

## A Double Deception

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After one terrible marriage, Laura Dalwood had sworn never to be duped again. But how could she refuse the proposal of handsome Mark Cheney? What could she do when, as his bride, she discovered how much she could love a man ... and how much she could fear him?

## A Double Deception Details


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## From Reader Review A Double Deception for online ebook

### Caron Pescatore says

I really enjoyed this title by Joan Wolf. I've read it twice, but have to confess that the second time around was quite by accident. Yet still, when I realized that I had already read it, I continued reading until the end. The story is very well written, with an interesting plot that pulled this reader in. It also has some nicely developed characters, although I didn't really get a good feel for the hero, Mark, until some time later in the book.

The story begins in a somewhat unusual manner, in that in the first couple of chapters the character on whom the story focuses is Lady Maria, aunt to the hero; godmother to the heroine, Laura. In those two chapters we follow Lady Mary as she attends first Mark's marriage, and then Laura's, to two different people. Subsequently, both Laura and Mark are widowed and events lead to Laura becoming a nanny of sorts (she's unpaid) to Mark's son, while Mark is away on an assignment for the Royal Navy. Once Mark returns home, events unfold in such a manner which results in Mark and Laura entering a marriage of convenience. Of course, this is partly due to Lady Maria's. The story unfolds at a nice pace, and is fairly intriguing. I enjoyed it very much and would recommend it as a worthwhile read. Of course no book is perfect, and I did have an issue or two with this one, which I have expanded on below.

First of all, you should be aware that it is not until Chapter 5 that Laura and Mark finally meet. Typically I get irritated when it takes a while for the protagonists of a romance book to meet. In this instance, although it was almost 20% into the story before Mark and Laura met, I wasn't really bothered by it. The events that unfolded up to this point were interesting enough to hold my interest, although I was keen to finally see the first meeting between them.

What I didn't particularly like is the fact that the reader is given absolutely no insight into Mark's character. Consequently, it was extremely hard to get to know him, and I was never really able to discern what he was thinking or feeling. It didn't help that he has a very stoic personality and the uncanny ability to hide his thoughts and feelings from others. Laura was constantly in the dark as to what was going on in Mark's mind, as was I. Add to this, the fact that the book is more narrative driven than dialogue and the end result is that I felt somewhat removed from Mark and consequently, from Mark and Laura as a couple. Finally, around 60% into the story Mark and Laura begin an open communication and the dialogue between the two starts to flow. At this point, the book got more interesting, and I began to feel more vested in the couple.

There is a lot of intrigue added to the plot in the form of an apparent murder plot against Laura. With Mark believed to be the cause of his first wife's suicide by his neighbors, all become suspicious when apparent "accidents" keep happening to Laura. Mark's stoicism left me wondering what the heck was really going on. The mystery surrounding who and why someone wants Laura dead was very cleverly created and evolved in such a way to keep this reader in the dark. Who and why turned out to be--for me at least--a big surprise! I didn't see that coming.

So, the bottom line is that I really enjoyed this book. So much so that I've read it twice. FYI, for those of you concerned about sexual content in the books you read, you should know that this is a clean romance. The couple do, of course, engage in marital relations, but the reader is given no details whatsoever. I hope you found this review helpful. Happy reading!

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## **P. says**

In this sorta mystery there is only one suspect. While it is amazingly clear to the reader quite early on, the two main characters just moan about in stolid confusion - who could it be!! they moan, Who could it BE?? While it's difficult to view this book with any affection, it's readable.

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## **ms bookjunkie says**

\*happy sigh\* There's nothing like a traditional regency for the warm fuzzies. Love!

(Stand alone but slightly connected to *The London Season*—we meet some familiar characters.)

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## **Suzanne says**

This well written early regency romance has a bit of everything; emotionally wounded protagonists, a marriage of convenience, a dangerous saboteur, unemployed sailors, scientists, children, horses, and a raucous London Coronation. I enjoyed the angst, the mystery, and the laughter. I particularly loved learning about the lives of Jane and David, characters from Wolf's 'A London Season'. Fortunately, these memorable characters play a substantial role in 'A Double Deception'. Together, 'A London Season' and 'A Double Deception' make a great duo.

Thanks to Kathleen for recommending this book!

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## **Cathy Dunlop says**

I enjoyed this story of Mark and Laura but I couldn't give it full stars. The reason being there were too many unanswered questions and we never got the point of view from the hero's perspective. I was delighted when Jane and David from A London Season appeared we got to find out how they fared still very much in love.

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## **Li says**

I've a soft spot for Joan Wolf's regencies - I liked this sweet romance, though it's not one of her best. Familiar plot and familiar characters with an OTT villain - a quick and enjoyable read.

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## **Naksed says**

If you couldn't get enough of Jane and David from Joan Wolf's lovely A London Season, you will be happy to know they have an extensive cameo in this book. The author realized halfway through this MOC/murder whodunit hybrid that the protagonists were flat and the plot tired, so she injected energy by bringing back her

wonderful creations from a previous book. I was tickled pink to get an epilogue of sorts for that couple, even if they still couldn't really manage to quite save this sinking ship.

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### **tacitus says**

**A good story, well written, but missed some obvious opportunities that eventually damaged the whole.**

I really liked this story because the mystery and drama were laid out very quickly, and with enough subtlety to not insult the reader with unnecessary "explanations". However, I really object to the fact that almost the entire story is ONLY from the heroine's perspective. There is no inner dialogue for the hero at all. Because of this, scenes that should have been the most dramatic and jaw dropping end up occurring "off screen", with the characters literally telling us about them after the fact in dialogue. Are you kidding me? Who writes a murder mystery filled with outrageous taboos and then doesn't actually show the reader the climactic confrontation? Also, I thought the end solution to the "problem" was incredibly weak. Very, very anti-climactic at the end.

In short, this was a great story that was going everywhere, and then it's like the author just lost her nerve and pulled everything WAY back at the last moment. Too bad... =/

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### **heidi says**

I thought this was a nice companion piece to A London Season. Both of the romantic leads are coming into a reasonable logical reason with very bruised hearts, for good reasons. Of course, it would be a very short book if that was all that happened, so there is a delicious plotline with thrills, chills, and danger. Also there is a small adorable child and a really lovely example of adult friendship.

I think my favorite part of all the Joan Wolf books I've read is how very human and distinct her characters are.

\*There is harm to an animal in this book.

Read if: You enjoy a whodunit with a romance costume.

Skip if: Gothic romance plots annoy you.

Also read: A London Season by the same author. It's a very unusual feeling romance, which I have reviewed on this site, but it's very much about loving who someone is, not who they should be.

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### **Jacqueline says**

A very good regency. Like most of Joan Wolf's books the feel of the period is very good. This is not just wallpaper history. The people really act like they would have in the period or at least a reasonable facsimile

of it. I liked Laura, she was a very strong character and was able to think things through and respond appropriately. He was a dark brooding character but was underneath a very decent man. Jane and David from 'A London Season' are secondary characters in this one.

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### **Olivia says**

Nice story of a marriage of convenience.

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### **Mary23nm says**

Good book. A little short. Could have used more detail on Laura's first marriage. Conflict resolution was somewhat off the page and anticlimactic. Ending contained detailed description of ceremony with the King. No epilogue.

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### **Kathleen says**

4.5 stars for the sequel to A London Season. My heart went out to the noble Mark, slandered, maligned, framed to look like a wife-murderer, twice (hence the title). But THIS time the calvary cometh, for Mark's new wife, Laura, is not gonna stand for it! She overcomes her fears and trusts her heart, standing by Mark despite everything. So poignant. Solid relationship and character development.

The final chapter, at the king's coronation, brought an end to this sometimes gothic tale with laughter and high spirits: "We're hungry!"

The author portrayed the child, Mark's five-year-old son Robin, realistically.

As for the intrigue, not complex: Early in the story I predicted who the villain was. Just follow the bread crumbs....

One more HUGE plus: I got to spend time with Jane and David from A London Season. One of the best cross-text character integrations I have seen, and Jane held true to form.

Contents: Some tame lovemaking, some violence, a few incidents of profanity, which I could do without..

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### **Gerrie says**

This is a sequel to one of my very favorite books, A London Season. I really love, and have greatly enjoyed, many of Joan Wolf's regencies. However, this book just felt flat to me, especially the relationship between Mark and Laura, the hero and heroine. As some other reviewers have said, the real attraction of the book was the role of Jane and David from A London Season as major secondary characters (even Uncle Edward and his wife Anne from that book made brief appearances here). It was great to see them all again a decade later.

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## **Ana T. says**

I've read some books by Joan Wolf and on the whole I enjoyed the regencies more than the European historicals so when the opportunity arose to read one more I didn't hesitate.

After one terrible marriage, Laura Dalwood had sworn never to be duped again. But how could she refuse the proposal of handsome Mark Cheney? What could she do when, as his bride, she discovered how much she could love a man . . . and how much she could fear him?

A Double Deception seemed to have the ideal plot for me. A marriage of convenience story where both the hero and the heroine had troubled pasts with unhappy marriages. I actually did like the idea and how Wolf developed it. It starts with their first marriages and then jumps forward in time. Mark is a widower with a son and departs for the sea leaving the boy in the care of his nurse. Laura is a widow but without children and through her godmother she goes to live and raise Mark's son. When Mark returns they spend a few days in the same house without a chaperone and therefore marriage is the best solution to stop the gossips. Not only do they have to get to know each other as Laura has to face the rumours that Mark murdered his first wife and when a series of accidents start to happen those rumours start again.

It becomes obvious that there's a secret regarding Mark's first marriage and his wife's death. Also that someone is trying to hurt Laura to put the blame on Mark. This could have been interesting if the villain had been a bit stronger and if there had been a confrontation between them. Instead we are told what really happened and who was behind the accidents but there's no sense of closure. Another weak point is that we are told from the back blurb that Laura feared her first husband but it seems he ignored more than mistreated her. I would have liked more background on her because she was such a sensible and nice girl.

Grade B-

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