



The Cad

Edith Layton

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Bridget Cooke possesses the gifts London society prizes: genteel manners, intelligence, an exquisite figure. She lacks, however, a fortune. A companion to icy relatives, Bridget resigns herself to a life of solitude, especially because of the childhood scar that mars her lovely face. Little does she expect to receive the vigorous attentions of darkly handsome, rich widower Lord Ewen Sinclair, Regency England's most infamous rake.

In a matter of days, the Sinclair whisks Bridget to the altar and into his passionate embrace. Dismissing the vicious rumors surrounding their hasty marriage, Bridget is sure of Ewen's love, even when he is mysteriously called away. But then a shocking secret from his past emerges, threatening her happiness. If Ewen is a cad and their wedding a lie, as the gossips say, then why does Bridget's very stubborn heart still believe his love is true?

The Cad Details

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From Reader Review The Cad for online ebook

Tina says

3.5 stars

Ewan, Viscount Sinclair is in London the on the hunt for his wife. He is a widower and a Rake.

Bridget Cooke is a poor relation who has been passed from family member to family member and has been mainly a glorified, unpaid maid, nurse and now a companion to her beautiful cousin Cecily.

Sinclair and Bridget lock eyes across a crowded ballroom. A happening that is really not a good thing for Bridget because of who she is and because of what he is. But Sinclair is intrigued by her and pursues her.

The beginning of the book was fantastic. Bridget could have been this little beaten down creature because of her hopeless circumstances but she was not. In fact the little-bit-flirty, little-bit-contentious back-and-forth verbal sparring she and Sinclair engage in was great fun to read and showed how much spirit Bidget still had.

There is also the fact of Bridget's scar. She has a scar on her face that she is quite conscious of. From a modern perspective, it did not sound like it was that bad. I pictured it being like Tina Fey's only maybe a tick more noticeable. I like how most of the time Bridget doesn't think about it, but in one memorable scene we see how much the scar has deeply affected her. But Sinclair doesn't care about the scar (in the same scene we learn how much he doesn't mind the scar).

But the book takes a bit of an odd turn. Bridget and Sinclair marry hastily, but Layton is careful to make it seem as if on the one hand, there is something not quite on the up-and-up about the marriage but on the other hand, everything is as it seems. It is a balancing act between doubt and faith that she allows to play out. As a reader I was sure that Sinclair wasn't trying to be a Cad in truth, otherwise what kind of hero would he be? Except.... there were those doubts.

Hence my tenseness.

The story was well written but I can't say I loved the second part of it unabashedly. Like I said, I was tense. So I was more interested into getting to the end of find out what the heck was going on than in enjoying the intervening story. Also, there was a point when Bridget was very isolated, in the midst of people who just weren't treating her well and with very few allies. It was not a fun part to read.

The ending was rather wild. Did not see that coming! But I was satisfied.

Jeri says

Bridget Cooke is a poor relation when a chance meeting with rakish Lord Ewen Sinclair leads to a hasty marriage. After glorious honeymoon, Ewen is called away and Bridget is left to hints and rumors about Ewen's behavior and even about the truth of their marriage.

This is another one that started off great. I enjoyed it, but the separation was, well, tedious. It was obvious what was going on and it lasted too long -- they are apart for nearly half the book. I found myself skimming, where I had been engrossed up to that point. Also, there didn't seem to be any reason for Ewen not to have

told Bridget he was doing something important (even without details), rather than pretend he thought she'd be "bored" with him in London. And I don't see why the servants were so doubtful (before the shocking visitor, anyway), since Ewen had presumably introduced Bridget as his wife. (Why didn't we see them all turned off without a character after Ewen's return, BTW?)

Sabrina says

A wonderfully written romance between an unlikely pair: Bridget Cooke, a lady's companion with no wealth or connections, and Viscount Ewan Sinclair, a dashing soldier and self-confessed rake. I loved the interplay between these two well-rounded people from the first. I laughed and sighed along with them, and most of all I rooted for their happiness. Bridget's point of view is particularly touching and engaging, and Ewan was wonderful. Highly recommended.

Laura says

I enjoyed the first 2/3 of the book, then it got odd and more complicated than it needed to be.

Preeti ♥? (Romance She Reads) says

Another lost promise!

From amazing to meh to whaat?

A masterclass in how to stretch a chapter or two worth of material ten times!

Intriguing and fresh characterisation, good story, timely development but then the author messes up what little she had, the h/H are strangely and unconvincingly separated, and then a completely irrational entry by a character just for a climactic ending which really wasn't.

Won't say much for the lovely first half as the second half washed it away nicely. So just a rant!
(view spoiler)

And those insolent servants so deserved a comeuppance but....!

Desi says

I have never felt so much anxiety for a woman in a book. He wouldn't introduce her to his friends, or his family, he holed her up in a country house, he made promises, he rushed things, didn't go through proper channels, he left on "business", all those dire warning signs of shady men. It was just impossible to know what on earth was going on. Anyone looking in on the situation would say the woman was gullible. Hence the feeling of stress for her. Masterfully held up throughout the book, always pitched to new heights just as you think it will let up, that maybe it was all in the imagination. Nothing much really happened action wise in terms of story but it was well done.

They were apart a little too long in my opinion though. Settings were beautifully described. I actually liked her aunt a bit. She wasn't a caricature of a villain, just doing her best. I liked both the leads, though I wanted her to let up about the scar already. It's like a pimple that looms large in your mirror but most others stop thinking about it after noting its existence. Not a relaxing read but the tension was adroitly handled both between the leads and in terms of overall conflict. A bit Hitchcockian in the sense of making the mundane threatening.

Ana T. says

I've heard so many good things about this book that, in my mind, it was up there with favourites like Lord of Scoundrels or Heartless. Unfortunately, after having read it, I thought it was an ok read but not an outstanding one. In fact, with a title like The Cad, I was expecting a far tougher hero than the one I got.

But there is much to like in The Cad. First we have an original heroine. A lot of heroines have imaginary or common flaws, but this one actually has a scar on her face that makes people notice her and stare. The hero is a rake, usually interested in beautiful (and so perfect) women he finds himself attracted to Bridget and decides to pursue her. As she doesn't go about in society he has to pretend to court her cousin, who she is chaperoning, so that he can be close to her and get to know her better.

His main interest his to make her his mistress but Bridget's strength of character eventually leads him to propose marriage and convince her to accept. To do so Bridget has to cut her ties with her family and, in a way, be at his mercy. Bridget is a fragile character in what concerns her looks, it's heart wrenching to see her so happy when a couple of actresses teach her to use make up to disguise her scar. She feels whole for the first time... and beautiful. And although Ewen was right that she did not need it to be beautiful to him that way he said it was painful to read.

Their wedding is attended by only a small group of people, and no one of Bridget's family, and there an aura of mystery surrounding it. The need for a quick wedding is explained by Ewen with the need to visit his ailing father. After wards they travel to his country home for some days honeymooning and although Bridget feels very happy and secure eventually Ewen is called to town and they are separated.

While they are separated Bridget keeps her faith in Ewen but eventually we start seeing that all is not well. First Bridget and Ewen have taken under their wing a young girl and her sister comes to collect her because she doesn't want her spending time with a courtesan, eventually she tells Bridget she doesn't believe that Ewen really married her. Then Ewen's cousin arrives with his courtesan and friends in tow and at first

mistake Bridget for a mistress instead of a wife. Then a lady arrives claiming that she is Ewen's true wife and Bridget is just someone he duped to be able to bed her. By this time we already know that Ewen is involved in a mission for the Foreign Office and that he would very much to return to Bridget but his boss doesn't let him.

So, I think the biggest flaw of this book is that, after a great start, everything is set to make us believe that Ewen is not an honourable man, that indeed he is duping Bridget and playing her for a fool, and in the end the truth is far from that. I think too much attention is given to his first marriage and Bridget ends up going through some painful situations because of that. It is hard to believe that her servants would behave the way they did towards her and the complicated plot surrounding Ewen's first wife seemed a bit too much to be believable. I loved Ewen and Bridget when they were together but the time they spent apart and the kind of misunderstandings that came out of it were almost too much to bear.

I did like Gilly and Betsy very much, I think I've read somewhere that they have their own books and I am quite curious to discover their stories...

Grade: 4/5 just because I usually like Layton so much.

Darbella says

Enjoyed this more the first time I read it. This a good read to me though.

Anne says

It was not bad, though the latter part seemed a bit contrived, and I think 100 pages could have been cut out and not lost the heart of the story.

April says

A really great read! Plenty of drama to keep the story interesting. Very well paced and nice narrative. A really sweet story at points and at other parts gut wrenching. Can't wait for more of the series!

Suzanne says

The sexual tension in this regency romance is almost palpable, which was unusual and wonderful. Just about all historical romance novels attempt to portray physical romantic attraction, but few are actually successful. The romance and the sexual attraction is so believable in this novel because of the wonderful dialogue and the characterization of the hero and heroine, particularly Lord Ewen Sinclair. a romantic hero who has it all; naughtiness, wit, determination, humor, and honor. His skillfully written dialogue had me swooning along

with the heroine, and resulted in a very satisfying love story. In addition, the book was replete with an interesting and distinct cast of secondary characters, that appear in the sequels to this book. Looking forward to reading the next books in Edith Layton's 'C' series!

Steelwhisper says

1.5* rounded up

This was... odd.

The prose was overly verbose, the plot overly complicated, the novel overly long, but I liked the two street urchins enough to finish reading.

Hopefulpuffin says

Holy crap. 4 1/2 only because it got a little convoluted at the end and the two leads spent too much time apart - they had such fantastic dialogue I wanted more of it.

I was amazed by this book. I'd read one of Layton's books (the one with the rakish duke and a wager) which I thought was okay. But THIS. This was awesome.

I was so stressed out for Bridget I was up half the night wondering how on earth she could earn her HEA. I had all sorts of convoluted scenarios in my mind. Everything fast just enough doubt on what Ewen was doing/saying/writing. Just enough. I knew he was the Hero so it must be okay but it was a stressful ride.

I loved the differentiation between rake and cad. The whole idea that a rake sleeps around but only with women who know he score vs a cad who will practice any deception to get what he wants. Ewen owns his rakishness. He admits it and is very upfront about it. Not at all devious about it. He was great.

And there is sex in this. PG-13.

I have Lord of Dishonour on my TBR list and have high hopes for it.

Ilze says

Aneca's review echoes my thoughts and feelings about this book pretty closely, but I couldn't give it more than 2 stars because the character of the villainess was completely unbelievable. I also found the Gilly character a lot more annoying than likeable, especially in the scene where Gilly rips into Bridget for being Ewen's mistress instead of his wife. Gilly should have really grovelled at the end, but nothing like that happened. The whole build-up to the final scene with the villainess was far too contrived, IMHO, so I couldn't feel the intended effect of Ewen's confession. The confession was also too convoluted, probably to keep the suspense going, but it didn't work for me at all.

Natalija says

This book had a very good start, but then it somehow lost its magic & at the end the only thing that kept me going was Ewen's marriage mystery. Another big letdown was that for the big part of the second half of the book Ewen & Bridget were separated, although I really appreciated the fact that Bridget had a faith in her husband and didn't run like I expected her to do.
