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# The Education of Bet

Laurien Clay

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Baratz-Logsted, Lauren. *The Education of Bet*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. ISBN 9780547223087. \$16.00. 192 p.

Reviewer: Laurien Clay

Reading level: Young Adult

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Fiction; Historical Fiction;

Subject: Sex role--Juvenile fiction; Schools--Juvenile fiction; Social classes--Juvenile fiction;

Books--Reviews;

Bet Smith wants an education. Will Gardner does not. So what better an idea than for Bet to switch places with Will and go to school in his stead—as a boy. However, in Victorian England there are more than a few complications since Bet is a girl and the companion of Will's beloved Uncle. Nonetheless, Will secretly heads off to join the military, and Bet—as Will—goes off to school in pursuit of knowledge, only to find that she may be in over her head and that she may also have lost her heart.

Lauren Baratz-Logsted, author of *Crazy Beautiful*, *Angel's Choice*, and *Secrets of My Suburban Life*, comes out with another piece of historical fiction relaying yet another coming of age and self-discovery story. A blatant spin-off of a Shakespearian comedy of errors and mistaken identities, *The Education of Bet* presents a somewhat halting and jumbled series of episodes (in obviously modern language) that are both likely and far-fetched. While most of its historicity is verifiable, there are other problems, including both what appears to be “forced” writing and inconsistencies in Bet's actual character. In spite of this, readers may find a brief respite from real life between its pages.

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