



Lady with a Black Umbrella

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Giles Fairhaven, Viscount Kincade, does not believe his life can get much worse after his purse is stolen at an inn before he has paid his bill and then he is set upon by three ruffians in the inn yard before he can leave. But it does grow worse when a little slip of a lady clad only in a flannel nightgown and wielding a large black man's umbrella comes to his rescue and puts his assailants to rout and then--after he has left--pays his reckoning at the inn plus the money he lost the evening before in a card game with a fellow guest plus what he owed the barmaid with whom he spent the night. The ensuing gossip is almost too much humiliation for Giles to bear. Yet when he finds and confronts Daisy Morrison in London, far from being cowed by his displeasure, she declares with sunny good nature that if he insists upon repaying the slight favour she was able to do for him, then he can recommend a lady sponsor to her so that she may find a husband for her younger sister among the gentlemen of the ton. Inexplicably, Giles finds himself agreeing. His troubles are only just beginning."

Lady with a Black Umbrella Details

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Grace says

Like most of Mary Balogh's TSTL heroines, you either love them or you don't.

Either I wasn't in the mood for the heroine or for the book, but this book just didn't speak to me. My favorite of Mary Balogh's TSTL heroines is Josephine Middleton, who causes all sorts of ruckus by being the flakiest Regency heroine in the world. Daisy, on the other hand, was annoying to me in her inability to see how much she was ticking off Giles. The fact that they ended up together was surprising in the extreme. How she wasn't kicked out of London society was another miracle.

Anna D. says

4.5 stars. Cute. Very very cute.

Daisy, our heroine, reminds me very much of an Amanda Quick heroine. She's a trouble magnet, a bit reckless, and she sort of lives by her own rules where her actions are not based on propriety or the rules of conduct but by what she feels is necessary, right, and intuitive. We feel the frustration of those around her, but we also love her because she is selfless – almost to her own detriment. These types of “wild” heroines are paired perfectly to starchy heroes and that's who we get with Giles. I had a lot of fun reading this short book! Also to pair Giles & Daisy's eventful romance, Mary Balogh provided us a side calm romance between Arthur & Rose – that was a nice addition.

Andrea says

Mh. Not my favorite Balogh book. I ended up skipping passages from the heroine's point of view because she annoyed me to no end, but loved the rest of the story.

I guess I just wasn't in the right mood to enjoy the heroine's crazy antics. I know most people found her charming, but to me, she was just annoying. She was really oblivious, going on and on and ON about how now one could love her because she's just so old (25), managing, and annoying. She freely admits that logic and thinking things through are not her strong suit (understatement of the year if you ask me. Over the course of the story she (view spoiler). All of which come from a good place, but she did it so obtusely and publicly that I can't imagine how even a pretend engagement saved her reputation). For the most part I wanted to encourage the hero to enact his fantasies of strangling her, which can't be a good sign. But Giles (our hero) was kind of adorable. His inner monologues about how he can't believe how that annoying little baggage managed to weasel her way into his thoughts are pretty sweet.

Desi says

Fun and light hearted. Which is unusual for those who know Balogh's habitual style. Relatively mild pontification here and there from the vicar-to-be brother of the hero. Heroine was occasionally a bit TSTL, but she was inherently charming.

The situations featured were far-fetched and the sisters being taken under the wing of a respectable woman would have been nigh unto impossible, but, going with the flow of the story, it was a super fun, quirky read.

Definite mood booster with lots of laughs. And that poor, poor put upon man who had to deal with her. I like that a lot of the story was from his perspective.

More time could have been spent on their building a relationship and I was a bit unclear as to the passage of time over the course of the book, but I think it was meant to be more caper style à la Georgette Heyer so less focus on relationships and more insta-pairing and situational comedy. You get the same happy feel in this book as from Metzger's "Miss Lockharte's Letters". I particularly loved her extended, rather graphic, fantasy birth sequence where she imagined poor Giles somehow being the one who was forced by circumstance to deliver their baby himself.

Lines I loved-

Daisy yawned again, aloud and at great and satisfying length. Now, where had she been? Ah, yes. She was stretched out in bed, in a sweat-soaked bed, her lips raw with the effort of not screaming aloud and alarming Giles, who needed to remain calm. She had sent him to boil water, but he would be back soon to hold her hand and murmur soothing words to her. The wind howled outside and the sleet beat against the windowpanes. She thought her waters had probably broken. Her pains were coming thick and fast. Daisy moved her hands from behind her head and spread them on her very flat abdomen. She smiled as Giles gently kissed her forehead and smoothed back her hair. Some minutes before their child was born, she slid into a peaceful sleep.

"Rose followed her sister downstairs and stood a few paces from the table where Daisy sat with a smiling plump gentleman who gave Rose the shudders. She could not explain why. He probably could not help having soft fat fingers with dark hairs on the backs of each. And if he chose to wear a ring on each of those fingers, well, that was entirely his business. And one could not quarrel with a smile and a quiet, polite manner. But Rose found her lips curling in distaste and had to deliberately school her expression to blandness."

"You could almost hook your grin over your ears, you know."

"What could possibly happen to embarrass him further? Matters were at such a low ebb that surely they could only improve. But then the fates that had so sensibly decreed such a pattern of existence had surely never known Daisy Morrison. He would believe his fortunes to be on the upward rise when he knew the woman to be safely back in the country again, managing her family as she claimed to have been doing all her life. And even then he would never again feel quite secure in the dignity of his name."

"I came to take you for a drive."

"Did you?" she said, brightening. "I must say that I have not been enjoying Robinson Crusoe excessively. I

had heard that it was an exciting book.”

“It probably becomes more interesting on page two,” he said, glancing down at the book in her lap. “At least I seem to remember that that was where my interest picked up.”

“She seemed to have no conception whatsoever of her own attractions.

And he was attracted. He found himself, at first unconsciously and then quite deliberately, touching her whenever he could do so without being too obvious”

Dina says

What a delightful book! There's really no other adjective to describe it. This was one of the funniest reads I've had, and I found myself smiling, chuckling and laughing the whole time.

Giles and Daisy were both adorable. Giles didn't know what to do with her at first but, little by little, she made a place in his life - and his heart - and, before he realized it, he couldn't see himself living without her. Ms. Balogh has done an excellent job *showing* Giles and Daisy's slow but steady growing affection, and then love, towards each other, and I can easily see them living happily ever after. I'd go as far as to say that I wouldn't mind reading about them even *after* their HEA. It would be one heck of a funny read, considering Daisy's "talent" to get herself in trouble - not that she ever acknowledged that "special gift" of hers, of course. :)

The secondary love story involving Arthur, Giles's brother, and Rose, Daisy's sister, was also very charming, though more "serious" in tone, and added to my overall enjoyment. While Giles's marriage proposal to Daisy cracked me up, Arthur's proposal to Rose was sight-worthy. I felt lucky, as if I had landed a two-for-one deal. Not bad, considering this was a short novel.

This was only my third book by Ms. Balogh - I know, *where* have I been living all these years?!? - and she's yet to disappoint me. Considering how huge is her backlist, I'm in for a long, amazing treat!

Ilze says

Very, very funny. Delightful, if quite obtuse, heroine and wonderful hero who would dearly love to rid himself of the pest (the heroine), but somehow always ends up being even more deeply involved with her.

Luli says

Ha sido extraño leer esta historia. A veces me gustaba, a veces me exasperaba, y aunque en general me ha gustado, tampoco me ha parecido nada del otro mundo.

Quizás la protagonista la ha estropeado un poco para mí. O quizás no he sabido divertirme leyéndola, pero en algunas ocasiones me ha parecido infantil la actitud de ella. Era como si todo el mundo tuviese que estar pendiente de que no se metiese en un lío, al principio era refrescante pero después me resultó cansino.

Precioso el romance secundario. Muy dulce.

Encantador el protagonista, realmente encantador. Me gusta cuando es él el que lucha contra sus sentimientos pero está embelesado con ella, muy a su pesar.

A excepción de la protagonista, los demás caracteres son creíbles, encantadores y sensiblemente reales. A pesar de ello es la historia de esta autora que más me ha gustado. Es muy diferente a lo que he leído de ella, más relajada, más light...

It has been strange to read this story. Sometimes I liked it, sometimes it exasperated me, and although I've, in general, liked it, it was nothing special.

Perhaps the heroine has spoiled it a little bit for me. Or perhaps I have failed to have fun reading it, but sometimes I think the heroine's attitude was too childish. It was as if the world had to be looking after her to not make a mess everywhere, it was refreshing at first but then I found it tiresome.

Lovely secondary romance. So sweet.

The hero is charming, really lovely. I like it when he is the one fighting his feelings but is besotted with her, much to his regret.

Except for the heroine, the other characters are credible, charming and noticeably real.

Nevertheless, this one is this author's story that I most liked. It's very different from what I have read from her, more relaxed, more light...

Leona says

This is definitely a treasure. I could not stop laughing. Much lighter than *Silent Melody*, *Heartless*, *Dancing with Clara*, or *The Secret Pearl*, but still very enjoyable.

I am so glad that MB's backlist is being republished in ebooks. I have loved her earlier work, but unfortunately not all were available in libraries.

Ceki says

4.5 stars rounded up to 5 because this book made me laugh so many times that I stopped counting! A surprisingly delightful read.

If you are in a bad mood and would like something light, fluffy and romantic - choose this one. I would have never thought that Balogh would be able to pull off this kind of humor because her recently released books are nothing like that. This one reminded me of Georgette Heyer. There is basically no angst in it, just delightful banter and funny action.

Daisy did come off as a bit too naive and impulsive, but it wouldn't have been so funny if she was different. I loved the Viscount Kincade's monologues and inner thoughts, I LOL-ed each time Daisy pissed him off. It was hilarious.

Linda says

While staying at an inn, and through a serendipitous series of events, Miss Daisy Morrison saved Giles, Viscount Kincade, from thugs intent on hurting him. He had already had issues with a thief and had no money. Without further thought, she comes to the rescue with her voice, fists and a large men's black umbrella. Hence, the title of the story.

Lord Kincade had promised the innkeeper he would pay all of his debts as soon as he returned home. Of course, Daisy didn't know this, so she not only paid for his room but his gambling debt and an amorous night with a barmaid! When Giles found out, he was furious and is determined to meet her again.

Daisy has always had the best of intentions. *She really does mean well.* The reason she was on the road was to visit relatives in London so they could sponsor her sister, Rose, with her first season. Because of her age and spinsterhood, she thought of herself as the perfect chaperon. Propriety, be damned.

This was a romance that matched a reluctant hero, with whom dignity was all-important, and a motor-mouth but sensible heroine in a comedy of errors. I found myself both smiling and laughing while reading of all the hijinks that happened to Daisy while Giles tried to keep up. When one crisis leads to another, they found themselves compromised and Giles offered marriage. Because neither person wants this, they decided to pose as a betrothed couple to fool their respective families until Daisy can break it off without hurting anyone.

I am leaving out quite a bit concerning Daisy's sister, Giles's siblings, some friends and a few shady characters. Daisy continually referred to herself as five-and-twenty and on-the-shelf and it drove Giles (and me!) crazy. But you can't help but love this endearing, meddling young lady. It took the majority of the story for Giles to figure this out but he finally ~~surrenders~~ falls in love.

StMargarets says

This was adorable. Fast-paced and lighthearted, this is a reissue of one of Balogh's Signet Regency stories. The lady in the title is the heroine, who tried to save the hero from a beating at a coaching inn armed only with a black umbrella. The hero had his purse stolen and had to leave IOUs for everyone at the inn - including the prostitute who had entertained him the night before. Since the heroine couldn't save the hero from a black eye, she did one better and paid all of his bills. (Without him knowing, of course).

Then off to London our "ancient" heroine (she's 25) goes to procure a season for her lovely 19 year-old sister, who is ten times more practical than her idealistic sister, but also resigned to her sister's strong personality.

The hero hates the heroine because she injured his pride by paying his debts, but he can't quit her. Their lives become entangled with his aunt takes on the job of sponsoring both women and his sisters and brother

befriend them as well.

They inadvertently become betrothed with they are caught together in an empty room (they were both looking to stop the hero's younger sister from meeting a fortune-seeking cad). The hero kisses the heroine to "hide her identity" but the secret is out. Both H/h enjoyed the kiss, so the betrothal of convenience isn't such a burden.

It's really fun to watch a hero succumb when he really, really doesn't want to like the heroine. The heroine is oblivious to his seething emotions because she's so busy trying to manage everyone else. It's fun to watch her dawning realization of his strength of character and her physical attraction to him. Balogh also manages a romance for the heroine's younger sister and for the hero's sister. The sinister cad trying to elope with the hero's sister was the weakest part of the story.

Netanella says

Argh...I wanted my own black umbrella to smack Daisy with. How utterly annoying a character she was. Unfortunately, I found no humor in her personality.

Jannah (Cloud Child) says

3.5/5

Hilarious and yet frustrating. I'm smiling ferociously on the inside.

The heroine Daisy, is the most agonisingly stupid cow, with a crusading streak, as if the world couldn't stand on its own feet, without her propping it up.

Usually the "stronger" the heroine the better (us girls gotta stick up for ourselves or someone is gonna tell us we can't fight off highway men with an umbrella). But Daisy..just made me cringe laugh while wanting to bang my head against the wall.

Surprisingly its an enjoyable journey despite this flaw. Especially the many times when love interest (first comes hate, then love..terrible disease that one) Lord Giles Kincade imagines strangling and shutting her up during her wildly embarrassing escapades. Daisy is all the more likable when firmly shut up by Giles. A sign of a reliable hero..

However there were moments when I did appreciate her for her ridiculous self..like the various times when she would daydream about giving birth...I didn't think it could be that funny. But it just..was FUNNY. I wish I could depict the scene better or copy a quote from the book to show it's hilarity..however I deleted my ebook (a figurative throw at the wall attempt) so (eep I didn't realise I would do this) I recommend you check out a copy..

Giles is a sweet hero, whose stern pompous self is suddenly overtaken by this crazy woman (determined to think herself an on the shelf spinster, despite evidence to the contrary that she is young and attractive), an unwanted Joan of Arc for all. He somehow melts and gives in after understandably hating her guts. Cute (do

you see me smiling ferociously). Yet in reality would it sustain? It was sweet though.

The secondary characters were nice, not as strong as the main, but complementary to the story. I felt Daisy's sister could have a bit more backbone instead of sweetly sighing over Daisy's insanity.

I wish there was some true needed character development for Daisy. She needed to realise the amount of stress, embarrassment and calamity came from her "good deeds".

I realised later she reminded me of a quote by Miss Marple in *The Mirror Crack'd from Side to Side* (Miss Marple, #9). On comparison of a murdered woman to a similar character in her village Marple remarked the lady "always saw her own point of view so clearly that she didn't always see how things might appear to, or affect, other people."

Daisy. You may meet your death sooner rather than later..

Megzy says

Lady with a Black Umbrella is the perfect book when you need a break from your denser and darker reads. It is fast-paced, clever and often humorous. If you like strong characters that pop right off the page, Daisy is your girl. She is pretty much a terror and between getting in the way and deciding to "help", she turns everyone's life upside down.

Mara says

3 1/2

It's truly a good writer the one who makes you love her story even when you hate her heroine (a stupid, stupid conceited dumb ass). Did I say she's really stupid? But I couldn't stop smiling. Weird, I found myself in the hero's shoes. I don't think it had ever happened before...
