



## Reckless Conduct

*Susan Napier*

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'9 to 5"Behaving badly..."

Harriet attended the company's New Year's Eve party in all innocence. It wasn't her fault that the punch she'd been drinking was stronger than expected--so that she'd ended up confiding in a gorgeous stranger about her broken engagement. How was she to know she'd been pouring her heart out to the chairman himself, Marcus Fox? ..at the office party!" Now Harriet has to work with Marcus. Luckily, she's since changed her image, dyed her hair blond and is a model secretary. Unluckily, Marcus still recognizes her--and seems determined to punish Harriet for her reckless conduct!

## Reckless Conduct Details

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# From Reader Review Reckless Conduct for online ebook

## Vintage says

This was almost a 4 star, but just missed.

Poor Harriet has been through the wringer. Not to get into great detail but the past couple of years she has had one tragedy after another. (Don't fear. She's not a mealy-mouth, woe is me kind of girl. It's like pulling teeth to uncover her trigger.) She recalls wallowing a teensy bit at what is now a notorious New Year's Eve party where an ex-employee spiked the punch. She's happy to semi-recall that she only moaned a little about her life before leaving the party to crash in an office. Lucky girl. She didn't embarrass herself. Nope, not at all.

The story opens several months later with her reaction to the latest emotional blow: a full scale makeover from little mouse to blonde bombshell, a blonde bombshell with 4" heels and a mini-skirt. Marcus, CEO of the company she works out, just happens to have his handy dandy telescope out when he sees her as well as the company Lothario.

Marcus asks/demands that Harriet devote herself to helping his 15 year old daughter get through a rebellious stage. Harriet is quite reluctant to do this as she wants to go through her own rebellious stage and doesn't have time to be a boring role model, but the boss has spoken.

Essentially, the plot breaks down with Harriet doing her best to walk on the wild side while Marcus makes every attempt to talk her down off her emotional ledge. His so-called rebellious teen daughter, rather than being the ubiquitous snotty nightmare we all hate, is the sweet voice of reason to some of Harriet's more outrageous actions. Is it really wise to buy a Porsche you can barely drive in the last 15 minutes of your lunch hour, Harriet?

Susan Napier is one of my favorites as she has yummy alpha heroes who get in waaaayyyy over their head, and her heroines actually have this thing called...what is it...a personality, an element that is often missing in the storm und drang of many a Harlequin. Marcus, yum, Marcus is a keeper, but he hangs back a little too much for me. He comes through in the end. Harriet is a confused mess, and Ms. Napier drops the ball on occasion with her character. What is clear is that while life has thrown her some hardballs, she is a fighter and a great heroine.

Despite only giving it three stars, I recommend this for readers who are sick and tired of the same old cynical and suspicious, all women are gold-diggers tycoons as well as the poe faced, spineless martyred heroines.

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## Ira says

This is a very nice surprise!:)

A delightful read gave me lots of lol moments ???.

I thought is just a light read until I feel speechless when I found out what was happening with the heroine's family in the last two years, it's a tragic and I think she needed a professional help if the hero not with her when she needed someone badly.

Btw, why can't we get an alpha hero like this anymore ?

He is very sophisticated and clever in his way to get what he wanted without the heroine realised she had been manoeuvre, lol. ?

See, you don't need to be an alphole jerk to get your girl.

And the epilogue? Here some clues for you,

**They stretched out to the side of her, joined hand in hand like a string of identical paper-cutout dolls, in their little black coats and patent leather shoes and baby-fair curls.**

Awww, I haven't read that adorable ending lately:)

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### **Chitra \*CJ\* says**

"Reckless conduct" is the story of Harriet and Marcus.

When Harriet decides to have a makeover and change her lifestyle, she never realizes she'd catch the eye of the big boss Marcus, or that he'd employ her to babysit his teenage daughter Nicola.

What starts as an impulse becomes a journey of self discovery- filled with burning chemistry, various laugh out loud moments, hot sex and an adorable HEA.

I enjoyed this book from starting to the end - because of a strong heroine as well as a non overbearing hero- and the ending made the book all too sweet.

Safe

4.5/5

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### **KC says**

[Why did Marcus fall in love with Harriet (I wasn't feeling the love), and why did Harriet undergo a self-induced makeover? I dunno. Your gu

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### **iamGamz says**

A really fun read with with a heroine that you will either love or hate with a passion.

Within a short span, Harriett lost her brother and both her parents. Then her fiancé dumps her and her cat gets killed. The loss of her cat makes her realize that her life is dull and she is frumpy. So she decides to revamp herself. She sets out and buys a whole new wardrobe full of clothes that are a complete, vampy change from who she was before.

Her new change brings the attention of lots of men and Marcus decides that he will have Harriett work on a special project to keep her out of trouble - mentoring his 15 year old daughter.

What follows is Harriett going over the top with her desire to prove that she has changed. Her constant harping about changing herself became annoying really quickly.

However, even with the h's annoying ways, the story was sweet. Harriett's relationship with his daughter. His suppressed jealousy. And Marcus, the alpha male, tried to hold quicksilver in his hand and was eventually successful.

I really enjoyed this book. It was definitely worth the read.

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## **Charlie says**

Well she certainly led him on a merry dance - what wasn't to love about this one?

The h inadvertently got drunk at a new year party and unknowingly had sexytimes with her big bad boss. In the lead up to this she lost her parents, her brother, her fiancé and her cat (the fiancé was a butt munch though so that's allowed). Because of all these sad things happening she inherits some money and just decides to say sod it, I'm gonna blow it on what I want because life is too short.

After the bumping uglies she dyes her hair blond, buys awesome dresses, tells her bosses to stop taking advantage of her and buys a Porsche and a new place to live. Boss dude was kinda smitten by her before then and has no idea what hit him when hot to trot Harriet strolls in. He liked her just the way she was and is a little horrified by the dye job because it reminded him of his shallow but dead wife.

Harriet has him wrapped round her little finger she parties with the handsy office lothario who didn't even notice her before when that doesn't work out she signs up for online dating and lots of clubs which will let her meet men.

Boss man H is horrified he wants h for himself but she's never available because she has so many extra curricular activities going on. Meanwhile teen daughter is acting up saying she wants to drop out of school but basically she wants to spend more time with her dad. She shares a house with his MIL and dad when in town and goes to boarding school which she wants to leave.

Dear old dad thinks giving her a mindless holiday job in his building will put her off this course of action and send her running, the snag she will be working for the h who splutters and threatens to corrupt said daughter with her dating buffet, piercing, reckless spending and late lunches.

THE daddy/daughter situation bothered me because he part lived with his interfering old bat (but heart in the right place) MIL so that he could stay in town whenever he wanted with the ladies in the apartment he has there and he has to live in childcare - when she's not at boarding school. That is some bad parenting right there he just doesn't seem to be that bothered, just wants to get into the h's unmentionables instead so that's why I have now on reflection dropped a \* (plus he calls the h a stupid little bitch so he is not quite the H I originally thought).

He manipulates the h into buying an apartment in the same building he is (think he owns it) and the situation escalates when she finds out and they have a pretty big row he blurts out that they had sex. To be fair he is pretty mortified by the whole experience as he realises he took advantage of a drunk woman but didn't know that at the time. The h gets in some pretty good verbal barbs 2 which end when they both agree to another night together.

The ending to this book is one of the best despite the MIL - she is far too involved in the SIL life and she would do my head in if she were mine. Turns out the h had gotten pregnant after the NYE amnesia lurve fest and the H suspected as much. He sends her off to the Dr's for a check up threatening to withhold his favours until shes been. Anyway 4 years later shes still a bottle blond, shes a mum to triplet girls, the H is head over heels for the h and shes pregnant again and ordered to have a boy or 3.

I think this was my first h who dyed her hair other than the odd pink streak that appears in some of our more modern rebellious h's hair. This would have been a 5\* for me of not for the name calling and bad H parenting.

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## **MBR says**

Never have I laughed so hard and so much while reading a romance novel in recent times as I did when I was reading *Reckless Conduct* by Susan Napier. I would always be forever grateful for having found Susan Napier's books because they are absolute gems in the world of Harlequin romances.

*Reckless Conduct* is a novel that is to be lauded for so many reasons. It has got that oh-so-good-i-am-going-to-die-of-laughter variety of humor going for it. There is a deliciously controlled hero who made every single sense of mine stand on high alert. Then there is the heroine, whose makeover and clumsy antics, plus the way she seems to always find herself in one tantalizing position after another with the hero became one I reveled in. The sense of want and desire that is continuous thread throughout the book was one that I found heady and enjoyable on so many levels.

Harriet Smith, the heroine is someone who has continually being considered as staid, boring, and conventional. However, all of that changes when Harriet decides to have the makeover of a lifetime which turns her from the wallflower so to speak to the stunningly beautiful and curvaceous woman that turns heads as she makes her way to the office on the morning following the makeover.

Marcus Fox is the chairman of the board of Trident Finance where Harriet works. When Marcus enlists Harriet's expertise on a personal matter, Harriet is forced into close proximity with a man who makes her want to throw caution to the wind, who brings back that edge of spontaneity to her character which had died a painful death under the hands of her ex-fiance'. It also makes her want to flee because she is reluctant to get into something that could spell long term heartbreak for her. That sense of awakening in a heroine as reluctant as Harriet was one of the best aspects of this book.

If you are a fan of Harlequin romances, this is a must read. Susan Napier is brilliant in her execution of romance novels. Her books have foresight and depth to them that few Harlequin authors bring to the table. Her stories are less than conventional and for me that is one reason why I absolutely adore them and indulge in one every now and then.

Definitely recommended. If not for the laughs, for the sheer experience of Marcus Fox in all his glory. Loved the last chapter. Made me want to bawl my eyes out, and smile from ear to ear at the same time.

Final Verdict: Susan Napier wows her readers with unconventional stories that stand out for their sensuality and strong leads. *Reckless Conduct* is classic Napier in this sense and I cannot recommend it well enough.

**Rating = 4.5/5**

### **Jacqueline J says**

4-1/2 stars. Amusing story with a ditsy heroine. You don't get enough of those and it's a story type that I really like. She used to be staid and conservative and just got tired of it. So she gives herself a make over dyes her hair and changes her dress style. She had already caught the eye of her boss in her old incarnation and he doesn't really know what to do with her now. She sort of runs circles around him. A couple of surprises in the end. Cute read.

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### **Fiona Marsden says**

3.5 stars - This was a fun read, if a little confusing at the start. We meet Harriet on the day she put into action a plan to change her life.

The mouse like Harriet is recovering from being dumped her fiance and making a fool of herself at the work New Years Eve party, not that she remembers much about it. So she has dyed her hair blond and refurbished her sensible wardrobe to include stiletto heels and mini-skirts. Now every man who used to ignore her is sitting up and taking notice. Even staid Marcus, the big boss at her company. Only it seems he has an aversion to blondes.

Marcus has a job for her, supervising his teenage daughter in a holiday work placement. He decided this before he saw the dramatic new Harriet but it makes no difference. He still insists on her doing the job. The thing is, he remembers exactly what happened New Years Eve.

I enjoyed watching Harriet trying to change her life, not knowing what was coming. Marcus was adorable trying to keep her from being too reckless. Especially with the office lothario who finally noticed the new Harriet. Not a favourite of mine but a good read if you want a little froth and bubble.

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### **Kay says**

5 Stars! ~ Reeling from a year of unbearable losses, Harriet snaps one Friday after yet another emotional hit. No more is she going to be the mousy boring woman who is so dependable and efficient. In one weekend, she replaces her wardrobe, bleaches her hair, takes a makeup lesson and sells her house. Late to work on Monday, she makes her grand entrance; short platinum wavy hair, snug mini-skirt, four inch heels and sexy black stockings; she has every male distracted. Ever since the company's New Year's Eve party almost three months before, Marcus has had Harriet in his radar. Someone had spiked the holiday punch, and Harriet doesn't remember the events of that party, but Marcus does. He's been worried about her, as that night the alcohol had brought out her depression and she'd needed comforting. Surprised by her drastic make-over, Marcus now worries about the about face and her sudden desire for excitement in her life. He carefully watches out for her, even to the extent of showing up at a club where's she on a date with the office Lothario. Enlisting her help with his 15 year old daughter works to his advantage, and he's able to keep tabs on her exploits. Harriet loves her new attitude, and she loves to tease Marcus at every turn. He's always been rather a stuffed shirt, all business; seeing that he has a sense of humour and can be put off balance, only spurs her

on. Whenever she's close to Marcus, her libido goes into overdrive, and she's plagued not only by ex-rated fantasies but a tremendous sense of déjà vu.

Ms Napier had me rolling with laughter from the first page! Harriet has changed her image to project a ditzzy blonde in the hopes of sparking some excitement into her very lonely and depressing life. But she's not a blonde bimbo by any means, and she deftly keeps Marcus on his toes. I loved the way Marcus tried to keep a step ahead of Harriet, and often lost that battle. As she slowly reveals all that she has lost, her sudden need to live fully comes to light. Marcus is there for her every step of the way. These two make a fabulous couple and I know I'll be reading their HEA again and again.

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### **Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says**

This is an awesome book. Harriet is the typical, prudish, retiring type girl, who gets fed up with her life after her fiancé dumps her for being too boring. She gets a little drunk at the Christmas party at work and it turns out she sleeps with her boss, who's shoulder she cries on. It's a little embarrassing, but Harriet is ready to move on anyway and live her life, so she tries to resign. But her boss Marcus is not willing to let go of her, namely because he's been in love with her for sometime. He loved her in her previous incarnation, but isn't sure what to do with her new, reckless, bleach-blonde, sexy-dressing, hot-rod driving car self. But he's going to pursue to get her back and in his life.

This was a fun book. I had never read a book with a heroine who was a bleach-blonde when I read it. I enjoyed Harriet's rather reckless behavior and her desire to have fun and enjoy life. It was fairly harmless, and Marcus was there looking over her shoulder to keep her from falling into another man's arms. When he finds out she wants a no-strings attached affair, he selflessly volunteers himself out. He even moves into her apartment building (okay, maybe it's a little stalkerish, but it works). He introduces her to his young teenaged daughter Natalia and asks her to watch out for her (although you'd wonder why he'd want the new, wild and crazy Harriet anywhere near his impressionable daughter, but it's clear that he has a lifelong agenda). Marcus is a typical Susan Napier hero, big, sexy, alpha, but a little on the conservative side, but not too much to appreciate Harriet.

There is a wonderful twist (I absolutely refuse to give it away) that was icing on the top of this wonderful dessert. This is a more lighthearted romance, with two characters that you like as people and want to get together, and the journey is very entertaining. I like that Harriet doesn't have any plans to go back to being staid. Despite becoming a wife and mom, she keeps her bleach blonde hair and her fun demeanor. This book has a great epilogue, by the way.

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### **Lucimar says**

Harriet é que se chama um moça certinha, que da noite para o dia muda completamente de aparência e modo de agir. Em vez de se esconder, passa a encarar o mundo de peito aberto.

Marcus é o patrão boa pinta, que de repente se vê atraído por uma das suas secretárias. E a partir daí rolam trechos engraçados criados pelos personagens. Ele, por conta de seu bom comportamento resolve pedir que ela o ajude com sua filha adolescente, visto que é viúvo e não entende como orientá-la e qual não é sua surpresa quando topa com a nova Harriet, que não aceita imposição, nem quer se envolver em problemas, apenas quer viver livre-leve-e-solta.



Ele não aceita muito bem esse comportamento e tenta protegê-la, mas mesmo se sente atraído e no final do livro, a autora surpreende ao revelar o motivo da mudança desta nova Harriet.

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## **Megzy says**

She did reinvent herself completely after she changed her hair color from brown to bleached blonde.

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## **boogenhagen says**

Re Reckless Conduct - Susan Napier's contribution to the 9 to 5 series is a hilarious study of a meek and mild h improving her confidence and her assertiveness by changing her life when she changes her hair color.

This h has been through tragedy after tragedy over the last two years. An efficient upper executive secretary, she is also the preferred company trainer for up-and-coming new assistants and was a devoted caretaker of her mother, her father and her elderly cat Frank.

She had a tepid, boring fiance too. But after her mother had a stroke after the death of her older brother, then passed on herself, her father fell ill from a broken heart. The h's money grubbing fiance wanted to put him in a care facility, as he decided that home care cost too much.

The h dumped his apathetic and heartless hiney toot sweet and then devoted herself to her father's care. He died a week later. Then the h had a spot of work embarrassment when someone spiked the punch at the company holiday party and the highly inebriated h crawled into an office to sleep it off.

She managed to sneak out of the office with nothing more than some strange, vague dreams of angels and demons fighting over her body. Then her 18 year cat Frank died when he got hit by a car, the h found him when she came home from work and that was the final blow.

The h decided that life is too fragile and short to live behind a set of rigid rules and plans and all of her devotion and kindness has left her alone and sad. She figures blonde's have way more magnetism, assertiveness and fun and she is tired of being called a little brown mouse.

Because her parents were well insured and a land developer wants to buy her childhood home, the h decides to make a drastic change. She bleaches her hair to a very professional shading of platinum's and buys herself a whole new wardrobe of miniskirts.

When the book opens, an expensive bottle blonde woman in very high heels is slinking her way across the courtyard of the H's 19 story office building. The H is the Chief mucky muck of his firm and has a very convenient executive telescope set up before his panoramic view.

Ostensibly, the telescope is for soothing views of the New Zealand harbour, but in reality, the H is checking out the men who are checking out the lethal blonde as she makes her way across the flag stones.

The H has nothing good to think about bottled blondes, tho he does hope he is over his younger self's fatal fascination with them. When the blonde disappears, the H gets back to his original goal, which involves

some sort of plans for a very specific woman.

The h is the blonde of course and shows up a little later than her usual work time to make a big first impression with her new look and get the office drama over with at once.

Everyone is definitely surprised as this formerly staid and serene company stanchion of executive efficiency totally wows them with the flashy golden light she had been hiding under a brown serge bushel.

Her immediate boss has a panic attack tho. The big boss H has requested the h for a special assignment and after the h shows that she is still the formidable office organizer underneath that platinum streaked mane, the h's immediate boss is trying to convince the h to change back to her usual staid self.

The h determinedly refuses and in the process of that hilarious debate, which the h is winning, the H wanders into the office right as the h's boss is in the middle of changing his shirt. (He spit out his coffee all over his previous one when he first saw the h.)

The H and h have some verbal banter of their own up in his office and the H wants the h to mentor his 15 year old daughter in a menial office job for her school holidays.

His somewhat meddling mother in law needs a rest to recover from some illness and he doesn't feel like sending his child off to mentor with the mother-in-law's choice of a suitable future wife for him.

After the mother in law, the wanna be OW and the H's daughter walk into the H's office while the H has his hands tangled in the h's garters, there are lots of raised eyebrows and the h escapes. The h and H meet again later that night.

The h had accepted a date with the office Lothario and they end up at the same night club as the H and his group of friends, including the wanna be OW. The h is daringly dressed in a gold metal link dress and the H and h have more verbal banter as the h tries to convince the H that she is not a suitable caretaker for his impressionable young daughter.

It soon becomes apparent that there is more to the H's motives than what he is admitting too. He refuses to accept the h's excuses and soon the h is taking the H's daughter around on her lunch hour, getting their ears pierced and buying go-with-anything white Porsche Carreras.

The h manages to get manipulated into buying an apartment in the H's building too. The verbal banter between them as the H swears that the h is trying to drive him around the bend and his desperate jealousy when the h starts dating OM, and taking various classes to meet more, is quite entertaining.

Eventually a book of erotic pictures is found in the h's book collection and the Lurve Force Mojo between the H and h fairly sizzles. The H finally admits that he and the h had a one night Purple Passion moment during that unremembered office holiday party and the h is mortified.

The H had been traveling for days when he got to the office party, he was jet lagged and he drank a few of the spiked punches. He normally doesn't drink, but when he got into his personal office, he found the h all cuddled up and crying and things led to things and Passionate Mojo Moments Happened -to the mutual enjoyment of them both - but the h was too toasted to remember.

The H explains that his father was an alcoholic, his birth mother was a trampy gold digging bottle blonde

who abandoned him to his father and step mother for money, but refused to allow the H's step mother to adopt him.

Then the H met his first wife, also a bottle blonde, and the daughter of the owner of the H's current company. Their marriage was a torment of never ending games of jealousy and potential cheating on the wife's part, until she and the H's father in law were killed in an accident.

So the H has a firm dislike of unnatural blonde bombshells, but they are also his fatal attraction and the h is attracting him madly.

They decide on a one night stand and there is much Purple Passion Mojo and bronze garter belts involved. The H then tells the h that she really wants more than just a one night stand, (or two night stand, as it is,) and the h agrees. They decide to embark upon an affair.

But first, the H demands that the h go to a doctor and get checked out, otherwise there will be no mutual exploration of his lurve club. The h goes to her doctor and finds out she is preggers. She is pretty gobsmacked about the whole thing, but is called up to the H's office once again.

We get a pretty convoluted explanation that the h is having some sort of mental fugue state and behaving erratically as a result of her first night o' love with the H. (The H even called a psychiatrist friend of his to verify that.)

The H claims that he has been trying to manage and ensnare the h with manly mojo for months now, because he just can't stay away from her charms and she is constantly hi-jacking his thoughts.

The h admits that she loves the H and he declares that he loves her too, right before they decide to re-christen his office couch. His mother in law forces her way in while the H and h are roofie kissing on the couch.

The h and H are seen by half the executive floor staff and the h hastens to announce that she and the H are celebrating their new engagement to preserve the H's company chairman reputation.

The H immediately agrees they are getting married and rapidly pulls out a huge diamond ring - the H was all prepared to propose, but he will accept the h's very well done proposal instead.

The mother in law starts complaining that the H's request for a registry office wedding is too abrupt, but as the h announces her pregnancy right at that moment, the mother in law decides that tomorrow morning won't be soon enough.

The book ends with a cute little epilogue of the H once again using his telescope in his penthouse office. This time there is a blonde bombshell in a black swing coat and three little mini blondes in swing coats too, they are making their way up to their daddy's big office.

The H, h, their three triplet daughters and the H's older daughter are happily together and the h announces that there is another holiday baby or three on the way for the big HEA.

This one was very funny and the H's frustrations as the h was determined to get out and live a little are truly hilarious. If you are looking for a light-hearted office romance with a dip into some more serious pools about self validation and gaining self confidence, it is hard to find a better HP outing than this.

Tho the H's assumption that the h was erratic and only acting out because of their drunken one nighter was a bit egotistical, as were his many, many manipulations, the h truly does gain self esteem and a backbone over the course of this and the HEA is adorable. Give this one a go if you run into it, it is fast, amusingly frivolous and great day at the HP office.

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## **Aruna says**

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Harriet has a sort of break-down after a series of miserable events in her life and decides that she will re-model herself into a blonde heart-breaker, and sets out to achieve that by dyeing her hair, buying lots of clothes, a new apartment

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