



All's Fair, Mrs. Biddle

M.E. Meegs

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What sort of woman is Mrs. Biddle? In **May of 1903**, we find the young mother hungry and destitute, stranded in a squalid inn on the north coast of France. Six days later, she's booked into New York's Plaza Hotel with two thousand dollars in her purse....

A charitable person might use the word resourceful to describe her. But those encountering her are rarely left feeling particularly charitable. As ruthless as the day is long, this faux duchess of a drowned duchy brooks neither fools nor opposition. Those who stand in her way are crushed utterly, and those who cross her—well, who better to judge than her own husband?

We may well ask ourselves, as Biddle did then, was she really so vindictive she'd travel 3,000 miles to the sort of jay town she despised with no purpose other than to inflict pain and misery on one she felt had wronged her? Oh, yes, was his answer—10,000 miles... on hands and knees... and still arrive glad about making the trip.

(This novel incorporates Books 1, 2, & 3 of the Byblos Foretold Novaplex: *Babes at Sea*, *Peddlers All*, and *Dames Engaged*.)

For more information on the novaplex, please visit: ByblosForetold.com

All's Fair, Mrs. Biddle Details

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From Reader Review All's Fair, Mrs. Biddle for online ebook

Peggy says

An enjoyable romp! Everyone is trying to outwit everyone else in this farce set in 1903. Only the infants are without guile here! Entertaining from start to finish.

Jo-Ann Murphy says

I was thrilled to receive this book from the author in exchange for an honest review. I am more than happy to comply.

This is a collection of three novellas that are all intertwined. I had purchased Babes at Sea when it was published but was not very satisfied at the ending because it really needs the other two novellas to be a satisfying read.

It is a wild romp from start to finish. This author is a fictional character that is a bit off center and her telling of this tale is as engaging as her character.

Some of the humor is very subtle and the word play is a great way to expand your vocabulary. Its clever writing engages the reader to the point you hate to put the book down.

All of the characters have an angle and an agenda. Trying to keep them all straight sometimes requires a score card. As if things were not crazy enough, two of the characters are twins who switch identities leading to even greater confusion. They are so well developed the reader becomes invested in each of their tales. The twists and turns in this story rival a ride on Lombard Street but are more entertaining.

If you like a book that is a bit out of the ordinary has a little mystery and romance with a large dose of humor this is the book for you.

The best part is that the stories culminate in a satisfying ending that leaves the reader looking for the next book in the series.

Melanie S says

A uniquely funny and outlandish "period piece"

My thanks to Hidden Gems for the ARC of All's Fair, Mrs. Biddle. This, however is an independent and voluntary review. I haven't laughed so hard in ages! Written to mimic the literary styles of the 1900s, this series of novellas chronicles the adventures of Mrs. Biddle - queen of scammers and con artists from New

York to Paris, and her various co-conspirators, allies, enemies, and marks (which, as it turns out, are often the same people). The reader is well advised to partake of caffeinated refreshment while reading this opus, as the sheer number of bewildering double-crosses and triple agencies requires close attention and focus. The rewards of keeping track through scam after con after impersonation are generous - more smiles, giggles, guffaws, snorts, and snickers than many purported comedic novels. Though there are elements reminiscent of Dickens' Oliver Twist, M.E. Meegs (a pseudonym) writes with the dry, understated and subtly judgmental humor that calls to mind Thackery's Vanity Fair. Indeed, Mrs. Biddle is the Becky Sharp of her literary generation, and this outrageously entertaining retelling of her escapades is not to be missed.

Heidi says

review to come.

Conny says

I got this book from the Author, who I have been a fan of, in exchange for a honest review, which I am very happy to provide. This book contains the novellas Babes at Sea, Peddlers All, and Dames Engaged in their entirety, and what a delight they are to read. While I was reading this book filled with complex and interesting characters, that this would make a great movie. It takes place in 1903 so you also get an idea what it was like to live at that time, and it has a lot of humor, some deaths, though its not a mystery, some romance though not your typical romanic read, and all the while you hope that our main characters will end up together. I thoroughly enjoyed this read and it held my attention from the first page. Very Entertaining.

Evgeny says

M.E. Meegs is a fictional character who writes about the adventures of her friend and/or enemy (does it make sense at all?).

The story starts with a strong Dickens vibe; somehow it reminds me of Oliver Twist in spirit: Mrs. Biddle is a poor young single mother in a cheap hotel with practically no money to support herself and her baby... If you think you know where it goes, you are wrong. The moment the poor mother leave the hotel the story takes a completely unexpected turn. Let me just quote a part of the book description (very appropriate one, too):

In the dank attic room of a squalid inn on the north coast of France, a young and penniless American woman, only recently recovered from a difficult birth, yearns for home. May God help those who stand in her way...

I mentioned that I had no idea what to expect from this book; I had some vague notion that it was an over-the-top historic romance. I was pleasantly surprised as it turned out to be a very easy over-the-top read in spirit of classic stories from The Gentle Grafters collection by O. Henry. This is a fun read which while occasionally slows down is never boring and I was always curious about what would happen next. The slowdowns are mostly due to M.E. Meegs by getting in the way of her own story.

A group of con artists try to out-con each other and everybody else; the best and the most devious ones

would win. I can also give you one hint without spoiling much: Mrs. Biddle is very competent when it comes to getting what she wants, by using any means necessary.

All the con artists in question have no trace of conscience whatsoever and as such it seems hard to root for any of them initially. To my complete surprise some grew on me and I found myself caring about them - enough to wish their side would win.

Speaking about the whole trilogy: is it worth reading? If you want to read fairly lighthearted and quite amusing adventures of a bunch of crooks, the whole thing is very much worth reading with each installment getting 4 star rating from me. I would love to read about further adventures of Mrs. Biddle and the rest of the folks if such book ever appears written by the new and promising author M.E. Meegs.

I usually try to say something witty and funny in my reviews, but in this case I let the book do it for me. The slow parts I mentioned above are the only reason for 4 stars instead of 5.

Joel Bresler says

M.E. Meegs, the purported author of "All's Fair, Mrs. Biddle" is, in fact, a character out of Robert Bruce Stewart's series of historical detective stories. Having a character you've created "write" their own book is either madness or genius. I'll leave that thought there, for the moment!

All's Fair is a trilogy of novellas, though they could easily have been presented as a single novel. What Stewart has done, however, is both intriguing and skillful. The writing, in parts, is stylistically reminiscent of actual novels from the period in which the stories are set. There are shades of both Wodehouse and G.K. Chesterton here, and the combination is a very entertaining one. Try as I might, I could not convince myself that the "writing" was the work of the aforementioned character; but no matter. Stewart's ability to tell a story is exceeded only by the craft and quality of the prose he tells it with.

My one criticism concerns what I considered an excessive number of asides by the "author" to the reader, though in Stewart's defense these were not exactly unknown in works of that period. All in all, another excellent reading experience from this author.
