcolm to work it all out. I understood their struggles and conflicts. With Charles and Melanie, it was just painful. Things happened too fast, Charles was a jerk, maybe justifiably so, but it didn't make me root for them to work it out. He came across very much holier than thou. I appreciated that Melanie essentially pointed that out to him, but you would think after seven years of marriage he would cut her a little slack a little sooner once the shock wore off and not have her have to spoon feed him all the reasons for doing the things that they did back in the day when they were fighting for what they believed in. Bottom line, if you have read about Charles and Melanie and loved them, I think you will love the newer books about Malcolm and Suzanne even with the name change. If you love Suzanne and Malcolm, be warned that Charles and Melanie are little rougher around the edges.

*The re-release as *Secrets of a Lady* did include some changes which may make a difference to some readers. I read and reviewed the original version- *Daughter of the Game*.*

Julie Barrett says

Really my rating is 2.5 stars. I thought the actual mystery was a good one. I did not guess who did it. There were other twists & turns in the story that surprised me in a good way. So Tracy Grant has a clever plot going for her.

However, something about the 2 main characters bugged me. I didn't find them as enchanting as I was obviously supposed to. They just rubbed me the wrong way, which is a large problem when the two main characters are on almost every page. They seemed too modern, too twenty first century. The story was set in the early 1800s during the Regency period in England - one of my favorite periods in history. However, it could have been set at any time. I didn't get a feel for London at that time. And Charles, the husband, was just too too understanding and open minded. I could not suspend my disbelief enough to accept he would respond the way the author had him responding. It veered to comedy, the way he was so liberated and understanding.

Bibliophile says

Tracy Grant's *Secrets of a Lady*, set in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars, starts off interestingly enough

with the kidnapping of a young boy from his wealthy family's house and the slow revelation that his parents' seemingly idyllic marriage isn't all that it seems. But I find the main characters boring and paper thin – Mélanie is impossibly beautiful and refined (despite the life that she's revealed to have lived) but simultaneously, a totally kickass fighter who can shoot and stab people without difficulty but who also has exquisite taste in everything; Charles, her husband, is yet another Lymond-clone (unaware of his true paternity and angsty about same; extremely enlightened and liberated about women; incredibly forgiving, etc.)

The language is also problematic for me (e.g. I believe "mad" in English English more or less always refers to "insanity" rather than anger, and yet it's used for the latter purpose constantly. There are many other such linguistic blunders that surprise me, given the blurb that mentions Ms. Grant's prize for her undergraduate history thesis!) In fact, the only things I liked about this novel were the attempt (however thin) to contextualize the romantic suspense novel and ground it in actual political events; and the characters of the children and the cat, who seem to have been based on observations of actual children and cats, in contrast to the adult characters who seem to have been based on wishful thinking and the belief that constantly describing someone as brilliant, beautiful, etc., will convince the reader of same!

I guess I should have known what to expect, having read and not particularly liked *Beneath a Silent Moon* (the "prequel" to *Secrets of a Lady*) but I kept hoping I'd like this one better!

Jennifer says

Whew...ok, wow. Any review I try to give here would not do this book justice. Suffice it to say that I absolutely *loved* it. This book had so many twists and turns (including one moment where my mouth literally dropped open in surprise), that my head was spinning pretty much the entire time...which is definitely a good thing.

The characters are rich and compelling, the dialogue is sharp, honest and tightly written, and the action scenes are breath-taking. There are parts that were very difficult to read and I welled up with tears more than once.

I cannot wait to read more of this author's work!

???s Xamante de los spoilersX says

DNF

Los libros sobre secuestro y/o asesinatos no son lo mío, no sé, no tengo la paciencia suficiente como para querer saber o descubrir quién es el culpable ¿? que se yo, es un sub género del Romance que no me termina de convencer.

Wealththeow says

Rich, handsome and respected, Charles Fraser survived the Napoleonic Wars and now has it all: two healthy children, the love of his beautiful and intelligent wife Melanie, and a burgeoning political career. But then his son is kidnapped, and Charles can only save him by plunging into society's underbelly and the bloody past he tried to repress.

Only a few chapters in, a Huge Secret is revealed. Most of the time, Huge Secrets are either the end of a novel or are forgiven/forgotten after a single touching scene. But here, the characters deal with the repercussions for the rest of the novel. I really enjoyed watching them work through the consequences and renegotiate their relationships. Charles and Melanie are a little too anachronistically enlightened to be believable, but I'm glad Grant made the attempt.

SPOILERS FROM HERE ON OUT!

Melanie was a French spy and for the first few years of their marriage, stole papers and info from Charles and their English friends. Moreover, their son is actually Melanie's with her spy master, Raol. AND Raol is in fact Charles's father as well. AND Charles's younger half-brother Edgar is the villain. Why make Raol father Charles? Why have Edgar be evil? Half the twists are unnecessary.

Oyceter says

<http://oyceter.livejournal.com/116930...>

Jack Vasen says

What a tangled web. *Secrets of a Lady* was one of Tracey Grant's earlier books. It is about characters named Melanie and Charles Fraser. It precedes most of the Malcolm and Suzanne Rannoch books in terms of original publication. Yet in terms of historical chronology, this book takes place late in the sequence. And yet many of the things that happen and secrets revealed occur early in the Rannoch books. Chronologically, this is the first book about the Frasers but the second book published.

The Frasers and the Rannoch's are the same characters with minor differences. Most of their family and friends are the same. Some of the secondary characters have different names, but many have the same names such as Colin, Jessica, O'Rourke, Laura, Blanca and Addison. TG herself makes a comment that it is like an alternate dimension or parallel universe or some such.

The difficulty is in trying to find an order to read the books and TG offers suggestions but even so there are problems. ***Secrets of a Lady* is a spoiler to many of the Rannoch books.** It tells much of the characters' histories in one book where in the Rannoch books, many of the revelations take place spread out over the series. And there are a few differences in the stories.

I think this story is excellent and it certainly has a good twist at the end. Like the Rannoch books, much of the text is about relationships as opposed to story progression. This is where the problem is. As mentioned earlier, the relationship story including backstories is much the same as in the Rannoch books, but it is revealed more quickly. The point is, if you read this first, you spoil many of the fine twists in the Rannoch

books. If you read them first, as I did, much of this book is old news. Very much.

Since this book was written many years earlier, I think it lacks some of the polish and depth of the Rannoch books. There is hardly any of the double meanings and deeper meanings which they contained. The Rannoch books frequently juxtapose things occurring in Malcolm and Suzanne's life against things happening in the lives of their friends as a sort of irony.

I didn't like Charles and Melanie as much as Malcolm and Suzanne. There is at least one major event in Charles backstory which is different from Malcolm's and I think that makes his character slightly different. As to why I like Melanie less, I can't put my finger on it. Perhaps my preference is artificial and non-existent.

In short, my recommendation would be that a new reader start with the Rannoch books such as Vienna Waltz and especially Imperial Scandal and so on, and not read this book at all. I don't think this adds enough to their story and some of the differences in detail are hard to keep straight. In some ways those differences are minor but in some ways they are not. To me, Kitty is a major difference.

Mature themes: There is backstory description of war related rape which is particularly vicious and includes an 8 year old girl. There are other atrocities against preteen children including one by the judicial system. There are many descriptions of non-sexual physical violence including killing which are not unusual in a book of this type. There is no description of consensual sex.

Mary says

Charles Fraser, grandson of the Duke of Rannoch, met his wife, Melanie, during the Peninsula War. They barely knew each other when they met but now, nearly seven years later, and well after Waterloo, they are deeply in love and have the kind of intimacy in marriage others can only dream of.

Until their son Colin is kidnapped by a figure from a past they thought dead and buried. They come face to face with secrets in their marriage and their family that may tear them and their marriage apart. They must race against the clock to save Colin from unscrupulous spies, keep their own Foreign Office at arms length, manage the shocking revelations, and stay alive.

The characters are wonderful. The plot is great. The dialogue is excellent. And the historical research for the background is impeccable. The portrayal of intimacy in marriage and how the betrayal of trust affects that intimacy and each of the partners is so wonderfully shown here. I am so impressed with this plot line has been handled. Not to mention the way other family storylines have been woven through to make sense of the motivations for decisions past and present.

This is the first of this authors books that I have read and I am really looking forward to reading more of this series.

Christy B says

Oh, boy, this is my kind of book. I *loved* it. Fantastic Regency mystery. Fast-paced, intense dialogue, all kinds of twists and turns and lots of surprises.

Charles and Mélanie Fraser's son has just been kidnapped from his own home. In the search for a priceless heirloom, which is the key to getting him back, the Frasers have to trample in places that no self respecting member of high society would ever be caught dead in.

In their course, the Frasers unearth secrets that have been long buried. The dialogue that ensues is as harsh and honest that you'll ever see between a married couple.

The characters are intriguing and you never know who's hiding what. You never know who's around the corner ready to do someone in. People aren't what they appear to be. And there are moments that will just outright shock you.

This is the perfect regency, no doubt about it. You can see and just about smell the world you're reading. The descriptions are just right, not overdone.

I recommend this to any historical mystery lover.

Estara says

This would have been five star if we hadn't had the heavy-handed drama with the surprise villain at the end - otherwise I thought it was an amazing tour-de-force of a marriage of seven years of true feelings, true passion, true beliefs and secrets on both sides finally being thrown into the crucible of the lies and secrets because they endanger the son of Melanie and Charles.

As I said in the review of the chronologically earlier book - what if the Juana and Harry Smith situation had NOT been as it was in real life (or as Georgette Heyer romanticised it in *The Spanish Bride*)? Okay, Harry was never a spy.

I loved Melanie and Charles doing their utmost to save their son, the closer focus on their immediate family and helpers, with the surprise revelation of Charles true father thrown in - I loved that the dialogue and interior monologues followed along with the various shocks and I could follow why the marriage actually does grow in strength after the various shocks.

If I hadn't read the chronologically earlier book first, where we see Charles dysfunctional family in all its glory, I would not have believed in his overcoming of the mores of the time in his acceptance of what Melanie did, though.

I wouldn't mind seeing more O'Roarke and Roth, if I can get them. Colin's reaction to the situation was a bit too good to be real for a 6-year-old to me, though. As was Roth's dealing with that last letter...

Jennavier says

Last night I was desperate to find a decent book to read. I was striking out spectacularly and I didn't have much hope of it getting better. *Secrets of a Lady* is an ebook I'd started over a month ago but had to put down early on. Luckily for me I decided to give it another shot because it was excellent.

The historical feel of it was probably my favorite thing. I'm a history nerd and it's rare that an author engages

me so much I feel like I might be back in that era. Grant does an excellent job of mimicking that world without falling into the stereotypes we've created of it. All of the little details were so great without overwhelming the story.

After that I was fascinated by the romance between the main characters. Don't trust the blurb on this since it has almost nothing to do with what actually happens. This is about a married couple who faces the typical trauma of a seven year itch on an unusual way- by finally learned all of each others secrets. It was riveting. Lastly the mystery plot was quite excellent. Technically this was the focal point of the novel but it was overshadowed by the many revelations between characters. That doesn't mean that the author didn't do a good job with it. It was suspenseful and kept me on my toes.

Amanda says

There's an effing typo on the back of the book. This does not bode well. *facepalm*

UPDATE - OK, so it's actually good. But still... Proofreading = Good.

Karina says

I loved this book. It's different than my usual fare but it caught me and wouldn't let me go.

Imagine two spies married and in love, their child is kidnapped, and then a lot of surprises get revealed in their mad dash to save his life. Add to that great writing, great character building, and amazing pacing, and you can see why I LOVED this book and was sad when it was over.

And the ending and resolution do not disappoint.

I'm going to keep an eye out for anything else Tracy Grant has in the works.

Zann says

I liked this but it seems to me there were some inconsistencies. Ultimately I enjoyed the book but this series is VERY confusing. Apparently Malcolm and Suzanne Rannoch and Charles and Melaine Fraser are the same people but in sort of a different timeline/parallel universe (?) with events and supporting characters not being consistent in both timelines. You can read the books in chronological order or publication order but I'm told that going back and forth between the characters and events is quite confusing! I'll bet! Why not write two completely different series instead of this confusing mess? Therefore, although I'd like to read more, I think I'll pass on this series.
