

INTERVIEW WITH SARAH EDEN

What are the characteristics of a good story, character, etc.?

That is not a question that can be answered in a single paragraph. But one thing I think is crucial to good writing is authenticity. Too many writers employ a tight-fisted control over their plot, characters, setting, etc., forcing the story to take the shape they, the author, want it to take rather than letting the characters act the way they ought to act, and allowing the plot to play out in a way that is natural, even if it isn't convenient. Sometimes that means letting characters make stupid mistakes or behave in ways the author wouldn't. Often that means the plot doesn't take the shape the author had anticipated, and it means more work. But, in the end, a story that isn't authentic doesn't work.

What do you find most challenging about writing historical fiction? As a 21st century person, how do you write convincing fiction set in other times, cultures and places?

For me, one of the biggest challenges is finding balance. I'm a stickler for accuracy, and yet a book needs to be accessible to modern readers. Historical fiction needs to delve deep into past times and cultures, but can't read like a text book. Characters should speak in historically-accurate ways, but need to speak modernly enough to be understood by current-day readers. Striking that balance is difficult, but crucial.

If you could take a month-long vacation in any time or place, where and when would you choose? Why?

Easiest question ever! I'd go to Ireland. I've been twice before, and each time I've come back to the States I am desperate to return and stay even longer. Not only have I begun writing a lot of Irish characters, thus the writer in me would love a month-long stay in Ireland, but also I come from proud Irish stock and love Ireland all the more for it.

Sarah M. Eden is the author of multiple historical romances, including Whitney Award finalists *Seeking Persephone*, *Courting Miss Lancaster*, and *Longing for Home*. Combining her obsession with history and affinity for tender love stories, Sarah loves crafting witty characters and heartfelt romances. She holds a Bachelor's degree in research and happily spends hours perusing the reference shelves of her local library. Sarah has twice served as the Master of Ceremonies for the LDStorymakers Writers Conference and acted as the Writer in Residence at the Northwest Writers Retreat.

