

A Rose in Winter

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The fairest flower in Mawbry is Erienne Fleming, the enchanting, raven-haired daughter of the village mayor. Charming, spirited and exquisitely lovely, she is beset on all sides by suitors, any one of whom would pay a king's fortune for a place in her heart. But Erienne has eyes for only one: the dashing and witty young Yankee, Christopher Seton.

But marriage for love is not to be, for her irresponsible and unscrupulous father, crippled by gambling debts, is intent on auctioning off his beautiful daughter to the highest bidder. And in the end, Erienne is devastated to find it is the strange and secretive Lord Saxton who has purchased her--a mysterious, tragic figure who wears a mask and a cloak at all times to hide disfiguring scars gained in a terrible fire some years back.

But in the passing days, Saxton's true nature is revealed to her. A gentle and adoring soul, he treats his new bride with warmth and abiding tenderness, yet appears to her only by daylight. She, in turn, vows to be a good and loyal wife to him. And then Christopher Seton reenters Erienne's world.

Conflicted by emotions she cannot suppress, Erienne valiantly attempts to remain honorable to her elusive, enigmatic husband but feels herself irresistibly drawn to Seton's passion, his fire, and his secrets. Entangled in intrigues she doesn't yet understand, Erienne Fleming will soon have to make a devastating choice: between love and honor...between her duty and her heart.

Debt-ridden Avery Fleming is determined to find a wealthy husband for his beautiful daughter, Erienne, so he can pay off his mountain of debts. Erienne, however, has refused every one of the old men her father has picked for her consideration. When she meets dashing American merchant Christopher Seton, she cannot deny her attraction to him, despite the fact that he wounded her brother, Farrell, in a duel, crippling him for life. However, when Seton asks for Erienne's hand in marriage, both she and her father refuse him. Instead, Erienne's father auctions her off to the highest bidder--the mysterious Lord Saxton, a man whose horrifying scars are hidden by a mask and cloak. Erienne comes to know her husband as a kind and gentle man, but when Christopher Seton returns to town, she cannot fight her attraction to him. She finds herself torn between her duty to the man she has wed and the call of her heart.

(1939 - 2007) Kathleen E. Woodiwiss, creator of the modern historical romance, died July 6, 2007 in Minnesota. She had just turned 68. Her attorney, William Messerlie, said that she died after a long illness.

Born on June 3, 1939 in Alexandria, Louisiana, Mrs. Woodiwiss was the youngest of eight siblings. She long relished creating original narratives, and by age six was telling herself stories at night to help herself fall asleep. At age 16, she met U.S. Air Force Second Lieutenant Ross Woodiwiss at a dance, and they married the following year. She wrote her first book in longhand while living at a military outpost in Japan.

Woodiwiss is credited with the invention of the modern historical romance novel: in 1972, she released *The Flame and the Flower*, an instant New York Times bestseller, creating literary precedent. *The Flame and the Flower* revolutionized mainstream publishing, featuring an epic historical romance with a strong heroine and impassioned sex scenes. "Kathleen E.

Woodiwiss is the founding mother of the historical romance genre," says Carrie Feron, vice president/editorial director of William Morrow and Avon Books, imprints of HarperCollins Publishers. Feron, who has been Woodiwiss's editor for 13 years, continues, "Avon Books is proud to have been Kathleen's sole publishing partner for her paperbacks and hardcover novels for more than three decades." Avon Books, a leader in the historical romance genre to this day, remains Mrs. Woodiwiss's original and only paperback publisher; William Morrow, Avon's sister company, publishes Mrs. Woodiwiss's hardcovers.

The Flame and the Flower was rejected by agents and hardcover publishers, who deemed it as "too long" at 600 pages. Rather than follow the advice of the rejection letters and rewrite the novel, Mrs. Woodiwiss instead submitted it to paperback publishers. The first publisher on her list, Avon, quickly purchased the novel and arranged an initial 500,000 print run. The novel sold over 2.3 million copies in its first four years of publication.

The success of this novel prompted a new style of writing romance, concentrating primarily on historical fiction tracking the monogamous relationship between a helpless heroine and the hero who rescued her, even if he had been the one to place her in danger. The romance novels which followed in her example featured longer plots, more controversial situations and characters, and more intimate and steamy sex scenes.

"Her words engendered an incredible passion among readers," notes Feron. Bestselling author Julia Quinn agrees, saying, "Woodiwiss made women want to read. She gave them an alternative to Westerns and hard-boiled police procedurals. When I was growing up, I saw my mother and grandmother reading and enjoying romances, and when I was old enough to read them myself, I felt as if I had been admitted into a special sisterhood of reading women."

New York Times bestselling author Susan Elizabeth Phillips, a leading voice in the women's fiction arena, says, "We all owe our careers to her. She opened the world of romance to us as readers. She created a career for us to go into."

The pioneering author has written 13 novels over the course of 35 years, all New York Times bestsellers. Kathleen E. Woodiwiss's final literary work, the upcoming *Everlasting*, will be published by William Morrow in October 2007. "Everlasting is Kathleen's final gift to her fans," notes Feron.

Kathleen E. Woodiwiss, who was predeceased by her husband and son Dorren, is survived by sons Sean and Heath, and numerous grandchildren.

Other Books

Come Love a Stranger, A woman with no name and no memory...The two men who claim her: one with love, the other with fear...A dazzling tale of secret passions—and a love tragically lost and miraculously reborn—by the incomparable storyteller. Mere days after Ashton Wingate's wedding to the enchanting Lierin, capricious Fate stole the Mississippi plantation owner's beloved from him. Now, three years later, his carriage has collided with a cloaked rider on horseback: a woman who bears an uncanny resemblance to the young

bride who was swallowed up by the merciless river. She awakens from unconsciousness in his magnificent home with no memory of who she is. Yet the tenderness of this noble, caring stranger who lovingly calls her "Lierin" soon captures her heart and enflames her with wanting. Then another enters their lives, threatening to destroy the happiness they have rediscovered in each other's arms—the dark and dangerous Malcolm Sinclair, who claims the enigmatic beauty is, in fact, his own wife, Lenore. But Ashton has sworn that he will not lose his adored one a second time, and he will risk any peril to preserve their newfound joy—no matter what the unremembered secrets of his lady's past ultimately reveal.

“ . . . A woman with no name and no memory.”