



## Imperial Scandal

*Tracy Grant, Teresa Grant (Pseudonym)*

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**June 1815**

*As two countries prepare for war, the whirl of revelry hides unimaginable deceit. Amid the treachery of war and the whirl of revelry, no one is what they seem. . .*

*Nights waltzing at candlelit balls...champagne-filled picnics on golden afternoons...*

Removed to Brussels in the wake of Napoleon's escape from Elba, Intelligence Agent Malcolm Rannoch and his wife, Suzanne, warily partake in the country's pleasures. They find the city, on the verge of war, seemingly bent on pleasure. But with the Congress of Vienna in chaos and the Duke of Wellington preparing for battle, the festivities are cut short when Malcolm is sent on a perilous mission that unravels a murderous world of espionage. . .

But one night Malcolm slips away from one of the endless round of lavish balls to meet with a fellow spy. Gunfire interrupts their meeting and claims an unexpected victim.

No one knows what Lady Julia Ashton, the demure wife of a British officer, was doing at the château where Malcolm and his fellow British spy are ambushed. But now her enigmatic life has ended in an equally mysterious death.

As the conflict with Napoleon marches toward Waterloo, and Brussels surrenders to bedlam, Suzanne and Malcolm search for the truth. The secrets behind Lady Julia's life and death lead them into an intricate labyrinth of secrets and betrayals in which no one can be trusted...not even a spouse.

## Imperial Scandal Details

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Author : Tracy Grant , Teresa Grant (Pseudonym)

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## **From Reader Review Imperial Scandal for online ebook**

### **Kay Webb says**

on kindle; began 30 Mar 2012; finished in the early AM 1 Apr 2012

I really enjoyed this new episode in the adventures of Malcolm/Charles and Suzanne/Melanie Rannoch/Frazer. This one is set in Brussels and its environs just before, during and just after the Battle of Waterloo. There is a murder to solve, espionage to contend with, personal relationship complications to resolve, and THE BATTLE. Grant performs a masterful balancing act of presenting scenes from different characters' perspectives on the battlefield and in the city.

Malcolm and Suzanne deepen their bond, even though she is more torn than ever by her divided loyalties to the French Republican cause and to her husband. David and Simon face a challenge from their different backgrounds. New couple to the series, Harry and Cordelia Davenport begin to repair their marriage, broken by her infidelity.

This is an engrossing read.

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### **Julie says**

There were so many characters in this book, it was a little difficult to keep up with the mystery, but the historical references to the Battle of Waterloo and the complicated relationship between the main characters was fascinating.

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### **Alice says**

Aweome book and series. Love the setting, indepth plot and characters. Highly recommend

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### **Li says**

Reading this right after Vienna Waltz meant I actually remembered who was who, which in turn meant that it was a lot easier to follow the plot, which was a good old-fashioned whodunnit. I loved the historical detail and how the feel of the times was portrayed, especially the frenetic gaiety of the last days leading up to the War. The secondary romance really worked for me, but then again, I'm a sucker for angst. There's betrayal galore and a very complex web of relationships, and I love how Teresa Grant doesn't take the easy route out when it comes to Malcolm and Suzanne - how is this going to end?

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### **Brenna says**

I really enjoyed this sequel to The Vienna Waltz although I had the same problem with this one that I did with the last. I kept getting confused with who was who and some of the back stories but I didn't let it distract me from the overall story.

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### **Angela says**

Loved this mystery set against Brussels & Waterloo. Great history lesson, well plotted story that kept me guessing till the end - like an Agatha Christy, but with better characters & setting. Such interesting characters, with a twisting plot, secrets revealed, surprises, & more! I really enjoy this author and had ordered all her other books now.

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### **Noodles78 says**

So second book could have been the difficult one, number one sets the tone introduces the characters and lets you discover the time/place/feeling. What can number two bring to the feast? A whole lot of intrigue, scandal, death and more shocking plot-turners if this book is anything to go by!

I even had to put the book down in confusion at one point, but don't worry, this only lasted for about 5 mins until I had to find out what happened next. I love how complex the characters are, how just because a couple are married, it doesn't have to mean that they get the 'Moonlighting' ending (google if you're not sure. Bruce Willis and Cybill Shepherd. Amazing until they got together, then Meh.), they are twisted and full of surprises but still love each other. Brilliant.

Cannot wait until book three comes out.

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### **Mary B. Grove says**

#### **Intricately plotted and quite well-written**

All of Grant's books are worth reading, despite the unmitigated gall of her latest publisher in forcing her to alter the main characters' names partway through the series. The characters are complex human beings in emotionally trying situations, and the focus is on the cost of speaking truth and the inherent unknowability of the people we think we know. The author is miles better than most historical mystery/romance novelists, and I recommend her work highly. On another note: I've read a number of people commenting that they believe the Charles+Melanie/Malcolm+Suzanne series should be read in publication order. The problem with that is how many spoilers you get stuck with. Grant's website gives the chronological order for the first few books: His Spanish Bride, Vienna Waltz, Imperial Scandal, Paris Affair, Beneath a \_\_\_\_\_ Moon, Secrets of a

Lady/A Daughter of the Game, Mask of \_\_\_\_.

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### **Misfit says**

The setting: Brussels, Belgium June 1815. Napoleon and his army are on the march, and Brussels is a hot bed of spies and double spies, along with a murder mystery to be solved by English diplomat Malcolm Rannoch and his wife Suzanne. I really don't want to say much more about the story than this, because 1) you don't want to be spoiled and 2) it's way too complicated to try to explain without a tl;dr review.

Imperial Scandal is the next book following events at the Congress of Vienna in Vienna Waltz, with Malcolm and Suzanne once again playing detective. In this book, the relationship between this pair who married as strangers continues to grow, and Suzanne now finds herself with quite a pickle on her hands when a big twist is revealed (I did not see that coming!). Complications ahoy for future books in this series.

The cast of characters is a bit complicated (there's an awful lot of brothers marrying sisters and other inter-family relationships going on, Grant does provide a list of them at the front if you've a need to refer back (kind of awkward with a digital book - should have had a second device with the list open next to me).

All in all a very good mystery, plus the historical setting (Waterloo!) and a healthy dollop of romance as Malcolm and Suzanne's relationship continues to grow (the sex is very low-key and behind doors). This series is a bit difficult to track down the reading order (on GR it is listed by date of publication), but you can also find an FAQ on the author's website here. So far I'm sticking with the Kensington titles published more recently, and then will backtrack to the older titles since they appear to take place later than the Kensington Books. While His Spanish Bride is the first in chronological order, I would not recommend reading that prior to finishing this book. There be spoilers.

Kindle copy obtained via library loan.

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### **Foggygirl says**

The political and romantic machinations were enough to make your head spin but still a very entertaining read.

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### **Bridget says**

I think I liked this one even better than the first book, Vienna Waltz. The plot twists made me dizzy, & I loved the account of the Battle of Waterloo. The hardest part was keeping track of who was with whom, and what side they were on. Great book, hope there is a third!

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### **TJ says**

**3.5/5.0**

Very honest but cynical view of regency era relationships couched in a mystery.

For a complete review, visit *Affaire de Coeur* magazine, hard copy or online, April 2012 issue.

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### **Lynn Calvin says**

really love this story of characters Suzanne and malcolm. they parallel but arent quite Melanie and Charles of Daughter of the Game/ Secrets of a Lady,which I consider one of the best books I have ever read.

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### **Sarah says**

Interesting twist, but I'm getting a little tired of the ham-fisted, "if he only knew" "she was still keeping secrets."

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### **Lynn Spencer says**

Another strong book in the Rannoch series. I love reading about Malcolm and Suzanne Rannoch. The ebb and flow of their marriage is at least as interesting as the mysteries they untangle.

This book is set immediately before and during the Battle of Waterloo. Not surprisingly, tensions run high and Grant paints a fascinating picture of diplomatic balls juxtaposed with murder and intrigue. As the book opens, the apparently respectable Lady Julia Ashton is killed at a chateau where Malcolm and a fellow spy are ambushed. Her death raises a number of questions, not the least of which would be why was she there in the first place? Malcolm is tasked with untangling the mystery, and so begins a story that is quite the page-turner for the most part.

As with her other books, Grant creates a universe where her fictional characters interact seamlessly with actual historical figures. In some ways, this can be difficult reading because she has a way of making one care for the real people as much as the invented ones on occasion. Why is this difficult, you ask? Well, you try being the one to explain that you're bawling over someone who died 200+ years ago.

If you like historical romance or historical mystery, you will likely enjoy **Imperial Scandal** quite a bit. The solution to the mystery involved a giant pile-on of coincidences that went beyond my ability to suspend disbelief at times, but I still found this a very enjoyable read.

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