

historical romance reviews

SEXY—Borders on erotic. Very graphic sex. **SPICY**—Very explicit sex. **VERY SENSUAL**—Spicy, but goes beyond conventional lovemaking. Explicit sex. **SENSUAL**—Most romance novels fall into this category. Conventional lovemaking. Explicit sex. **SWEET**—May or may not include lovemaking. No explicit sex. **★★★★½ GOLD PHENOMENAL**—In a Class by Itself. **★★★★½ FANTASTIC**—Keeper. **★★★★ COMPELLING**—Page Turner. **★★★ ENJOYABLE**—Pleasant Read. **★★ PROBLEMATIC**—May Struggle to Finish. **★ SEVERELY FLAWED**—Pass on This One.

THE MASQUERADE

Brenda Joyce

Mira

Setting: Regency England

★★★★½

TOP PICK The de Warenne Dynasty continues as Elizabeth Anne Fitzgerald and Tyrell de Warenne are thrown together by a twist of fate.

Quiet, plain Lizzie has always idolized Tyrell, even though she has no chance of attracting the handsome young nobleman. Not only are their stations in life different, but he adores beautiful women like her sister, Anne.

On the night of a masquerade ball, Tyrell requests they meet at midnight. Her dreams are shattered when she must give Anne her costume. Heartbroken Lizzie leaves the ball, not knowing how the events of that night will thrust her into Tyrell's life.

Two years later, Lizzie returns from Ireland with a son. The child's striking resemblance to Tyrell points to his paternity. Though their families press Lizzie, she refuses to give up the child. She creates even more scandal when she and the child move into Tyrell's home.

Joyce brilliantly delivers an intensely emotional and engrossing romance where love overcomes deceit, scandal and pride. She takes a standard "secret baby" plotline and turns it into an intelligent love story with smart, appealing and strong characters. Readers will savor this latest from a grand mistress of the genre. **SENSUAL** (Sep., 553 pp., \$7.50)

Kathe Robin

A LADY'S GUIDE TO RAKES

Kathryn Caskie

Warner Forever

Setting: Regency England

★★★★½

TOP PICK To complete her compendium for young ladies, Meredith Merriweather plans to lure the notorious rake, Lord Lansing, Alexander Lamont, into a tryst, proving her point that "once a cad, always a cad."

Meredith does not know that Alex has reformed and is seeking the perfect bride. He sets his sights on Meredith, who has to

admit that Alex is charming, handsome and passionate. But she's betrothed to a perfectly suitable, though staid, man.

To add a bit of spice, the delightful matchmaking Featherston sisters, Meredith's great-aunts, side with Alex. They conspire to thrust Meredith and Alex together, making it difficult for Meredith to prove her point. When Alex is the perfect gentleman, she's tempted to forget she's a lady.

Liberal seasoning with her hallmark wit and unforgettable characters, Caskie's latest is a winner: a delectable, sensual Regency romp, refreshingly told and cleverly crafted. *A Lady's Guide...* is a pure joy to read! **SENSUAL** (Aug., 320 pp., \$6.50)

Kathe Robin

A FINE PASSION

Stephanie Laurens

Avon

Setting: Regency England

★★★★½

TOP PICK Laurens makes sure that each member of The Bastion Club, a group of men in service to the Crown, discovers something infinitely more dangerous than espionage—the intricacies of a woman's heart.

After almost being trapped into marriage, Jack, Baron Warnefleet, flees to Cornwall, where he meets Lady Clarice Alwood, an intelligent hellion who tries his patience and ignites his passions.

Clarice has scandalized society and is "banished" to the country to live with her cousin, the vicar. There she enjoys the freedom away from the ton's rules and doesn't want Jack meddling in her life.

But the couple comes upon a coaching accident, which draws them into a mystery that endangers Clarice's cousin's position as well as their lives. Together, Jack and Clarice must lure out a traitor and save an innocent man's reputation. But can they save themselves from falling in love?

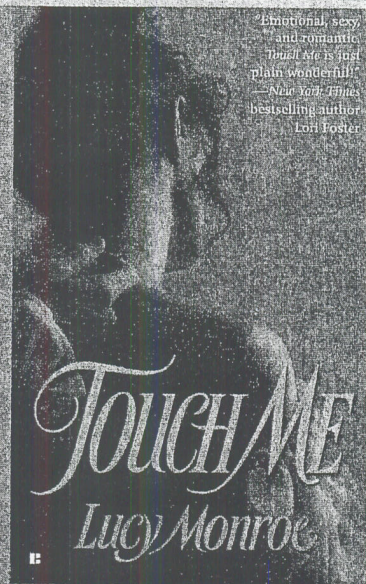
With each tale of this series, Laurens reaches higher, perfectly merging excitement, suspense and sizzling passion. She knows how to set fire to the pages with a nonstop romance, placing her at the top of many readers' lists. **SENSUAL** (Sep., 464 pp., \$6.99)

Kathe Robin

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AND BESTSELLING AUTHOR

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and romantic.
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—*New York Times*
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romantic. Touch Me is just
plain wonderful!" —Lori Foster,
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"Monroe brings a fresh voice
to historical romance."
—Stef Ann Holm, USA Today Bestselling
author of PINK MOON

Also look for:

**GOODNESS HAD NOTHING
TO DO WITH IT**

(Follow on book to Come Up and See Me
Sometime) Kensington Zebra—December

THE GREEK'S CHRISTMAS BRIDE

(Follow on book to The Greek's Innocent
Virgin) Harlequin Presents—December

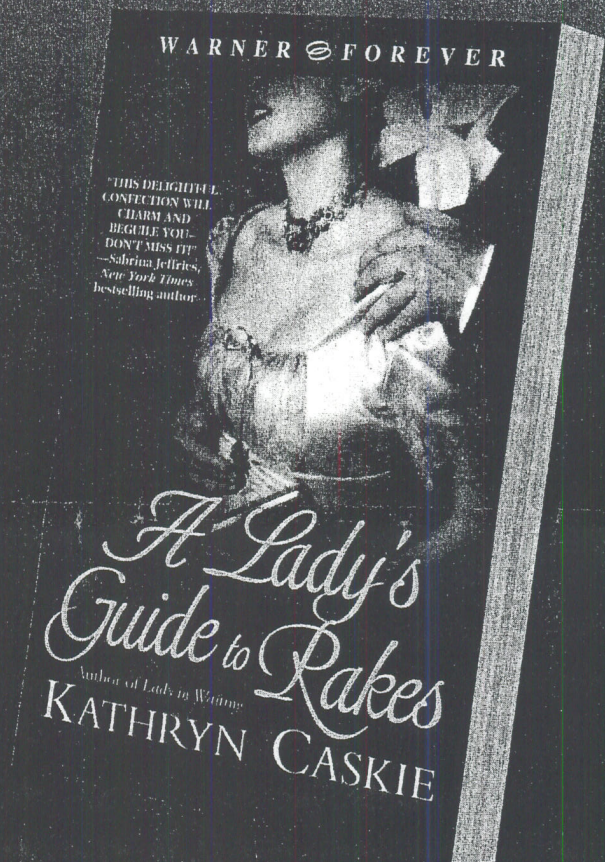
WILLING

(Book 2 in Mercenaries Trilogy)
Kensington Brava—Jan '06

www.lucymonroe.com

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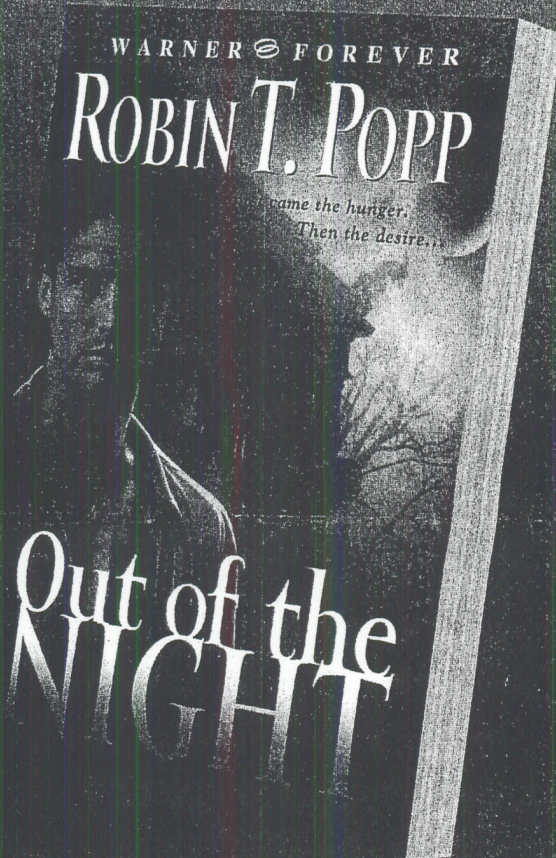
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From the author of
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Nothing in Lanie's career compares to the dangers awaiting her deep in the Amazon jungle. Her scientist father suddenly has disappeared while on an expedition, and Mac Knight, her lover and only ally, has been attacked by a creature that left two mysterious marks on his neck. Can Lanie save them both from the dark underworld of evil before it's too late?

"A truly unique, fast-paced, thrilling and sexy adventure!"

—*Romantic Times* BOOKclub on *Too Close to the Sun*

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