



## Gathering Storm

*Maggie Craig*

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Alternate cover version for ISBN 9780992641108

Jacobite Intrigue and Romance in 18th Century Edinburgh.

Edinburgh, Yuletide 1743, and Redcoat officer Robert Catto would rather be anywhere else on earth than Scotland. Seconded back from the wars in Europe to captain the city's Town Guard, he fears his covert mission to assess the strength of the Jacobite threat will force him to confront the past he tries so hard to forget.

Christian Rankeillor, her surgeon-apothecary father and his apprentice Jamie Buchan of Balnamoon are committed supporters of the Stuart Cause. They're hiding a Jacobite agent with a price on his head in Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, a hanging offence.

Meeting as enemies, Robert and Kirsty are thrown together as allies by the mysterious death of a young prostitute and their desire to help fugitive brother and sister Geordie and Alice Smart. They're on the run from Cosmo Liddell, bored and brutal aristocrat and coal owner.

As they pick their way through a labyrinth of intrigue, Robert and Kirsty are increasingly drawn to each other. She knows their mutual attraction can go nowhere. He know his duty demands that he must betray her.

Bringing to life a time when Scotland stood at a crossroads in her history, *Gathering Storm* is the first in a suite of Jacobite novels by Scottish writer Maggie Craig, author of the ground-breaking and acclaimed *Damn' Rebel Bitches: The Women of the '45*.

## Gathering Storm Details

Date : Published November 9th 2015 by Alliginbooks Books (first published October 12th 2013)

ISBN :

Author : Maggie Craig

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## From Reader Review Gathering Storm for online ebook

### Andy Harris says

first up thanks to goodreads for the review copy

I like historical books but i had a perception this would be mainly romance (not my favourite genre). Forget the preconceptions there's elements of crime, romance & politics all against a great historic backdrop of 1740's Edinburgh. It feels like a well researched book and oozes with the squallor of the period. Well developed characters and a good read especially if you have an interest in historic Edinburgh and/or historic events around the times of the Jacobites. Don't ignore on the basis this is just a period romance there's plenty more to this book. Recommended.

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### Emma Bull says

\*\*\*RECEIVED FROM GOODREADS GIVEAWAY\*\*\*

As a lover of Scottish historical fiction, I was excited to receive a copy of this book yet wondered whether it could hold its own against the Diana Gabaldon novels. I wasn't disappointed. It's got a plot that includes a bit for everyone, political intrigue leading up to the '45 rising, murder mystery, fine ladies and proper behaviour and romance. A strapping and decent hero, Robert Catto who faces off against a modern and likeable heroine, sparks flying as they try to dislike each other. I can't wait for the next one!

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### Greg Davies says

Mystery and politics as well as romance what more could you want in a good tale. It is a beautifully written historical and romantic story with a touch of mystery and adventure.

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### DL says

The author did a terrific job of making you feel like you were right there with the characters - not only could you see it all in your mind but you could feel it all as well. The storyline was intriguing - kept me wanting to read on to see how it would all play out in the end.

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### Emmy says

I don't know if it's the audio narration or the book itself, but Catto is totally skeeving me out. I can't listen to this guy any more. Maybe I'll try the book itself again later.

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## **Caz says**

**I've given this a C+ for narration and an A for content at Audiogals, so I'm leaving it at 4 stars.**

I've had this title on my TBR pile for some time, but haven't found time to read it yet, so when I saw it had been released in audio format, I grabbed it immediately. The book came very highly recommended and the author has a reputation for meticulous research and the ability to expertly immerse her readers into the historical periods about which she writes, so I was looking forward to listening to Gathering Storm with high hopes.

I'm not going to say those hopes were dashed – the story itself is very good indeed – but the audiobook as a whole turned out to be disappointing because the narrator, while very good on some levels, is not a good fit on others.

You can read the rest of this review at AudioGals.

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## **Hannah Stewart says**

Update: 21/5/17. I feel rather let down by the fact the publishers allowed Amazon/BD to put up a publishing/release date when the second book 'Dance to the Storm', wasn't even finished. The author admitted that on her own Twitter feed. I therefore have cancelled my pre-order, and am feeling rather depressed with the whole system.

On the one hand, I completely understand if the author is struggling to write the very best book that they can. And I'm happy to wait for said book.

But it is so frustrating to be given these timelines and expect them right up until the day when the publishers knew full well it wasn't going to happen. That is the hand that I'm disappointed, frustrated and angry at.

So, rant over. I guess I'll have to see if/when DTTS comes out, whether I will buy and read it.

I didn't review this book at the time, but I remember enjoying it.

What I don't enjoy is: pre-ordering the next book, receiving confirmation of order from BD/Amazon with a release date and therefore shipping date. Only to find its unavailable on said release date. When questioned, BD/Amazon state unknown reasons. After scrolling through the author's Twitter feed, I discover the book isn't finished.

Do I cancel my pre-order and get my money back then see how I'm feeling when/if the book is actually released? Or just wait without knowing when/if book will be published? (At the moment I'm leaning towards scenario 1).

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## **Andrea says**

I received this book free through Goodreads First Reads.

I enjoyed reading this book. I think the author is very talented to be able to paint such a brilliant picture of a time in history she has never seen, so you feel can really imagine what it would of been like. I don't always



<http://jaffareadstoo.blogspot.co.uk/2...>

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### **Marguerite Kaye says**

I absolutely loved this, my only complaint is that I have to wait for the next part of the story. Thank you so much Wendy L for recommending this one, it was a fantastic read.

So, what was so great? Well, the setting for a start - Edinburgh in 1743, before the New Town was built, a town split down the middle by those for the King across the Water, and those for the one in London. Then there was Captain Robert Catto, dark, incredibly sexy (that hair!), troubled, his loyalties divided, but at the same time a brilliantly believable soldier. He was not a nice hero. He's a hero who swears, and who kills, and who hangs out with ladies of the night - a lot. He can be unkind, he can even be deliberately cruel, but at heart he is true to himself, and in that sense a good man. Then there was the heroine, Kirsty/Christian, another flawed but attractive character, sometimes stupidly loyal, always struggling to do the right thing, put in the middle of a terrible dilemma by her father and her father's apprentice who was also her best friend. Then there's the rest of the cast, some historical characters some purely fictional, all brilliantly drawn. And finally the story itself, which resonates now, as Scotland struggles to define itself once more after a referendum, just as much as it does historically - what kind of country are we, what kind of people - then as now, feelings run very high, families are divided.

Did I say that I loved this? A fantastic read, one of the best books I've come across in ages, I just can't wait for the next one.

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### **NormaCenva says**

It is a well-written, nicely researched historical novel, with a nice cover, that is not particularly spectacular but is enticing enough. Romance novels are not my kind of a thing, but there was a lot of different things included in the story that kept me reading.

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### **Tony Parsons says**

1743, Edinburgh, Scotland. Former Lieutenant Captain Robert Bob Catto (Town Guard, Redcoat), has fought in many Wars.

Duncan Forbes (Culloden) is the Lord President.

Duncan has now appointed & made Captain Robert Bob Catto in charge of the Town Guard.

His mission is to help fight against the political upheaval of the Jacobite threat.

Christian Kirsty Rankeillor (daughter), Patrick Rankeillor (father, surgeon-apothecary, Professor), & Jamie Buchan (apprentice, Balnamoon) are strong supporters of the Stuart Cause.

The trio are hiding a wanted Jacobite agent in Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, which if caught the all will be hanged.

How will this clandestine operation turn out?

Is there a romance between Kirsty & Captain Catto brewing?

Warning: This book is for adults only & contains extreme violent or graphic adult content or profanity &/or sexually explicit scenarios. It may be offensive to some readers.

I did not receive any type of compensation for reading & reviewing this book. While I receive free books from publishers & authors, I am under no obligation to write a positive review. Only an honest one.

A very awesome book cover, great font & writing style. A very well written 18th Century historical fiction book. It was very easy for me to read/follow from start/finish & never a dull moment. There were no grammar/typo errors, nor any repetitive or out of line sequence sentences. Lots of exciting scenarios, with several twists/turns & a great set of unique characters to keep track of. This could also make another great 18th Century adventure movie, or mini TV series (Masterpiece; PBS). 1 book you won't want to put down. To be continued. A very easy rating of 5 stars.

Thank you for the free Goodreads; Alligin books; Autographed; paperback book  
Tony Parsons MSW (Washburn)

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## Wendy says

Wonderful stuff Maggie Craig, where do I start? I Loved this magnificent, fast paced, brilliantly researched novel of 18th century Edinburgh. Full of political intrigue, conspiracy, deception, murder and even secret dissections, darkly creepy and fascinating but with a touch of spine tingling romance. This is a story about people believing themselves to be in the right of it, the Jacobites determined to win independence for Scotland, no matter what the cost, committed supporters of the Stuart cause. And their opponents, the soldiers and politicians of the English crown, equally resolute and tenacious.

Ms.Craig begins with a bang, I can hear the click of boots on the cobbled streets as the soldiers march through the echoey, empty, dank and dark roadway. "Robert Catto swept out through the Bristol Port and wheeled left. Adjusting his steadying grip on the hilt of his sword, he proceeded to cover the newly-cobbled causeway behind Edinburgh University at a fast and loping stride."...and..."Bringing his right hand up to the side of his head, he splayed his long fingers so everyone would be sure of seeing the signal to stop. As he came to a graceful halt, spinning round on the balls of his feet to face the men, the soft folds of his cloak billowed out around him." These opening sentences completely set the scene for what is to follow, redcoat officer Captain Robert Catto of the despised Town Guard is on a mission. He has been summoned from front line duty in Europe and promoted to Captain by Duncan Forbes of Culloden, The Lord President. Culloden is a humane and honourable man whose only agenda is the peace and prosperity of his beloved Scotland, he has seconded Robert Catto to carry out a covert mission to assess the strength of the Jacobite threat under the auspices of Captain of the Town Guard.

Much of the intrigue is centred around Edinburgh's Royal Infirmary where Christian Rankeillor lives and works with her father, a much respected Professor, surgeon and apothecary. They are Jacobite sympathisers along with Professor Rankeillor's apprentice, Jamie Buchan of Balnamoon. Robert Catto is aware that unlawful dissections are taking place in the dead of night in the Infirmary, he uses this knowledge as a cover to enter and search the premises, frightening the women of the Rankeillor household in the process. Captain Catto finds evidence of a clandestine meeting, and suspects Christian and her father of hiding a Jacobite agent with a price on his head, he is duty bound to winkle out this traitor to the crown.

The story proceeds with Robert and Kirsty aware of a growing and unwanted attraction between them, they are on opposing sides, each determined to succeed, Kirsty to help the agent to escape, Robert to stop this

happening at all costs. I love Robert's character, he is honourable and charismatic, but entirely human, no chocolate box hero. Kirsty is a feisty and loyal, beautiful young woman, unusual in that she has been treated as an equal by her father and is therefore not afraid of the dead and the dissecting of them for medical science. Their growing love for each other is apparent but does not overshadow the serious subject, that of Scotland at a crossroads in her history, time for action, one side wishing to throw her into civil war, the other to avoid this if at all possible.

There are many twists and turns, the death of a young prostitute, bestial behaviour by some of Edinburgh's young and wealthy spoilt aristocrats', political intrigue, clandestine meetings etc. All combine to make this a thoroughly enjoyable, intriguing, and fascinating story. Maggie Craig is a historian of repute as well as a talented writer, her meticulous research and love of her homeland shows. I have recently completed the first two Outlander novels and therefore cannot help comparing the two writers. The fact that Gathering Storm has been written by a Scot who knows her subject by simply living and breathing it, is obvious, even the language used could only have been written by someone in the habit of using and hearing this vernacular every day...love it.

I can't wait for the next book in this series and I'm hopeful that Maggie Craig can also persuade her publisher to employ the fabulous actor, Lesley Mackie, to narrate this powerful tale as she did with her poignant and beautiful novel, **One Sweet Moment**. **Gathering Storm** with its evocative and turbulent background set in 18th century Edinburgh, would benefit from Ms.Mackie's intuitive and talented reading of it - a dream team indeed. 5 mega stars.

Footnote: added 8 June 2015

Having just listened to the newly released audio version read by James Bryce, I loved it all over again. In the end it was decided that a male Scottish actor would do justice to the myriad of characters in this wonderful feast of a novel. Maggie Craig's stunning story is vividly brought to life by this talented actor who interprets perfectly the many nuances of the Scottish language. I was at first unsure that Mr. Bryce could do justice to the delectable Robert Catto and if I have a criticism it is that James Bryce does not have a youthful enough voice for Robert Catto, nevertheless Maggie Craig's story is so wonderful that I lost myself in the story and forgot my reservations of Bryce's portrayal of Catto. At first the young officer comes across as an unfeeling, cynical, sarcastic man who puts duty over all else, by degrees his softer side and his conscience emerges and his interaction with Kirsty Rankeillor and his wee cook boy, Geordie, shows his softer side and this is expertly captured by James Bryce. Here I have to add, that having recently read some of Stella Riley's novels set in England during the Civil War - Robert Catto could well be a character right out of one of Ms. Riley's novels. Ms.Craig's admiration for Duncan Forbes of Culloden is evident in her portrayal of him and James Bryce's representation of him captures this admiration - his deep, cultured voice with its Scottish intones is immediately recognisable - without the necessity for explanation - in his clandestine dealings with Captain Catto. As for the female members of Professor Rankeillor's household - well the housekeeper is just hilarious! Bryce brings to mind a fussy, bossy little bantam hen. The depiction of the drawling, supercilious, spoilt Cosmo Liddell, one of Edinburgh's dissolute elite, is impressive and the members of the town guard, with their mixture of accents, from the highlands to the lowlands, young and old alike is perfection. But one of the real highlights for me was when the Professor, in a flashback, was explaining the facts of life to an eleven year old, Motherless, Kirsty, poignantly sad but sweetly funny at the same time, I've said it above but I really cannot wait for the next book in this fascinating series. 5+ stars! Can you tell how much I loved it?

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