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The Shadow Queen: A Novel Of Wallis Simpson, Duchess Of Windsor



Synopsis

King Edward VIII abdicated his throne for her in one of the world's great love stories – but who was Wallis Simpson? Born into a poor southern family but taken in by rich relatives, Wallis Simpson was raised as a socialite. Between family conflicts and debutante balls, she and her friends dream of their future husbands, and like millions of girls worldwide, dream of Prince Edward, the heir to the British throne who would someday be king. Beloved author Rebecca Dean imagines the early life of Wallis Simpson, her triumphs and heartbreaks, and the making of the twice divorced, nearly destitute woman who captured a king's heart and changed the course of history. Set against a background of high society, royal circles, and diplomatic intrigue, *The Shadow Queen* features one of the most fascinating and controversial women of the 20th century. From the Trade Paperback edition.

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Customer Reviews

2.5 stars You're telling me I went through all that and at the end, Wallis and Edward have only just met? Excuse me? I thought this was "A Novel of Wallis Simpson, Duchess of Windsor," not "The First Novel of How Wallis Simpson Grew Up, Married and Divorced, and Then, Two or Three Books Down the Road, Became the Duchess of Windsor." Grrr. Yes, I am disappointed. I figured the book

would focus a little bit on Wally's childhood, devote a bit more to her first two marriages, but spend the bulk of the book on the courtship and romance between her and Edward. Instead I find myself slogging through pages and pages of Wallis's life without really getting to know her as a character, beyond the fact she was proud of her lineage and struggled throughout her life with poverty (stuff I knew from already from biographies). And when I reached the end of the novel, I find that Wallis has only just met the prince and, thanks to reports by other reviewers, that their story will continue in a sequel. Talk about bait and switch! Don't get me wrong, the writing is well done: it keeps you involved in the story, the characters are well-drawn, and the dialogue is realistic. What annoyed me was how the characters were drawn, in particular Wallis. I get it: This is an historical fiction novel written by a romance novelist, but this was not the Wallis I expected. I was looking for a warmer side to the "cold fish" represented in history; I was not expecting a perpetual victim, a woman who resignedly accepts the abuse heaped upon her as being her due because she wasn't a "real" woman (according to the set up provided by Dean, which I'll get into later).

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