



## Ravishing in Red

*Madeline Hunter*

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## **Ravishing in Red** Madeline Hunter

Armed with her cousin's pistol, Audrianna travels to a coaching inn, to meet with a man who may have information that will clear her dead father's name. She does not realize that the handsome man of commanding sensuality who shows up is not the person she expected, but instead Lord Sebastian Summerhays, one of her father's persecutors, lured to the inn by the same advertisement that brought her there.

When the pistol accidentally fires, the situation becomes mortifyingly public, and thoroughly misunderstood. Audrianna is prepared to live with the scandal. Lord Sebastian has other ideas...

## **Ravishing in Red Details**

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Author : Madeline Hunter

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## From Reader Review Ravishing in Red for online ebook

### Kathleen says

Actually I give this book a 4&1/2 stars. I'd have given it 5 stars if it would have been a tish hotter, lol! It did have enough heat to keep me satisfied though. The story line was really good. One I had not read about before. I LOVED the H&H's characters in this book, they were both well done. I also like knowing that a lot of the other characters in this book will be written about in books to come in this series. I hope that Audrianna and Sabastian turn up during the following books since this book did not have an epilogue. I am planning on reading the next book, Provocative In Pearls in the very near future.

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### willaful says

I reread this because 1) I only got 1 1/2 books into the series and want to catch up and 2) I almost always find Hunter worth a second read. I think my feelings about it haven't changed much, but on this reading I was struck by the dry wit and clever turns of phrase:

“‘I suffered Mama much better before I had some experience in not having to,’ Audrianna said as they strolled down the street.”

“He had not gone far. He knelt right in front of her. Her head cleared enough to realize he was going to propose again on bended knee. That was almost too charming to bear.”

(A conversation between Sebastian and his unpleasant mother)

“Oh give me patience. You sound so much like *him* with your sardonic dodges.”

“If I sound so much like *him*, it is because you sound so much like *you*.”

Still didn't grab my heart or punch me in the gut, but well worth a read.

First review (originally read 2/26/10-2/27/10):

I might have appreciated this more if I'd read it before *The Rules of Seduction*. There are similarities in plot and theme and, well, TRoS is one of my top ten favorite romances, so naturally this one feels a bit pale in comparison. The primary relationship is similar (she has come down in the world, he is a duty-driven man whom she believes has injured her family) but the tension and emotion between them isn't as strong. I enjoyed reading it without ever feeling that strongly about the characters or anything that happens to them.

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### Jacob Proffitt says

This is the first by this author that I've read so it was something of a gamble for me; one that paid off, obviously, given my rating. It's a Regency era romance, but it has something of a different flavor than I'm

used to and it took me a bit to decide whether I was in favor of it or not. In the end, I decided that I at least don't mind and the surrounding story was so engaging that I'd have probably continued reading even if I had found it off-putting.

I've been trying to pin down how it differs from other Regency romances and I'll do my best to explain. I think at heart it is a kind of unabashed embrace of sentimentality that only works because it is completely sincere. In this book, Audrianna is pursuing information about the scandal that pushed her father into suicide. In doing so, she takes risks that appeared at first to indicate that Hunter didn't much care for actual Regency norms—like traveling on her own, renting a room in a hotel and meeting a stranger there. These are things that no Regency woman would even consider, or at least, be so concerned by the impropriety that she'd put her chances of achieving her aim at functionally zero. But Audrianna is committed to exonerating her father and her heart is engaged to an extent that is beyond simply extraordinary. Which is to say it's ramped beyond human norms and thus unrealistic. The thing is, if you can go along with this (and no, I couldn't really rewrite it in my head because there were too many other dependencies), then the story unfolds beautifully and delivers very poignant vignettes of uncertainty, trust, love, friendship, honor, and forgiveness. Vignettes that it absolutely earns, even if you take the background of unabashed sentimentality into account.

The thing is, the sentimentality isn't static, nor is it limited to just Audrianna. It kind of permeates the story in a way that serves to highlight and underline other themes and motifs of the plot and characters. By dialing that aspect up, it highlights and brings forward the emotional aspects of the story in ways that would otherwise have been more subtle. And the weird thing is that even though I'm usually a big fan of subtle, I really enjoyed seeing the emotional dynamic play out center stage, here.

So it turns out I have an unexplored sentimental streak (note, I don't say unknown, as anyone who knows me well will probably give me a big "duh" on that one). Which makes me wonder if the rest of Hunter's novels have that same background assumption or if this is an aspect of Audrianna's character. I kind of hope it's universal in her work as I look forward to exploring more of it.

Of course, it also wouldn't have worked if the characters hadn't been engaging and the story interesting and the pacing excellent. Hunter also pulls off another amazing feat in making a plot about wartime materiel fraud work. It's a topic that's dry as old bones on its own, but investing it with the human interest of lies, betrayal, manipulation, and death made it as engaging as a plot of spy/counter-spy. It also gave a perfect backdrop for Sebastian to truly shine as the man of honor and determination who would fully earn Audrianna's love in the end—even though they start off absolutely opposed as he is the investigator who first shone the spotlight on her father. I loved that emotional arc and how they couldn't help developing a mutual respect despite being so fundamentally opposed in motive.

Anyway, the ending was so powerful that I'm tempted to ramp this to five stars. I may decide to change it later, but I need time to digest that unabashed sentimentality and decide what I think about it. It could be problematic and your enjoyment of the story is going to depend heavily on if you can accept that strong background element.

**A note about Steamy:** There are three or four explicit sex scenes in the story and that would normally pop this in the upper end of my middle range. But these scenes served so well to outline the growing trust and love between Sebastian and Audrianna that it really didn't rise that high. Really, really well done.

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## **Sonya Heaney says**

Originally posted [HERE](#)

I put off reading this series for a long time, as every time I considered beginning it, I'd come across a negative review that made me hesitate.

Finally I was in the mood for something historical and all out of ideas, and so I took a chance on this, the first book in the *Rarest Blooms* series. Now I regret waiting, because I really enjoyed it.

What I liked most about this book was that the author stuck to the conventions of the time. Men and women acted within the parameters society allowed them, rather than blatantly breaking all the rules in displays of 'feistiness', as is the common way in historical romance these days. Attitudes to marriage and proper behaviour were in place, and so I actually felt like I was reading about the Regency era.

I loved the secondary characters, the hero's brother in particular, and the mystery woven throughout the romance took us on all kinds of twists and turns. I especially liked that while the marriage between the two lead characters started out as a rather angst-ridden marriage of convenience, where both characters talked openly of the possibility of infidelity in the future, the way they gradually fell in love with each other seemed genuine.

The only thing I had an issue with is the same thing I have an issue with every time I read a Regency book written by an American author: the use of American words and terminology. I live in hope that one day US editors will wake up to these mistakes, but I don't see it happening any time in the near future...

I'm going to put the mixed reviews of this one down to the fact it is hard to apply terms like *feisty* and *erotic* and *romp* to the story. It's come to be what readers expect these days. However I, for one, am glad that authors like Madeline Hunter can still have their work published in the bizarre climate of today's historical romance genre.

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## **Renee Jaspers says**

This turned out to be ultimately quite boring to me. Didn't draw much emotion from me at all. I think I'm just not into the Regency subgenre. All the worry over upperclass aristocracy and society gossip can be so dull. The romance was believable between the two, but it wasn't emotionally consuming for me as a reader. The sex scenes erotic without getting too explicit, but not very satisfying. The main mystery to uncover wasn't very exciting, engrossing or dangerous. As I said, I was bored by the end.

I did appreciate the intelligence Hunter gave her characters. They spoke with wit and cleverness. I especially appreciate how Hunter writes smart, independent women characters. I liked the concept of The Rarest Blooms group of independent young women with pasts coming together to live in peace and independence, but I have no plans or desire to read more of these regencies.

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## **Joanna (joreadsalot) says**

Regency Romances.....Oh man its been a while. I can say that, back in the day, this was all I read then. I owned the 3rd book from this quartet because, at the time, the book store didn't have the first two and the fourth wasn't out yet. I recently have been loving using my library for audiobooks so I decided why not try it for a romance novel I'm in no rush to buy but would like to read anyways. I have to say that I loved reading it via audiobook because of how quick I was able to get it done and move on to the sequel. Mini hint: I did enjoy the book.

To start, this was my first Madeline Hunter book and I did enjoy her writing style. I thought her prose was witty and her vocabulary was expansive. I also enjoyed both the main couple and the side characters. Audrianna, our main female lead, was confident, loyal and supportive. Sebastian, our male lead, was tenacious, supportive and surprisingly introspective. It was actually the relationship between Sebastian and his brother that really made me like his character more. He is so loyal to him and supportive of him that you can't help but grow to like him too.

One of my favourite side characters is Daphne which is the patroness of The Rarest Blooms. I enjoy her remarkably witty retorts and her intellectual ideas about woman rights which were very modern in the era the book takes place in. I love how she very logical but not so much to the point that she doesn't understand the human heart. I really hope one of the books in the quartet is dedicated to her cause thats the one I really wanna read.

Now with all the gushing I've done, you must be wondering why this book only got 3 stars? Well its because the plot was not that exciting. It was pretty weak actually. I almost forgot why Sebastian and Audrianna even met after reading part way through the book because it was just so insignificant. Then when it was brought up near the end, I was like "Oh yeah we need to kind of resolve that thing before we finish up." and that should never be the case.

If you are just looking for a light romance read then this would be for you. However don't expect fireworks because all your going to get are birthday candles.

Happy Reading

Jo

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## **?Karlyn P? says**

Ravishing in red finished strong with a clever mystery and some interesting characters, but the slow and boring start (that spanned the first half of the book!) had me nearly quitting many times. It was hard not to get distracted and just do something else instead of read, but as everyone points out the story does eventually speed up and will hold your interest. It took me nearly a full week to read this one, and I normally burn through three books in the same amount of time. So given how much effort I put into reading this one, you can only imagine that I am not feeling inclined to continue with this series, at least not right now.

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## **Carolyn F. says**

Audrianna's father had committed suicide after being accused of a crime. In trying to find out information to help clear him, she encounters Lord Sebastian at an inn, her gun accidentally goes off and then scandal at first makes her look bad and then him. In trying to repair some of the damage they marry and work together (kind of) about finding further information on the crime her father was accused of. In between this, they slowly fall in love.

This was a wonderful book. I liked it so much, I'm planning on finding book #2 and I preordered book #3. I would recommend this book.

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## **Ana says**

Audrianna will do anything she can to help clear her father's name. Even if it means going to an inn alone armed so that she could meet a mysterious man - Domino - who claims to know something. But the man she meets isn't the one she seeks, but Lord Sebastian Summerhays a man whose investigation placed the blame on her father in the first place.

Sebastian is enchanted by the woman he meets. Too bad that she is totally unsuitable, mainly because of her father. But when they are caught together and honor demands they marry, they must learn to get along. It does help that the attraction between them is strong.

I liked the book, but I had a few problems. The book dragged on a bit, and Audrianna had a few TSTL moments mostly when her desire to help her father overruled her sense. But later in the book she learned her lesson.

I like the marriage of convenience plot. How the couples have to learn with each other and the married life. In this case there was a mystery that could potentially destroy the relationship.

The secondary characters are great - the rest of the Rarest Blooms, and especially Castleford. :-)

Rating:

**4 stars.**

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## **Susana says**

A pretty forgetful story, with insta love/lust. The characters meet, and five pages later Sebastian is trying to choke her with his tongue O\_O .

There's nothing particularly wrong with this story, but there's nothing particularly interesting in it either. I'm afraid that the author's writing style is no longer a favourite, and then reading this translated to Portuguese, was the nail in the coffin...

Who hires these people?

Despite that, I will be giving the second one a try, because according to my mother:  
*The second one is definitely better!*

It better be! o\_O

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### **Krasimira says**

3.5

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### **Galina Shishkova says**

??-????? 3.5 \*

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### **Saly says**

3.5 stars

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### **Keri says**

This book was good, but suffered to me in some of the wording used. The premise and the majority of the book was solid. But when it came to the love scenes they were so far removed from the act with the wording used. It became hard to connect to the emotions of the h/h. I do look forward to the next book, but can't wait for Lord Castleford's book, what a man-whore. He is going to have to do some major groveling to deserve Daphne...MAJOR! :-)

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### **Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says**

It's been a few years since I read Madeline Hunter. But, I didn't forget how good her writing is. Her style has an authentic feel that I love to read in historical romances. I like her choice of words and her use of subtle wit. This story wasn't particularly steamy, and at first, I was disappointed at how mild the love scenes were. But, as I continued to read, I came to realize that they fit this story.

I love books in which the couple marries early, and the progression of the book shows how they come to know each other and fall in love as husband and wife. This book is no different. Sebastian and Audrianna had a very inauspicious start to their courtship, but it was deemed by fate, on many levels.

I liked and respected both Audrianna and Sebastian. I think Sebastian turned out to be a wonderful husband, even though he doubted that he would be. He was raised in the shadow of a big brother who was the perfect gentleman, and his harridan of a mother never let him forget that. When Morgan, the Marquess of Wittonbury, was wounded in the war, and paralyzed, he stepped in to attend to Morgan's duties as the



Marquess. Sebastian felt like his identity had been absorbed into that of his brother, and that he would never live up to him. He married Audrianna mostly out of duty, although there was not a little bit of desire there, as well. His brother immediately liked Audrianna, which spurred him to offer for her when her reputation is ruined. Although it's perfectly innocent, it doesn't look like it; as they are caught together in an inn room where they both go to meet the man who might have information about the adulterated gunpowder that led to soldiers' deaths, and ruined Audrianna's father's reputation. Despite the reason for marrying Audrianna, he treated her with kindness and respect, and listened to her, meeting her needs. Soon after, he gave his heart to her fully. Audrianna rejected Sebastian's marriage proposal twice, and finally agreed, having doubts as to the success of her union. She resigned herself to a ton marriage in which a husband's unfaithfulness was a forgone conclusion. She had no idea how she had stolen her husband's heart.

This is a very strong, good read. It falls short of five stars for me, because the passion seemed a bit muted, and it lacked a certain intensity that I like in a good historical. However, it's a very well-executed love story, with a captivating cast of secondary characters. I think it's also very successful as a historical; one in which I never felt like I was reading a modern book with window-dressing. This is one of those books I want to read when I yearn for a good historical, and I'm glad that Ms. Hunter delivered that reading experience to me.

I must say that Sebastian makes a very polite jealous/possessive hero, with some good quotes that show he won't be a man to be cuckolded:

*"You will have to forgive me, Major Woodruffe. I am new to marriage, and perhaps more given to jealousy than some of the more experienced husbands that you know. It is possible that you seek only friendship with my wife. If, however, you entertain any other--"*

-Sebastian to Woodruffe (Audrianna's ex-fiance who comes sniffing around her now that she's safely married to a man of influence)

*"I assure you that such a thing is the furthest thing from my mind."*

-Woodruffe to Sebastian

*"Come now, Major. We are both men. Such ideas are never far from our minds at all. But if you do anything that causes me to think that your mind dwells long on that particular idea, I will thrash you, I will ruin you, and I will probably kill you."*

-Sebastian to Woodruffe

*"I did indeed say you could have lovers. But I never promised that I would not kill them."*

-Sebastian to Audrianna

Those moments gave me some glee, as I do love my jealous/possessive heroes. I was glad that he intended to do his best to be faithful. I admired that he said he would do his best. Since he is not a man to lie or to shirk his responsibilities, and he is very much in love with his wife, I have no doubts that he will be faithful to her for the duration of his marriage. Before, Sebastian seemed to be rootless, but he found his home in his wife. I don't expect him to return to his wandering, rakish former ways.

If you want to read a good, entertaining, historical romance that reads like a historical, I'd recommend *Ravishing in Red*. Ms. Hunter writes so beautifully, I feel you'll enjoy this novel.

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