



One Good Earl Deserves a Lover

Sarah MacLean

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Lady Philippa Marbury is...odd

The brilliant, bespectacled daughter of a double marquess cares more for books than balls, for science than the season, and for laboratories than love. She's looking forward to marrying her simple fiancé and living out her days quietly with her dogs and her scientific experiments. But before that, Pippa has two weeks to experience all the rest—fourteen days to research the exciting parts of life. It's not much time, and to do it right she needs a guide familiar with London's darker corners.

She needs...a Scoundrel

She needs Cross, the clever, controlled partner in London's most exclusive gaming hell, with a carefully crafted reputation for wickedness. But reputations often hide the darkest secrets, and when the unconventional Pippa boldly propositions him, seeking science without emotion, she threatens all he works to protect. He is tempted to give Pippa precisely what she wants . . . but the scoundrel is more than he seems, and it will take every ounce of his willpower to resist giving the lady more than she ever imagined.

One Good Earl Deserves a Lover Details

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From Reader Review One Good Earl Deserves a Lover for online ebook

?Karlyn P? says

4++ HOT Sexual Tension Stars!

Wow, Sarah MacLean is easily becoming the historical romance author to beat. Her stories are so well crafted and honed, and the passion and sexual tension so damn thick! I can see why she is an automatic buy/read for so many historical romance fans.

This is Cross and Pippa's story, two brainiacs who believe in scientific proof over simple luck. With less than two weeks before her wedding, Pippa convinces Cross to help her with a research project so she will better understand the ways between a married man and woman. Shocked beyond belief, Cross thwarts her attempts over and over until he finally has no choice.

In truth, this story was downright ridiculous on so many levels, but I enjoyed every minute of it regardless! You never knew what these two were going to do next, and I certainly didn't see that ending coming. The passion between these two was AMAZINGLY HOT.

(((Oh my God, MacLean has mastered writing sexual tension.)))

I listened to this one on audiobook, and the narrator was fantastic.

KatLynne says

Review completed January 4, 2013

... "Temptation - it turns you. It makes you into something you never dreamed, it presses you to give up everything you ever loved, it calls you to sell your soul for one, fleeting moment." ... "It makes you ache," he whispered, and she watched the curve of his lips in the darkness. "You'll make any promise, swear any oath. For one...perfect...unsoiled taste."

5+ Delicious! Dazzling! Magnificent! Breathtaking Stars!

Ms. MacLean, this book is evidence of why I consider you a star!

You give us **alpha heroes** that are broken, captivating, redeemable, and scorching hot!; **heroines** who are SMART, funny, and doesn't fit the peg; **romance** that takes my breath away; **sexual tension** that is beyond explanation; and **combustible** love scenes!

One Good Earl Deserves a Lover is the second installment in Sarah MacLean's *Lord of Scoundrels* series and easily one of the **BEST** books I've read in 2012! Lady Philippa (Pippa) Marbury has only a few weeks until her marriage and she's determined to know what happens in the marriage bed. And who better to be the subject of her little experiment than Cross, one of the owners of London's most notorious gaming hells. He certainly has the reputation with the ladies, making him the perfect candidate.

Pippa's not like most young women of the day as she prefers knowledge over fashion. She'd much rather be conducting one of her scientific experiments than be bothered with what ball she may be attending or how pretty she can make herself look. I immediately fell in love with this endearing character and was rooting for her all the way. She's smart, inquisitive, determined and now has a permanent place on my favorite heroine shelf.

Jasper Arlesey, Earl Harlow aka Cross is a complex man with many secrets and is tortured by his demons. He was left speechless by Pippa's proposition and soon gets firsthand knowledge of her dogmatic determination. She doesn't want to actually engage in the sexual act, but needs a better understanding of carnal lust and appetites. As she continues to pursue his help, he finds himself having to fight the magnetic pull and bank down his desire for her. The characteristics that others label as odd are the very things that he finds enchanting. Cross is a hero who stole my heart early on and I wanted desperately for him to find the peace he needed along with healing for his tortured soul. I loved this sinfully sexy man.

Once again the author has crafted a unique blend of characters carrying me forward into their world and experiencing each emotion they encountered. I devoured every word and could hardly put it down. The sensuality, the temptation, the sexual tension is palpable and beautifully displayed. Each segment of their journey enveloped me in a cocoon of anticipated pleasure. As an added bonus, included is one of the best foreplay scenes I've read and it was breathtaking!

Ms. MacLean has given a masterpiece in the HR genre. She excels in storytelling and gives complex characters, well fleshed out scenes and an H/h that you'll not soon forget. The book is sensual, romantic, emotional, intense and breathtaking! You do not want to miss this spectacular love story!

*** Many thanks to Avon via Edelweiss for the opportunity to read this ARC*** It was a pleasure!

Elizabeth (Liz) says

Review posted at: Swept Away By Romance

5 Stars

I adore you, Sarah MacLean!! Your stories make me so idiotically happy;) Seriously, this is Sarah MacLean at her **very** best, doing what she does so well. This new series of hers, somehow, continues to get better with this second book, One Good Earl Deserves A Lover. I do believe this is my favorite book of hers to date!

Lady Philippa (Pippa) Marbury is a true individual. With her glasses, her brilliant and scientific mind, and her forthright nature, many consider her odd. She is to be married shortly to Lord Castleton, and has concluded that some scientific research into what goes on between a man and a woman in private is very necessary before making her vows. The only thing she requires? The perfect research partner. Enter Cross, the tall, sexy, witty, red-headed bookkeeper of London's most notorious gaming hell, The Fallen Angel. Cross feels a strong pull toward Pippa. He finds her funny and fascinating. He knows there are reasons he has to resist, and she knows he is the only man to help her. Who will win this battle of wills, and what will the ultimate outcome be?

I think it would be easier and faster to tell you what I **didn't** love about this story than what I did. The only problem with that? I LOVED EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS STORY!!! I truly feel like I shouldn't even

waste time with a review. I should just tell you to BUY THE %*+#[\!?!@ BOOK on release day (January 29, 2013), and get ready to sigh, melt, smile, laugh and just feel really, really good! But, okay, I guess I owe it to the book to say a little more than that. So, let me share with you my very favorite things about One Good Earl Deserves A Lover.

Hands down, no contest whatsoever, Pippa is my very favorite thing about this story. She *makes* this story, and she has to be a contender for my favorite historical romance heroine, ever! I adored her, right from the start! She's really super SMART, funny, self-deprecating and totally unique. She's completely confident and unshakable in some areas of her life, and, yet, vulnerable and uncertain in others. She's beautifully self-aware, though. She knows herself well. Sarah MacLean wrote this character *flawlessly*!! Pippa is multi-layered and expressed so well in this story. Love, love, LOVE her!

Cross is plagued by extreme guilt and shame when it comes to his family. He is charming and sexy, but I found him most so during those moments when he observes Pippa and admires and appreciates the qualities which others think make her odd. The fact that he sees exactly why she is so worthy of his love (and lust) endears him to me greatly.

I come back to Sarah MacLean and her brilliant writing. I just cannot say enough good things about this author. She *always* gives us a great story. But, this one? This one is a favorite of mine. The writing just thoroughly flows! It is smooth and lovely. The story pacing, the dialog.....every single thing is PERFECTION!

To be honest, the entire time I was reading this book I had a huge smile on my face. Sarah MacLean's writing, her storytelling, her characters....they all combine to make me so d@mn happy! Sarah's stories are humorous, smart and sexy. Each book seems to have the perfect blend of all three. Are they absolutely historically accurate and full of intricate detail? Nope. And, I'll tell you right now, her books don't need it, and I wouldn't want it. These books *entertain*. They make us laugh and cheer and sigh. I have yet to read a book by Sarah MacLean and not feel better when I'm done than I did before I started. Honestly? Who wouldn't want a gift and a talent like that? LOVE this author!!

Now, I *am* just going to say it. GO BUY THE BOOK! I dare you not to love it;)

**ARC courtesy of Avon via Edelweiss

Susanne says

Full review posted! 5 heartwarming beautiful gambling stars!

*"Are you an accounting fairy sent in the dead of night to check my figures?"
It's one o'clock in the afternoon", she said matter-of-factly, and he had an intense desire to take her spectacles from her face and kiss her senseless, just to see what this odd young woman would say.*

She took a deep breath. Released it. "I require ruination. And I hear you are an expert on the subject."

Say hello to Cross!

Lady Philippa is concerned. In fourteen days, she is marrying Lord Castleton. And as the quirky nerd and research loving female that she is, she pursues the only logical course of action. **She must enlist one of London's most notorious rogue and scoundrel as her research associate to learn about the carnal side of marriage.**

"I quite like children, so I'm sure that bit will be fine. But you see, I require the understanding in question. And, since you are purported to be such an expert on the topic, I could not imagine anyone better to assist me in my research."

"The topic of children?"

She sighed her frustration. "The topic of breeding."

"What do you want to know?"

She blinked at him with those big blue eyes and said, as though it was a perfectly reasonable thing to say, "Everything."

This book has it all! It is *light* and *dark*. It is **quirky** and **fun**. All at the same time as it is deeply *sensual*. It is as *rare* as Pippa's pink rose.

For me, the brightest spot was Pippa! I adored her. She made the book for me (although Cross was pretty hot too). They were so **perfect for each other**. Pippa is a bespectacled highly intelligent young lady in a time where women was supposed to be insipid misses. She is like no other romance heroine I've ever met.

"What did you mean by it?"

"I would rather not tell you."

One side of his mouth kicked up. Even now, when she no doubt wished to do so, she would not lie. "And yet I would know"

She spoke to her hands. "It's just that...since we met, I have been rather...well, fascinated by..."

You.

Say it, he willed, not entirely certain what he would do if she did, but willing himself to the test.

She took another breath. "By your bones."

It is not to be missed! Do yourself a favor and bump up this amazing gem and this wonderful series to the top of your pile. It is Ocean's 13 meets Devil in Winter meets Sarah McLean's finest work meets the quirkiness of A Week to Be Wicked. It sure is one of a kind!

Daniella says

DNF at 50%. I just couldn't stand it. The heroine was too stupid to live, even when she was supposed to be this highly intelligent girl. The hero was an asshole in the prologue, and I wasn't comfortable with how he was established. He was a cad in the worst sense of the word. Ugh. And the instant chemistry? Sorry, but I

didn't feel it. It wasn't natural, and just came out of nowhere. One moment, the guy was saying the heroine was ordinary, and the other, he wanted to make love to her on a chair. **WTF?**

Nope. I don't know about all the glowing reviews, but this was a total waste of my time.

Jilly says

What do you think of a girl who throws herself at a guy, he tells her "no", and yet she continues to throw herself at him every freaking day anyway? He rejects her day after day, but she still pursues him relentlessly.

Loser!!

And, that is pretty much the story in this book. Pippa is so freaking annoying that I was dying to bitch-slap her! *Get some fucking self-respect!!!* Sheesh! She spent the whole book literally chasing after this guy, Cross, and basically begging him to have sex with her. And, hey, if a guy turns you down for sex? He's just not that into you!! Guys aren't that picky when it comes to a free roll in the hay. But, she was so stupid, so irritating, so desperate, that she wouldn't leave him alone. I was actually embarrassed for her a few times in this book. *Embarrassed! for a fictional character!!* This poor character was really run through the mud by the writer. She degraded her in every way. It was just uncomfortable.

Lisa Kay says

*Thank you, UniquelyMoi *Dhestiny* BlithelyBookish for the use of these photos, taken by her daughter, Megan, from Dhes's very own rose garden!*

★★★★? (This is a review of the audiobook.) I just love Rosalyn Landor's narrations of Historical Romances. She always delivers. Her diction is perfect, her characters distinguishable, her tone and pacing appropriate to the context. I cannot sing her praises high enough. If you're looking to cut your teeth on audio, try one of her excellent readings.

I loved the characters in this story, by the talented Miss Sarah MacLean: Bespectacled Philippa Marbury - or Pippa - is intelligent, or rather brilliant, and ahead of her time. As a fianced woman and scientist, she is curious about the marriage bed. Of course, there is more to it than that, but I don't want to spoil it for you. Nevertheless, being the epitome of a researcher that she is, she seeks out the renowned Cross, AKA Jasper Arlesey, Earl Harlow, a man haunted by his past and working as an accountant in a gaming hell known as *The Fallen Angel*.

The dialogue is witty and it was interesting to see these two come to their happily ever after, but I must admit it took awhile.

Maybe I was in my head too much for this one; however, I felt Jasper's - or Cross's - reputation was deserved of his *last* incarnation, not his current one. I totally agree with Annie the Destroyer *Leather Lust* in her GoodReads review: if I had been given Pippa's reason earlier for seeking Cross out, I think I would bought into this story-line more. Plus, for me, it took too long to get these two together.

Still, some people are going to love this story, this engaging couple, the way Pippa's mind works, and Jasper's knack for foreplay. I know there will be a lot of ★★★★★ reviews. I hope you're one of them.

By the way, Ms. Landor's surprising stand-out character for me was Lord Castleton, Pippa's fiancé, who is not the "sharpest of wits." She infused his temperament with compassion and a gentle, self-deprecating sense of self-awareness.

The Rules of Scoundrels

Stacia (the 2010 club) says

"It's because I am odd. I can't help it."

God help him, he wanted to kiss her senseless. He wanted to kiss her senseless because she was odd.

"Pippa-" he said, knowing he shouldn't speak.

She cut him off. "Don't tell me it's not true. I know it is. I'm strange."

"You are."

Her brows knit together. "Well, you don't have to tell it is true either."

I'm sure some of you are probably wondering why I would choose to start off a review with such a peculiar quote.

Here's why I chose it : odd is good. In fact, odd is better than good. How could I not root for a quirky, cute, bespectacled, science-loving heroine? The hero *fell for her oddness*. How darn adorable is that?

In fact, I really couldn't tell you that much about the hero himself. He didn't really stand out for me as far as male leads go...and to be honest, I didn't really care. However, he did play a very nice role in what was a very impressive scene of seduction involving unconventional methods. Often, what we aren't expecting is the thing that ends up appealing to us the most, and this scene worked quite nicely for me. In fact, I think this scene is what a lot of people are going to be talking about when they read the book. However, I can read a hot sex scene any day, so that wasn't what impressed me the most, even though this is technically a romance book.

Why? Well, let's go back to the odd thing. Instead of the heroine's voice narrating every single perfection about the male lead and his sensational face or physically fit body, we got to hear about how much Pippa loved Cross's bones. Yes, that is what happened. She went into detail about how she loved the way his bones were formed. **Nerdy Girl wins points with me.**

What else should I say? I think I might have seen this story a few times before, in which a woman propositions a more experienced man to "enlighten" her on the concept of coupling (there's your 5 second book summary in a nutshell), but it really was the female character herself that was the breath of fresh air in

this book.

I have no humor or witty quips for this review (sorry friends, I'm still coming down from a food coma because of the evil holiday faeries who kept shoving food in my mouth). *One Good Earl Deserves a Lover* is a pretty straightforward historical romance. If you like that sort of thing, then there's a good chance you'll enjoy this book. If you don't read HR, then I'll see you in another day or two with something different for your consideration. :p

This book provided from the publisher through Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review.

Blacky *Romance Addict* says

full review now posted

"I am going to ruin you, Pippa. I shall show you pleasure you've never known, the kind you've never dreamed. Over and over and over until you beg me never to stop."

This book was all about temptation and sexual tension

The story

Lady Philippa Marbury is engaged to be married, and has a terrible problem. She doesn't know the mechanics of the marriage bed. Scientific person that she is, she finds that the only solution is research. Thorough research. And the best person to help her study it is Mr. Cross, co-owner of The Fallen Angel, a man known for his prowess and skill in the bedroom. Cross, on the other hand, has absolutely no intention of helping her, she's too much of a temptation to him, and even one touch could disintegrate all his walls and defences. Too bad for him, Pippa is very, very persistent.

"You should know better than to reach into the darkness, Pippa," he said softly, the sound of her name familiar on his lips. "You never know what you might find."

Cross

Co-owner of The Fallen Angel, extremely intelligent, an ex-rogue, and a man with a powerful title that he'd disavowed, Cross thinks Phillipa is a madwoman. What sane person would come to his rooms at a notorious gambling house asking him for her ruination? That's the last thing he needs, especially considering the strange effect that madwoman has on him. Showing Pippa about passion is something he can't do, because it awakens his own, but at the same time,

allowing anyone else to show her is unacceptable as well. So the best he can do is show her what he can, without touching. And can I just say, that man is unbelievably good with words every scene with them was full of sparks, tension all over, and WOW! The first lesson I loved Cross as a character, he's very smart, and with his secret from the past, I couldn't help but feel bad for him, and everything that happened. He doesn't want to be close to Pippa, doesn't want to corrupt and ruin her, and I just loved him for it, trying to make amends.

His gaze darkened, and a muscle leapt in his jaw. "This is all there is, Pippa. I won't touch you. I won't ruin you."

"I'm ruined, whether you touch me or not."

"No. If I don't touch you, you're safe."

"And if I don't wish to be safe?"

"I'm afraid you haven't a choice."

"It's because I am odd." And then she looked up at him with those enormous blue eyes, and said, "I can't help it."

God help him, he wanted to kiss her senseless, odd or not. He wanted to kiss her senseless because she was odd.

Pippa

She's intelligent, a scientist, and thinks through everything before she acts. She doesn't like dishonesty, and is sometimes brutal with sharing her opinions.

Soon to be married, Pippa is uneasy with what awaits her, because she doesn't understand it, and seeks help in a most unusual way.

Cross is reluctant to help her, but she is reluctant to give up and with his help, she'll find out what exactly temptation is, and that she doesn't have it with her fiancé, but with her teacher.

Pippa, I just loved her! One of the best HR heroines I've read.

You never know what might come out of her mouth, but whatever it is, it's not what you'd expect. Love the way she always confused Cross, and he couldn't keep up with her train of thought and at the end, what she did! Oh yes, very glad by how it all turned out, mostly because of her.

"Do not tempt the lion," he said, the words brushing across her lips, parting them with their touch. "For he most certainly will bite."

So my verdict: I loved this! The characters were great, and the book was simmering with heat and tension The only thing that was lacking was the subplot (Knight) and the ending was a bit too sweet (but that's just my problem) Still, a wonderful romance, Pippa and Cross were beautiful together and this book has the most sensual scene I've ever read in a HR! So don't miss it!

ARC courtesy of Avon via Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review

Karen says

OMG! These books... how I love them!!!

UniquelyMoi ~ BlithelyBookish says

This is such a great story! What are you waiting for?

Cross

One Good Earl Deserves a Lover is the second book in Sarah MacLean's *The Rules of Scoundrels* series, and from the first page to the last, simply wonderful! It's witty, poignant, romantic, and sexy, and a story I simply couldn't put down!

Cover blurb: Lady Philippa Marbury is odd. The bespectacled, brilliant fourth daughter of the Marquess of Needham and Dolby cares more for books than balls, flora than fashion and science than the season. Nearly engaged to Lord Castleton, Pippa wants to explore the scandalous parts of London she's never seen before marriage. And she knows just who to ask: the tall, charming, quick-witted bookkeeper of The Fallen Angel, London's most notorious and coveted gaming hell, known only as Cross.

Like any good scientist, Pippa's done her research and Cross's reputation makes him perfect for her scheme. She wants science without emotion - the experience of ruination without the repercussions of ruination. And who better to provide her with the experience than this legendary man? But when this odd, unexpected female propositions Cross, it's more than tempting . . . and it will take everything he has to resist following his instincts - and giving the lady precisely what she wants.

I don't know where to begin when sharing with you the many things I love about this book! The story is

amazing - fast paced, sensual, deliciously sexy and very romantic. It's the perfect backdrop for our hero and heroine who are also amazing. They are vulnerable yet strong, stubborn but yielding, flawed yet in a word, perfect!

Lady Phillipa Marbury, with her black and white, scientific way of thinking, drew me in and had me loving her early on. At times I laughed at how naive her ideas were, and at other times, I almost cried because of the same. I wanted to protect her from the harsh world of The Fallen Angel and Cross's life, and at other times I wanted to push her right into the middle of it - right into his arms! Pippa, like all of Sarah MacLean's heroines, is wonderful! The kind of woman I would like to be if I were living in her era.

And then there's Cross. Cross is such an interesting character! A man of many contradictions. He's got secrets, demons that torment and eat away at him. At times he's oppressive and bleak, yet at other times he's compassionate and determined to protect those he loves. He's devoted, exciting, sexy... a truly perfect hero!

And as if all that weren't enough, toss in an incredible supporting cast of characters, people whose stories I want to learn and whose lives I wish I had a place in... there's nothing more I can ask for.

The bottom line: This book has everything I look for in my historical romance reads. It's funny, romantic, heartwarming, sexy... indeed, it has *everything* I want, *everything* I've come to expect from Sarah MacLean's stories.

Many thanks to Avon Books for providing me with a paperback ARC of this story. It was a true pleasure to read!

Baba says

Review completed January 4, 2013

Utterly witty. Eclectic. Beautiful. Sensual. Deliciously good.

"You have no idea what I could do to you, Philippa Marbury. The ways I could touch you. The wonders I could show you. I could ruin you without thought, sink with you into the depths of sin and not once regret it. I could lead you right into temptation and never ever look back."

Can't breathe

Sarah MacLean has done it again! This is HR (emphasis on romance) at its best. I loved *A Rogue by Any Other Name*, however, this sequel exceeds everything that I've read by this author. She sure knows how to write a very witty, eclectic and enthralling HR. Wow, the heady thrill of a great HR. I bow to you, Sarah. While the first half of the story was very good the second half just blew me away. **A-mazing** with a capital A.

"I wonder if you could explain the use of the tongue."

Pippa is about to marry Lord Castleton and wants to start a research project. A research in carnal lust and appetites, so that she might enter into marriage without any concerns. She is in need of assistance and knows who to ask: Cross. He is the bookkeeper of *The Fallen Angel*, the most notorious gaming hell in London.

Cross is handsome, very tall, highly intelligent and known as a connoisseur of women. Cross's reputation makes him perfect for her scheme. She is not looking for any emotional connection--it's all about science after all. Oh well, things are not always as they seem...

Pippa doesn't want Cross to perform the *act*, however, she wants him to help her to better understand it. Initially Cross is refusing her request but as the story progresses he is promising Pippa to teach her about temptation and he is going to accomplish the task. Thoroughly.

Talk about temptation...

"I don't understand. What is temptation, then?"

"Temptation..." He hesitated, and she found herself leaning forward, eager for this curious, unsettling lesson. "Temptation turns you. It makes you into something you never dreamed, it presses you to give up everything you ever loved, it calls you to sell your soul for one, fleeting moment." (...)"It makes you ache," he whispered, and she watched the curve of his lips in the darkness. "You'll make any promise, swear any oath. For one...perfect...unsoiled taste."

Quick breath

When Pippa realizes that her physiological research project turns into something emotional, panic flares. She was here in the interest of discovery. In the name of research. Granted, the research in question was somewhat unorthodox but it was research nonetheless. She didn't want to allow emotion into the scenario.

Lady Philippa Marbury, daughter of the Marquess of Needham and Dolby

The bespectacled Pippa. Wow, I absolutely loved the heroine, she totally knocked my socks off. She has a brilliant mind. An odd yet strong heroine who is refreshingly different and utterly adorable and endearing. Pippa the Great One. In fact, she unsettled and distracted our dear Cross in a major way. Ultimately, Pippa is Cross's salvation, his hope and his love.

At a certain point of the story she had to admit that she didn't want the ordinary, the mundane. In conclusion, she didn't want the mundane yet very kind Lord Castleton.

Talk about odd...

"It's just that...since we met, I have been rather...well, fascinated by..."

You.

Say it, he willed, not entirely certain what he would do if she did, but willing to put himself to the test.

She took another breath. "By your bones."

Would she ever say anything expected? "My bones?"

She nodded. "Yes. Well, the muscles and tendons, too. Your forearms. Your thighs. And earlier--while I watched you drink whiskey--by your hands."

Well, I think it's not odd at all. I, for one, love male forearms and hands.

Cross

Cross (view spoiler) is an elusive and somewhat strange man. Cross has his own cross to bear. Whence the name--to recall past sins. As a matter of fact, he is hiding something very painful. Cross is punishing himself for a tragedy that happened a long time ago, and he has spent years atoning for his sins. He doesn't want to touch her because he is not willing to ruin her. In the end, though, Pippa is too much for him to resist.

Cross is another candidate for my shelf "memorable-favorite-heroes." He is a very sensual specimen of a man and I would like to be a virgin again. Specifically for him. Cross proved his prowess...

...when I hit the 58 % mark of the story. I had the pleasure to read the **Best. HR. Scene. Ever.** When Cross fell to his knees, it was like a sign--he surrendered to this adorable woman. It was devastatingly beautiful and

most certainly the best foreplay scene that I've read. Ever. Cross showed Pippa temptation **without touching** her. There were only his stunning voice and a great many lush, sinful, pleasurable, knowing words involved- besides the two MCs of course. Pippa almost came but Cross (view spoiler) Frankly, I was in a puddle at Cross's feet and I'd gladly volunteer any day. This may come as a surprise but I felt it was better than sex. With that said, I was drowning in their sensation, sensuality, and chemistry; it was so exceptionally well done that I wanted to combust. What a feast for the senses! Cross's onslaught of words left me...

Breathless

I truly adored the profound, richly-textured and witty dialogue. Fantastic! The author really has an amazing gift to draw me into the story and I was enthralled by Cross and Pippa's interaction. Hence, I so enjoyed their glorious and wicked journey to their ultimate destination: love. The plot is well thought out and provides some nice dose of angst. You should be prepared for some frustrating and intense moments when Cross's nemesis, Digger Knight, (view spoiler)

Cross and Pippa are perfect for one another because Cross really *saw* her. He looked beyond the odd woman. Cross *heard* Pippa and enjoyed her being different; she clearly intrigued him. In the end Cross claimed her mind, body, and heart and at the same time he was determined to protect and save Pippa, come what may.

"The room is spinning."

His lips curved at her earlobe. "I thought I was the only one who noticed."

She turned to face him. "What causes it?"

"My little scientist...if you have time to wonder about that, I am not doing my job well enough."

Just breathe

*The path to Cross and Pippa's carnal fulfillment is
deliciously...scandalously...amazingly...wickedly...sinfully...good!*

He stopped her. "They aren't experiments."

(...) "Of course they are."

"No, Pippa. They aren't. They're a desire for knowledge, certainly, a need for it, even. But more than that, they're a need for understanding of this thing that you are about to do, that you have refused to stop and that terrifies you. They are a desperate ploy to stop yourself from feeling all the doubt and frustration and fear that you must be feeling. You say you want to understand what happens between men and women. Between husbands and wives. But instead of going to any number of those who know better--who know firsthand...you come to me. In the darkness."

Breathing slowly

One Good Earl Deserves a Lover is a must read for every HR fan. What are you waiting for? Just read it! Next up is Temple's story, *No Good Duke Goes Unpunished*, and I'm already looking forward to reading it.

"This is for love."

Steam: 3 / Chemistry: 5 / Sensuality: 5 / Eroticism: 4

I strongly advise you to read the Author's Note.

Expected publication date: January 29, 2013

ARC kindly provided by Avon via Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review. Thank you--I appreciate it!

Sarah MacLean says

I know...it's totally cheating. But i really do like this one. ;)

Lady Heather says

Re-Read: January 13, 2018

This is the second book in Sarah MacLean's *"The Rules of Scoundrels"* series, and so far it's my favorite!!
I LOVED PIPPA!!

When I was reading this book and Phillipa (Pippa) was describing her dilemma to Cross, that she felt quite unprepared and had no idea about the activities that take place *after* the marriage..in bed, and that "she found the marriage vows rather specious" .. actually the bit before the vows, specifically the part that says, "*to satisfy men's carnal lusts and appetites, like brute beasts that have no understanding.*"

Pippa goes on to explain to Cross, "*that it's critical that I know what to expect. That I am prepared for it. Well. Don't you see? This is all wrapped up in the single most important task I shall have as wife.*"

Cross: "Which is?"

Pippa: "Procreation."

Pippa then proposes that Cross be her research associate by 'shedding' some light on the actual *activity*, and her research in carnal lust and appetites.

Pippa wants Cross to give her a "lecture of sorts. In animal husbandry. Of sorts."

Pippa then offers to pay him for his services starting at £25, then ups it to £50. At this point in the conversation, Cross is seriously tempted to do it for free, that never in his life has Cross wanted to throw this strange woman down on his desk and give her exactly what she was asking for.

To Cross, Pippa was probably the most dangerous woman he has ever encountered. She is highly intelligent, brave, bold, eccentric, and beautiful.

.. and that's only the first chapter!!

I was laughing my ass off during this whole conversation.

It was so well written, and captured my attention right from the get-go, that I COULDN'T WAIT to see what would happen next!

Background on Cross

Cross is the second son of an Earl, who was described by his father as 'the replacement' child. Who six years earlier was a notorious rake, rogue and scoundrel.

Then one night, all that changed when his older brother (Viscount Baine) was killed, and he (Jasper Arlesey) became Earl Harlow.

The only words his father said to him before he walked away from his family were "*it should have been you*", and his mother couldn't look at, or speak to him.

For six years Cross (Jasper) has been living with that guilt, and he's been punishing himself by becoming a partner, living at, acting as an enforcer when necessary, and doing the books at one of London's most successful gaming hell's. He's also been celibate, because he believes that had he done what he was supposed

to be doing the night of his brother's tragic accident instead of sleeping around, it would have been him dead, and not his brother.

In my mind when Ms. MacLean was describing Cross," a handsome, tall ginger" (not only this looks, but his actions)

this is who I pictured

.. and he's a bad-ass too!

This is how I pictured Pippa in my head.

All I can say is that I LOVED this story!

I really enjoyed the characters. The author's writing was brilliant, and her story was an *AMAZING* read!

What started out as Pippa awkwardly propositioning Cross to be research associate to understand the 'mechanics' of breeding.. turned into Pippa and Cross developing a relationship, and eventually Pippa saving Cross (Jasper) from himself.

This was a beautiful story to read, and finished with an AWESOME Epilogue..YAY! Ms. MacLean, THANK YOU for that!!

Mo says

Lady Philippa Marbury is odd. The bespectacled, brilliant fourth daughter of the Marquess of Needham and Dolby cares more for books than balls, flora than fashion and science than the season. E Engaged to Lord Castleton, Pippa wants to explore the scandalous parts of London she's never seen before marriage. And she knows just who to ask: the tall, charming, quick-witted bookkeeper of The Fallen Angel, London's most notorious and coveted gaming hell, known only as Cross.

This book was delightful. I loved it. I loved Pippa. I loved Cross. I thought the first book in the series was good but this was way better. Sweet, scientific, spectacled Pippa. Brooding, brash, broken Cross.

"You're asking me to fuck you?"

Her eyes went wide.

"Do you know, I've never heard that word spoken aloud."

Pippa is due to marry a nice man. A Gentleman. A man who does not awaken any passion in her. She wants

to experience the throes of passion, she wants the experience of ruination without the repercussions of ruination.

God help him, he wanted to kiss her senseless, odd or not. He wanted to kiss her senseless because she was odd.

She was temptation. She was torture

In all his life, there had never been anything Cross had wanted to do more than throw this strange woman down on his desk and give her precisely that for which she was asking. Desire was irrelevant. Or perhaps it was the only thing that was relevant. Either way, he could not assist Lady Philippa Marbury. She was the most dangerous female he'd ever met

Pippa believes that Cross is the man to help her with her ruination. Don't want to say too much but it was a fast-paced, funny, sexy read. The build up of the sexual tension was great ... and frustrating. The banter between the two was great also. A perfect match for each other.

**"Where would you like to touch me, Pippa?"
"Everywhere."**

It seemed there was such a thing as a broken heart

Temptation turns you. It makes you into something you never dreamed, it presses you to give up everything you ever loved, it calls you to sell your soul for one, fleeting moment.

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS LUCK

"My whole life two and two has made four"

And of course I got my Epilogue so I was extremely happy.
