



# A Highland Duchess

*Karen Ranney*

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## **A Highland Duchess** Karen Ranney

*Her heart, her soul, her passion belong to the magnificent Scotsman . . . but she can never be his.*

The beautiful but haughty Duchess of Herridge is known to all the *ton* as the "Ice Queen." But to Ian McNair, the exquisite Emma is nothing like the rumors. Sensual and passionate, she moves him as no other woman has before. If only she were his wife and not his captive . . .

Little does Emma know that the dark and mysterious stranger who bursts into her bedroom to kidnap her is the powerful Earl of Buchane, and the only man who has been able to see past her proper façade. As the Ice Queen's defenses melt under the powerful passion she finds with her handsome captor, she begins to believe that love may be possible. Yet fate has decreed that the dream can never be—for pursuing it means sacrificing everything they hold dear: their honor, their futures . . . and perhaps their lives.

## **A Highland Duchess Details**

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## From Reader Review A Highland Duchess for online ebook

### Cherie says

Ms Ranney really knows how to torture her heroines. Ian kidnaps Emma after a foiled robbery and does her a great favor. Unfortunately her returns her and her evil uncle gives her in marriage to a blackguard to settle a blackmail threat. This is her second marriage to a blackguard; although her previous husband was a duke he was a hedonistic sicko. Ian, meanwhile, can't get her out of his mind. He is smitten. Smitten to the point that he decides to cancel his previous wedding plans even if he can't marry Emma since she is now married to blackguard #2. Blackguard #2 happens to be his cousin, by coincidence. Murder and mayhem keep this story rolling. Even though I knew who the bad guy was I enjoyed reading how it worked out.

I wish Ian had been developed more as a character, even so, he is memorable. Emma is definitely a damsel in distress. The pace tended toward slow and I doubt I'll re-read it but am glad I finished it.

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### Diah Johar says

All that I can say is Brenna deserves more than this!!! I feel like happiness in this book can be felt only on the last ten pages.

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### Wenny Widjaja says

Suka!!! Ga disangka banget buku ini selesai dibaca dlm waktu 2 hari sajah..., buku ini udah lama banget ada di rak buku dan belum ada niatan baca sampai kemarin. Dan ternyata bagusss !! Mungkin ga semua orang akan suka dengan buku ini kali yah karena auranya agak2 murung gitu. Awalnya ada banyak bagian yang lucu juga menurut saya dan itu yang bikin saya ga bisa berhenti baca. Trus makin seru juga karena ada suspensnya.

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### Elisa Vangelisti says

Valutazione dell'estratto di amazon. Non l'ho finito perché mi interessa. La vedova di un duca crudele diventa la regina di ghiaccio. Chi riuscirà a sciogliere il suo gelo? Sarà interessante!

Sob. Gasp. Ulp. Questo libro l'ho mandato giù con l'imbutto. Finirlo è stato un vero supplizio, non tanto per lo stile dell'autrice, che è apprezzabile, quanto per la trama. Lei è stata costretta a sposare un vecchio satiro, subendo ogni sorta di angheria e perversione sessuale per quattro lunghi anni. Lui la incontra quando si trova a Londra per tre motivi: un simposio, uno specchio magico (inutile alla trama) e per riacciuffare il Cugino (tenete da parte il Cugino, servirà più avanti). Ovviamente fra Lei e Lui esplodono scintille e volano unicorni. Ma lei è finalmente vedova e senza intenzione alcuna di risposarsi, mentre Lui è già promesso. Lui riparte per la Scozia e Lei torna dallo zio, che la costringe a sposarsi di nuovo. Nel frattempo Lui decide di tornare a Londra perché non può fare a meno di Lei, senza sapere che Lei invece sta andando in Scozia perché chi altri ha sposato se non il Cugino? Durante il viaggio il Cugino sta molto male e si scopre che è stato avvelenato. Gli intrighi si scatenano, le cose si complicano, Lui continua a desiderarla e non poterla avere, Lei anche, il Cugino pare stare meglio, ma alla fine qualcuno lo strangola. Perciò Lei resta di nuovo

vedova e potrebbe anche sposare Lui, che nel frattempo ha rotto il fidanzamento perché ha in testa solo Lei. Ansia mia, portami via. Che polpettone pesantissimo e indigesto. Peccato, i personaggi sono meravigliosi, ma la trama proprio non va.

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### **Lover of Romance says**

Emma, Duchess and a recent widow, is still in her mourning period, but about to come out of it. Then he uncle informs her that she is to be married again, willingly or not, she has no choice in the matter. Then that night, a stranger comes into her bedroom and kidnaps her for he is in search of a mirror, a gift from her late husband, that she had practically forgotten about. Now Emma is his captive, and send her uncle a ransom: the mirror, for his niece. However it is apparent that her uncle could care less if she ends up not returning to him dead or alive, ever since her husbands death, has gambled away her fortune and if she were dead he would have full access to it. Emma even though captured, has felt more at home with Ian that she has ever been with anyone else, and she opens her heart to him, even knowing that there is no future for them, for she is to marry another, as is he.....but sometimes the matters of the heart have a way of disrupting best laid plans....

A Highland Duchess is the most recent book from Karen Ranney. As far as romances go, this was a average read for me. I could get into the story, but it wasn't like I couldn't put it down, I actually ended up pausing multiple times through the story. It wasn't a enlightening read or enchanting, but there was a drama about the story that held a certain appeal for me. I have usually enjoyed reading books from this author, so I was surprised when I had such a challenging time getting through this one. I found that there wasn't much consistency of engaging the reader much. The story had some flow, but it could be erratic at times. I did enjoy the characters and the emotional side of the story. There were parts of the story that drew me, but there were other parts, where I had to force myself to read through it. Overall it was a enjoyable read, but not one I would want to buy or re read....

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### **Alex says**

The first few chapters kind of misleads you to what the whole novel will about; which kind of pissed me off, since I was deciding between this book & another. It wasn't the seductive romance novel that I originally read in the few chapters but instead it contained many hard obstacles that the characters will have to face....I didn't have a problem with this part but to me, this novel felt like a long narrative. It was okay overall but this novel wasn't for me

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### **Elle says**

Some strong possibilities with the heroine's traumatic backstory, and I'll read more by this author, but I was never completely riveted by the storyline. I liked the characters and I love the fact that the author took me by surprise by putting her heroine completely and seemingly irrevocably out of the hero's reach. But it still seemed too easy, by the end. A good read, and some strong potential, though. Will read more.

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### **K says**

Always a fan of historical romance, I couldn't resist taking a break from the paranormal to read this one. And I'm glad I did. Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed this book from beginning to end. I loved watching Emma's character develop, as well as, the growing relationship between her and Ian. I thought Ranney did a good job at creating solid characters and bringing readers into the story. As a romantic, the star crossed lover theme definitely made the story most enjoyable for me, and had me not only rooting for Ian and Emma, but saying "screw being proper...go for it". However much I thought that, I'm glad Ranney wrote the story as she did. It definitely made the ending more satisfying. If I can add one more thing, I enjoyed the unpredictability of the plot. I would definitely recommend this book to fans of historical romance.

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### **Valerie says**

1.5 stars because it's okay but I didn't exactly like it, either. Still, some of my complaints are probably better directed at the genre than the author. (I don't really read romance, so this was a new experience.)

I liked the historical tidbits that lent legitimacy to the setting, and the time period it was set in (Victorian, when germ theory was being debated) is fascinating. However, the characters' actions didn't seem particularly realistic, and evil male characters with dubious intentions (always centered around gambling and degrading women) abounded. While I wouldn't have minded so many purely evil characters if the main characters were interesting enough, all they did was worry about the same things all the time. Despite that, their thought processes never went beyond a certain brick wall. They were completely innocent except for (of course) their inappropriate lust for one another. A little honesty would have gone a long way, especially since I was forced to slog through pages of feelings that didn't ring true. Still, the fact that I read the whole thing is a compliment to the author - there was some tension there, and good writing when it wasn't flooded with melodrama.

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### **Carrie Olguin says**

The story started out interesting enough, but the middle sagged (as if the writer added unneeded paragraphs to make word count). I skimmed the last third of the book hoping the dip was a sag and that the ending would be more interesting. Alas, not to be.

The heroine was married to a depraved (and sexually active) duke for four years and somehow emerged into widowhood still wealthy? (How come the money didn't go to the Duke's heir.

Her husband certainly didn't care enough to leave her any money in his will) After four years of marriage, she didn't have one single child or miscarriage. Really?

More logic errors and characters acting out of character (and spoilers) in the plot:

The major villain is her uncle who became her financial guardian when the duke died (herone has to be less than 25 to have one, right? The heroine's age is never specified.) is blackmailed by a minor villain. So what does her uncle do? Does he offer the blackmailer lots of her money to silence him? No, he offers the golden goose, the heroine and her fortune through marriage. Really. The blackmailer doesn't ask for her hand in marriage. The uncle makes the offer. Okay, put the major villain into the "not very bright" category.

Hero is an Earl and a scientist. A friend asks him to obtain a mirror the heroine is rumored to own. So what does a wealthy, logic driven, peer of the realm do? He breaks into her home to steal the item. Really?

The heroine is not accepted by polite society, been given the cut direct, due to her dead husband's reputation as a depraved libertine. She hates society and the people who gave her the cut. And yet she plans to become the model of virtue. Why? They will never accept her back and she knows it. So why bother to try? (contrived emotional conflict that just doesn't work)

There are plenty of other examples of characters slipping out off character in this story, and logic errors in character thoughts and deeds.

I don't know why I bothered to finish the story. I knew the second husband had to die. I knew who the murder was. I knew it was going to end with the heroine fighting for her life with the uncle in some type of predictable physical contest with the hero arriving just in time to save her.

I just had no idea why I bothered to finish reading until the end.

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### **willaful says**

Reading Karen Ranney is starting to make me feel like the Forty Year Old Hippie:

I persist in believing she's a good writer, yet I keep finding her books boring. This one has a strong Victorian setting and some potentially interesting characters -- a scientist hero, a heroine essentially suffering from PTSD -- but the plotting is stupid and full of mcguffins. And though I could understand why Emma is so passive and depressed, after all she'd been through, it didn't make her much fun to read about.

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### **Melanie says**

This is the latest book by an author that I respect. I loved her book "The Devil Wears Tartan" and I am very fond of her Highland Lords Series. As for this book, I didn't like it much.

Ian sounded interesting and mysterious, and Emma started off as being spunky. I'm not sure where they lost all their personalities, but somewhere something went wrong, and we ended up frustrated with the story as it dragged on, and on, and on... How long were we supposed to believe that NO ONE could figure out the Villain? It was too predictable.

As for Emma, she just kept dragging, that at one point I wanted to slap her and tell her "GET IT TOGETHER, GIRL"!! Being forced to marry once, she goes and does it again! AGHHH! I couldn't take it.

The bones were there, and that is the ONLY reason that I read it all through the AGONIZING end. I should have felt something for Emma, but the writing felt rushed through and the Author didn't even try to do these characters justice. Sorry, but I do not recommend it.

I think I'll go and reread Ms. Ranney's earlier works, of which I am a great fan.

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### **Shani says**

I grabbed this book from the dollar store... This was my first read from the author, but I doubt it will be the last as it was a most enjoyable experience! I did suspect the outcome at about the halfway point, but found that I very much wanted to continue reading to discover all of the twists and turns before the ending confirmed my suspicions. I was entertained by the character development of Emma and Ian, but also that of each of their homes. I do agree that some portions of the plot (and subplots) were drawn out, but that, to me, served to illuminate parts of each character's personality. It did not detract from the overall experience. Historical Romance readers enjoy!

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### **Ada says**

Interesting storyline although it did drag in parts. I loved how the relationship between Emma and Ian developed but it just felt like it took way too long to resolve all the issues. However, it's a good read and I'd try the other books in the series. The biggest problem I have is not explaining the part the mirror plays in the trilogy. If you haven't read the first book (which I hadn't), it just springs up. There could have been just a little more paid attention to it because otherwise, it's rather insignificant in the grand scheme of the book.

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### **Rebecca (everyday reader) says**

Being the infamous Ice Queen was the only way to survive the entertainments her late-husband involved her in, and the belittling of her as a person from her uncle. Bryce was a true jerk, but didn't deserve his fate. This story is full of real human emotion and actions. I was intrigued by the passion and love between Emma and Ian. Good read!!

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