



Never A Lady

Barbara Dawson Smith

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Haunted by her sister's memory...

A vision brought traveling preacher's daughter Mary Sheppard to the wicked city of London-she saw the image of her runaway identical twin Josephine, bloodstained and begging for help. But Josephine has vanished and is wanted for the murder of her nobleman lover. And his brother Adam, the haughtily elegant Duke of St. Chaldon, has sworn to see her hang.

Conspiring with her sister's enemy...

The only way to clear Josephine's name is to find the real culprit, so shy Mary devises a scandalous ruse. Dressed as a courtesan, wearing gems as heavy as sin, and tutored in the arts of a temptress by the duke, she will enter the gilded salons of Regency society.

Trapped by passion and endangered by love...

But soon Mary's passion and spirit arouse in Adam the dark heat of desire. And as he coaxes her to delicious abandon in a decadent game of deception, Mary finds herself living the life and the lie of a privileged lady-the lady she knows she can never be...

Never A Lady Details

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From Reader Review Never A Lady for online ebook

Chitra *CJ* says

"Never a Lady" is the story of Mary and Adam.

So I saw a good review of this book which went on and on praising it, and decided to give it a try.

BAD IDEA.

This was so uncomfortable to read.

Basically the gist of the story is- Mary and Jo are twins with psychic connection. They work with their conservative and controlling priest father, and help him live a pure life by singing sermons. When Jo escapes the stifling life to become a rich man's mistress, Mary is coerced to sever their connection and stay with her father..only for her to see a bloodied vision of her sister!

She decides to take matters in her hand by travelling to the city, and finding that her sister has apparently shot her lover Cyril. Soon she is assaulted by Cyril's brother, aka our hero Adam, who soon realizes his mistake and decides to use Mary to get to her sister.

A despicable hero, an innocent hero, a very BAD chemistry and loads of cringeworthy scenes fill this read.

Our dbag hero

- Manipulates the heroine
- Always sees her with lecherous eyes and ogles her bewbs
- Almost gets her raped
- Uses her for his own agenda
- Mishandles her
- Never believes her
- Seduces and discards her by propositioning an affair- DESPITE knowing about her faith in god
- Hates poor people and is very haughty
- Thinks he's doing the biggest charity by offering for her though he compromised her
- Tries to "better" her for the rich

Our heroine is slightly naive, mostly stupid and gives in to the INTENSE attraction she has for the hero by giving up her morals, always going back to trust him after he repeatedly tramples it, and ultimately not slapping him. She was so starved for love, she lapped up any crumbs he threw at her. I wish she had a effing backbone.

Her only redeeming moments were where she made him realize his hypocrisy and aristocratic disdain.

There are scenes where I *Almost* liked the book, but then the hero shows up again and Im like NAH. I dont mind a brooding, cruel hero- but usually in books by 80% mark you have an insight into the character's psyches. In this one, all we saw was a condescending horny hero who is bound by rigid duties, and nothing he said convinced me he was a loving guy.

GAAAAH

SWME (view spoiler)

1/5 (I wish I could rate in negatives)

Diana says

Back in medieval England, a guilty pleasure of mine. A different twist to the cliché of a nobleman falling for a commoner and throwing away convention. The kidnapping twist was fun but I had the bad guy picked out right away, it was still a fun read though. ⇒

Juliana Philippa says

Was surprised by how much I enjoyed the book, as I didn't think I would, given the whole preacher-daughter-good-two-shoes and twins-with-a-supernatural-connection aspect. I would have given it even more than 4 stars and was debating as I read it whether I would give it 4.5 or 5, but some things towards the end brought it down a little for me.

I didn't really like the mystery subplot and thought that the truth disclosed in the end bordered on the ridiculous and melodramatic. Parts of Mary and Adam's "investigation" beforehand were quite silly, but I was enjoying the rest of the book enough to ignore them. The other thing that was a little bit of a letdown in the ending was how Mary and Adam's romance plays out. Yes, they get together - I know, huge spoiler, sit down while you recover from your surprise - but while the rest of their relationship had been fantastic (!), this was ... I don't know, anti-climactic? Unsatisfying? Something.

Would definitely recommend though. Highly enjoyable romance.

Honey says

I loved it!!

Adam was just delish! typical of a reformed rake and Mary was not a simpering idiot.

Ivy H says

3.5 stars.

I was so excited when I came across this novel ! That's because I love to read about the preacher's daughter and the rake H trope. It's fascinating, for me, to read about a preacher's ingenue daughter bringing goodness and light to the dark world of a cynical and cold H. What's even better about this specific novel is that there is absolutely no cheating; the H is a rake and he is toying with the idea of proposing marriage to a debutante

friend of his family, but he absolutely loses all sexual interest in other women after he meets the heroine Mary. Mary's an endearing heroine, whose one of those idealistic young ladies that have not one nasty bone in her body. At times, I was awed and even annoyed (and jealous) that one woman could be so selfless and good. Lol. What's even more mind boggling (to me) is that Mary truly believes in her faith. She and her father (the radical itinerant travelling preacher) are not posers, fakers or pretenders who use the Bible to con others out of money or to make themselves powerful and important. At first, I thought that her father Thomas Sheppard was just another con artist type of Bible basher (because unfortunately, history has shown that these guys are far too numerous) but he's a true believer. Thomas Sheppard actually gave up an inherited fortune (that's only revealed at the end) because he doesn't want any ill gotten gains.

Mary Sheppard's identical twin sister, Josephine, ran off to London to be the mistress of a nobleman called Cyril. He's the younger brother of the hero. The H is the rakish, sexy, intimidating, powerful and rich Adam, the Duke of St. Chalon. He's bored with his life and is angry at his brother Cyril because the latter fell in love with Josephine and wanted to marry her. The H forbade Cyril from marrying a low born woman like Josephine and even tried to blackmail the woman into leaving his brother. A huge disaster occurs when somebody shoots Cyril and Josephine is nowhere to be found. Adam believes that Josephine is the shooter because he found a letter from her stating that she's run away with a new lover. The heroine, Mary, shares a special telepathic bond with her twin sister and so there's a tiny para-normal element to the storyline. Mary gets these visuals in her mind (messages from Josephine) that alert her to the fact that her beloved twin is in trouble. The loyal Mary then runs off to London to investigate and see if she can help her sister. When she arrives at Jo's house, she meets just one servant Obediah and a little dog called Prinny.

The H turns up at the house and thinks that he's seeing Jo but he soon realizes that it's Mary and he concocts a scheme to try and force Jo into coming out of hiding. He fools Mary into believing that he buys into her story that Jo has been kidnapped. He still thinks that Jo is the shooter but he asks Mary to masquerade as Jo, in order to investigate some men that he believes could've been Jo's partner in crime. Mary is a bit naive and sweet but she isn't cowed by the domineering Adam. In fact, she's the first person who's ever debated with him and he's shocked that a mere commoner female can stand up for herself. One of their best debate scenes occurs when he's teaching her to curtsy and behave like a proper lady. Mary thinks it's ridiculous for aristocrats to expect commoners to bow and curtsy and she tells him this bluntly:

"Must all people bow and scrape before you? Are you truly more worthy in the eyes of God than the man who polishes your boots or the one who drives your carriage?"

Unknown. NEVER A LADY BARBARA DAWSON SMITH.txt (Kindle Locations 630-631). Kindle Edition.

Adam, of course, flies into a temper:

He clasped his hands behind his back. "God made me heir to the dukedom. It is my duty to act accordingly. Every society needs its rulers, else chaos would reign."

Unknown. NEVER A LADY BARBARA DAWSON SMITH.txt (Kindle Locations 632-633). Kindle Edition.

But the determined little heroine wins out the day with her staunch refusal to submit to his aristocratic beliefs:

"Yet why must one class be more deserving of respect than another? We are all people. Even servants have hopes and fears, joys and sorrows."

Unknown. NEVER A LADY BARBARA DAWSON SMITH.txt (Kindle Locations 633-634). Kindle Edition.

Mary actually made this hard headed and arrogant duke change his views a little. As the story progressed (and as he spent more time with Mary), Adam began to appreciate her perspectives and he became more charitable and flexible in his attitudes to the labouring classes. Mary even persuaded him to employ a homeless middle aged lady called Mrs. Primrose. The MC's relationship is a bit of a forbidden type of love because he's so overbearing and stuffy that he doesn't think she'll be suitable as a duchess and she's betrothed to her father's deacon, Victor. She finds Victor attractive but she doesn't love him and she's only allowed him to give her chaste kisses on the cheek. The heroine soon falls in love with the H and breaks her engagement to Victor but the latter isn't the type to take rejection so lightly. It also happens that (view spoiler)

The highlights of this novel were:

1. The development of the forbidden love between the MC's. Adam refuses to call it love but he is also reluctant to propose marriage to the young debutante that he had been thinking would make him the ideal wife. He becomes obsessed with thoughts of Mary and is even filled with guilt for using her in a charade when he believes that her sister is a murderer. The MC's consummate their relationship and Adam thinks of asking Mary to be his mistress but she's unwilling to take on that kind of role. He even becomes madly jealous of Victor and wants to do anything he can to keep Mary to himself.
2. The H's sister Sophy provided a lot of comic relief in the story while her mother was (as are most dowagers in these types of romances) sour and judgemental. Sophy and Mary form a close bond that deepens after Mary helps Cyril to regain consciousness.
3. The mystery whodunnit storyline about the shooting of Cyril and the kidnapping of Jo, was entertaining but it was a bit easy to predict the identity of the villains.
4. The H threw all caution and propriety to the winds when he realizes that he loves Mary and can't bear to have another woman in his life but her. He saves her life, apologizes for the nasty stuff he'd said about her sister and becomes a nicer and more likable human being. His proposal to her was so romantic after he acknowledged that what he felt for her was a great intense love:

The tightness rose to thicken his throat and sting his eyes. And in that moment he knew the truth. Duty be damned. Life was too short for him to deny the need burning in his heart. He wanted only to be a father who loves his children. And a husband who loves his wife.

Unknown. NEVER A LADY BARBARA DAWSON SMITH.txt (Kindle Locations 4517-4519). Kindle Edition.

Adam finally learned that being a man was more important than being a powerful duke and he told his snobbish mother that he wouldn't be marrying the debutante of her choice. He even started to take a more personal interest in the life of his servants after his valet asked his permission to wed the new servant, Mrs. Primrose. The scene where he proposes to Mary was the sweetest scene in the entire novel:

He knelt before her, and the sudden seriousness of his expression left her breathless. In spite of her

resolve, she couldn't help asking,

"What did you decide?"

He brought her hand to his lips. "That I can't live without you, Mary. That you've come to mean more to me than duty or convention." His voice lowered to a husky murmur. "That I love you with all my heart."

Unknown. NEVER A LADY BARBARA DAWSON SMITH.txt (Kindle Locations 4660-4662). Kindle Edition.

This is the first novel I've read by this author and it won't be the last ! The plot was wonderful, the characters were great and the dialogue was fabulous. I've also discovered that she writes romances under another name as well: Olivia Drake.

This is the heroine Mary:

This is the H, Adam:

And, last but not least, this is the little dog Prinny:
