



## The Bride of Lammermoor

*Walter Scott , J.H. Alexander (Editor) , Kathryn Sutherland (Introduction)*

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This is a story of national change and personal tragedy. For Lucy Ashton and Edgar Ravenswood, acts of heroism are thwarted and love is doomed by social, political and historical division. This edition restores the action to the years of uncertainty and political flux before the Union of Scotland and England in 1707, rather than after, as Scott's later revision had placed it.

## The Bride of Lammermoor Details

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Author : Walter Scott , J.H. Alexander (Editor) , Kathryn Sutherland (Introduction)

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## From Reader Review The Bride of Lammermoor for online ebook

### Carol Storm says

I love this book! It's as sexy as any romance novel, but has a tragic ending and feels almost like a Shakespeare play. Usually Sir Walter Scott is romantic about history, and the gallant knights and damsels fair always win the day. Here it's almost like he knows the modern world must triumph over a nobler past, and he's sad but honest. When he lets his hero die at the end, he's like Deke Thornton saying goodbye to Pike Bishop in Sam Peckinpah's classic Western THE WILD BUNCH.

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### Surreysmum says

Read in an 1897 edition. [These notes were made in 1982:]. This novel should have been a hundred pages longer. It starts and proceeds at Scott's leisurely pace, and about half the main action - the return of Ravenswood, Lucy's attempted murder of Bucklaw, her madness and death, and Ravenswood's death, are crammed into the last 15 pages. That rather glaring fault aside, there is much to like here, and some particularly impressive scenes - one can see how it captured the European imagination enough to be turned into an opera. Having taken Jay [Macpherson:]'s course, I am now fully aware of two contrasting elements in Scott's work - the generalized "romantic", with its ladies beside fountains, its proud young hero, and domineering mother-in-law figure. These characters could as easily be English, or French, or Spanish, or anything, provided they were surrounded by appropriately stunning scenery. Then there are the highly localized, dialect-speaking lower and middle class, who certainly fit into the scheme Walpole identified - the "comic relief" - but are also the transmitters of the Scottish tradition, the Scottish language, and the Scottish (as opposed to merely general) superstition. With a curious double vision, we can see the three old hags of this novel not only as direct descendants of Macbeth's trio, but as aged Scottish crones - in which latter light they are consistently characterized by the narrative voice. Scott is playing games with us here, although it is a game common to the Romantic period - the game of relating in a very rational, almost sceptical fashion, things which bear only supernatural explanations, prophecies which irresistibly come true. "Here it is for your consideration," we are challenged, "something which shouldn't be, but is - and I, your author, have no opinion on the matter." The plot of Lammermoor is, of course, familiar through the opera Lucia, but where the brother is the chief "heavy" in the opera, it is the shrewd but rather weak father that Scott concentrates on. Caleb Balderston, with his single-minded pursuit of outward respectability for the Ravenswoods at any cost, is a fine creation. Not Scott at his best, but definitely and most enjoyably Scott.

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### Faouzia says

This is my first contact with Sir Walter Scott and i must say i am surprised i took me so long to read any of his work. The story was quite interesting.

Set in the end the 18th Century, in Scotland, it is the tale of the unfortunate love and tragedies of Edgar the Master of Ravenswood and Lucy Ashton.

It might not be an original story, but the setting was fascinating, with a background of Scottish superstitions and legends.

I always enjoy this kind of historical fiction, it always made me dream of a different world, where oaths were sacred and unbreakable, where honor was more valuable than fortunes and where love was pure, simple and eternal.

The characters were very interesting, and my favorite may not be considered as a main one, it is Caleb Balderstone, The butler of the Master of Ravenswood. Walter Scott made him look fascinating in his blind devotion for the family he serves and many times he was really hilarious with all the tricks he came up with in order to save the Family Credit, he was a piece of work!

The style of Walter Scott was different and interesting, and i enjoyed the ballads, poem.. that were inserted all along.

and i am sure this will not be the last Walter Scott for me!

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## **Laura says**

Free download available at Project Gutenberg.

*From BBC Radio 4 - Classical Serial:*

*Mike Harris adapts Sir Walter Scott's The Bride of Lammermoor.*

*The novel is set in the Lammermuir Hills of south-east Scotland at the beginning of the 18th Century and tells of a tragic love affair between young Lucy Ashton and her family's enemy Edgar Ravenswood.*

*The Ashtons and Ravenswoods have been enemies for centuries - but will a proposed union between the warring families finally bring peace?*

*Music Composed and performed by Ross Hughes and Esben Tjalve  
Violin and viola - Oliver Langford*

*Written by Mike Harris*

*Produced and Directed by Clive Brill*

*A Brill production for BBC Radio 4.*

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## **The Lit Bitch says**

Beware the Ravenswood!

This is a must read for fans of the genre....a classic gothic romance!

This Gothic tale has it all....witches, women going mad, a family fallen from grace, degenerative castles, ruined fortunes, Byronic heros, star crossed lovers, a dark prophecy, ominous symbology...everything! It is MacBeth, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, and Wuthering Heights all rolled into one. I wish Goodreads would let me give 1/2 stars as I would rate this one 3.5 stars....

See my full review here

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## **Monica says**

Una vecchia leggenda narra di uno spirito della fontana che, uscito dalle acque, irretì un giovane cavaliere rubandogli l'anima e la vita.

Si dice che l'ultimo dei Ravenswood perirà a causa di una giovane donna morta di cui lui ne chiederà la

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mano.

*“Quando di Ravenswood l’ultimo erede  
Una morta fanciulla in moglie chiede  
Il Kelpie col cavallo se lo inghiotte  
E sul nome si fa eterna notte”*

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## **Shawn says**

Scott really is a masterful novelist. If, like me, your knowledge of this tale originates in Donizetti's opera, you will be fascinated by the job of his librettists! They managed to plumb the psychological depths of the story even as they did away with 90% of the characters and plot. The recognizable plot line of the opera starts up about Chapter 20, or nearly 170 pages into the novel. And the last chapters move along with the same intensity as the opera. But the excitement of the novel lies in the ways Scott deploys the standard 19th century novelist's tools to full advantage. He has a fine way of ordering the narrative so that we might be surprised just as a character is surprised, and learn very naturally in the following chapter all the back story that we expect to explain a happening (in particular the appearance of guests at Wolf's Crag and the subsequent story of the change in political winds that precipitated it). True, Scott also deploys traditions of the 19th century novel that seem strained now (a well placed bullet in a charging bull is one thing, but a second well placed thunderstorm that makes turning away unwanted guests impossible is a bit much). Scott also makes full use of Scots dialect and auguries for turning the tale exotic and mysterious. And his own liberal use of foreshadowing makes sure we won't be too surprised by the ending. And somehow, Scott manages that forte of the English novel -- he spends two thirds of the book winding string so that when he pulls the last one and the whole knot comes together it is as inevitable as the sun rising (or the fog rolling in over the Scottish coast line!)

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## **Bettie? says**

[Bettie's Books (hide spoiler)]

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## **Bruce says**

Donizetti's opera, "Lucia di Lammermoor," is based on this novel by Sir Walter Scott. Published in 1819, Scott's narrative is set in southern Scotland and traces the tragic love affair of Lucy Ashton and her family's enemy, Edgar Ravenswood. Lucy's father has, through shady legal maneuvering, taken possession of all the properties of the ancient and honorable Ravenswood family, leaving Edgar as the family's role and impoverished survivor. Intent of revenge, Edgar unwillingly falls in love with Lucy and establishes an uneasy reconciliation with her family, but when he is called to the Continent on political business, Lucy's family convinces her that he has been unfaithful and pushes her toward marriage with another.

Scott's writing is compelling, and his sense of pace and drama cannot be resisted. Lowland Scots dialect is captured well, although it might take the reader a number of pages to become accustomed to it. Scott's characters are strongly drawn, and the principle protagonists evolve subtly and convincingly. Peasants are used as contrasting character elements, often almost as a traditional Greek chorus, and three old hags in particular parallel Shakespeare's device in Macbeth. To a reader previously acquainted with the general plot,

the ending will seem inevitable, and the unfamiliar reader will be kept guessing until the last few pages.

Scott's ability to use general historical events as a frame for fictional narrative is masterful, and he is rightly often considered the founder of the historical novel. It is easy to see why his reputation, long in eclipse, has begun to rise again over the past few decades.

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## Henry Avila says

Around the time of the union between Scotland and England 1707, great changes are occurring in that ancient and often unhappy land of the north, rebellion is always beneath the calm surface, in uneasy Scotland. Rivalries, family blood feuds, (and just plain hate) political contests between Whigs and Tories for power, but with a polite face shown. Edgar, the son of the late Lord Ravenswood, his downfall caused by Sir William Ashton a devious lawyer or a honest man, depending on your side of the aisle, bribery was common in that era's legal courts. Of course brooding Edgar, after a few duels, seeks vengeance against the destroyer of his family's fortune, estates and honor, he lives in a ruined, like his life, haunted (some say) castle with only one old wily servant left, Caleb Balderstone, in Wolfscrag. A tower above the pounding surf of the North Sea (always seemingly ready to collapse into the yearning waves below), in the Lammermoor Hills of the southeast part of the country. Chance can complicate situations, Edgar hunting on his small estate, saves the life of Sir William, his neighbor, and his pretty daughter Lucy, from an angry, wild bull. Why? Family honor maybe, but that question is never answered clearly, except the fragile, meek Lucy, is fascinated by the handsome stranger, and he also feels warmth towards the alluring lady. His sworn enemy's daughter, the former Lord Ravenswood, his father had lost that title, supporting the losers, during the Glorious Revolution, would not understand either, if he were still alive. Edgar finds out from friendly, grateful, Sir William, that the deceased, had borrowed many thousands of pounds sterling, and was unable to repay him. The almost Gothic romance between Lucy and Edgar, is mostly in secret walks, (Lady Ashton, the mother, despises poor Edgar) outside the homes of the rivals, by an antiquated fountain, the site of their first inauspicious meeting. They visited blind, old, Alice, in her tiny decrepit, as much as she is, hovel, on Lucy's father's land. The woman had for many years been a valuable servant of Lord Ravenswood's, but Alice opposes the marriage between the happy couple... she predicts disaster in the future (uneducated people have accused her, of being a witch). When the old woman dies, Edgar sees her apparition, and is very shaken. Witches, unknown things felt, or thought seen in the woods, rumors of the supernatural are spoken in the nearby village of Wolfshope (but this is the age of the believers, in evil spirits). Lady Ashton makes arraignments in Ravenswood Castle, Edgar's former home for a more worthy husband for her young daughter, wealthy but coarse, Francis, Laird of Bucklaw. Sir William is afraid of his dominating wife and the engagement is announced, while Edgar is attending business for his rich, influential relative the Marquis, who is trying to get his land back, on the continent. Lucy has written many letters to him, as he has too, but her cruel mother has not let them pass. Will Edgar come back before it is too late?...A popular Opera, was made from this novel. One of Scott's best books....based loosely on historical events.

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## Andrew says

I read this book after working on the opera based on it which, it turns out, has relatively little to do with the novel after all. While the opera is boiled down to the story of two star-crossed lovers, the novel puts the lovers on the back-burner, preferring to concentrate its focus on creating a record of Scottish politics and daily life at the turn of the 18th century. This is evident in the care and detail Scott devotes to describing, say, hospitality rituals, about which he goes on and on. Contrasted to the very quick, to-the-point passages about the lovers themselves (including a resolution that, compared to the rest of the novel, moves at a

lightning pace) it is very clear what the true intention here is.

For all that, it is a beautiful novel, in turns haunting and witty, and fascinating as a history piece. I highly suggest an annotated version, as Scott largely assumes the reader has at least a survey knowledge of Scottish Union politics, and large passages are written in thick 18th century Scottish dialect which, unless you're familiar with it, can be completely confounding.

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## Czarny Pies says

Today Ivanhoe is Walter Scott's most read novel. Ivanhoe is nice enough. Moreover at time when England was considering emancipating its Jews, it draws attention in a timely fashion to how unjust the actual expulsion of Jews from England in 1290 A.D. had been.

Nonetheless, The Bride of Lammermoor is by far the most important book that Scott ever wrote. It took Europe by storm and is largely responsible for the launch of Romanticism in France as the French were blissfully unaware of the German romantic movement.

The Bride of Lammermoor had its greatest impact on Italian opera. In fact, I much prefer Lucia di Lammermoor by Gaetano Donizetti to Scott's novel. For those of you with funds I would suggest that you go to Covent Garden for a performance instead of reading this book. Lucie's death is much more entertaining when presented by a loud soprano and a discreet orchestra than it is on the printed page.

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## Lobstergirl says

I truly thought my whole life would pass without any Walter Scott, but I picked up this paperback for pennies at a sidewalk sale because I'm drawn to old paperbacks. There it sat along with all my other sidewalk sale finds until I reread Madame Bovary, which contains a scene in which Emma and Charles Bovary attend a performance of Donizetti's opera *Lucia di Lammermoor*, which is loosely based on this novel. (Another novel whose occupants attend this opera is *Where Angels Fear to Tread*.) So then I watched, or half-watched, half-listened, to the opera on Youtube, and decided to read the book.

I was expecting this to be all doom and gloom and drama, but *au contraire*, the mood constantly shifts back and forth from that to comedy. There are parts that are extremely funny. These are the parts not having to do with hags, sibyls, and apparitions, which I could frankly do without.

From the back of my edition: "John Buchan considered it the most perfect of his novels 'in one way...for the sense of marching fatality is unbroken by any awkwardness of invention, or languor of narration'; and even the scenery had taken a less inanimate part and become like 'Egdon Heath in Mr. Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, almost a protagonist in the tale.'

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## Maan Kawas says

I loved this novel by Sir Walter Scott very much, and I am eager to read more of his novels! I always meant to read it as Donizetti's opera adaptation of this novel (Especially with Dame Joan Sutherland as Lucia) is

one of my favorite operas! The novel is about loss, revenge, love, honor and dignity, marriage, and death, with Gothic elements. It also has something from Shakespeare's plays, particularly, Macbeth, where Lady Ashton is somehow reminiscent of Lady Macbeth. That was my first Scott novel but it will not be the last for sure.

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## **Christine says**

now on BBC Classic Serial starts June 29

*Mike Harris adapts Sir Walter Scott's The Bride of Lammermoor.*

*The novel is set in the Lammermuir Hills of south-east Scotland at the beginning of the 18th Century and tells of a tragic love affair between young Lucy Ashton and her family's enemy Edgar Ravenswood.*

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Produced and Directed by Clive Brill  
A Brill production for BBC Radio 4.*

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## **Kailey (BooksforMKs) says**

Beautiful tragic romance that made me cry at the end. Scott does wander off into seemingly purposeless rambles, with extra characters who have no usefulness in the story, but I forgive him b/c the rest of the writing is so very good.

I love the characters and the story line! The writing is exactly designed to sweep one away to another world, another time.

They say that he wrote most of the book whilst he was deliriously ill by dictating to his editor/publisher Ballantyne. Maybe that accounts for some of the gaps in places where I wish he would have written more in a particular scene, and for the long rambles in other places. ha ha!

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## **Suzannah says**

Cloaks swirl, ladies go mad, rocks fall, everyone dies. Full review coming!

## Bill Kerwin says

This is an impressive work, one that can be enjoyed by fans of the historical novel, the gothic novel and the novel of ethnic character--provided they accept "The Bride" as a not completely effective fusion of the three and are willing to adjust their expectations accordingly.

The essential plot--the story of the dispossessed Master of Ravenswood (now living on top of a promontory overlooking the sea in a half-ruined castle) and how he falls in love with the daughter of his mortal enemy, eventually leading to madness and murder and the fulfillment of an ancient family prophecy--is fiercely romantic, as are Scott's descriptions of the castle of Wolf's Crag and the surrounding countryside. At the same time, the starkness of this wild gothic tale is illuminated and qualified by a rich political context and lightened considerably in tone by humorous Scots stereotypes--particularly that of Ravenswood's faithful majordomo Caleb. I found the resulting hybrid both unique and effective. (Although I must admit I could have done with a little less Caleb. Okay, I admit it: a lot less Caleb).

Also . . . I believe--correct me if I'm wrong--that this is the finest novel ever written during a series of debilitating gall bladder attacks.

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## Cynthia says

"The Bride of Lammermoor" is surprisingly funny. It's about two Scottish families who, through the centuries, fight over the same fortune and land holdings. One family wrests it away from the other branch and a century or so later another grabs it back and so on. As the book opens Lord Ravenswood has just lost his father and his fortune. It's reverted back to the Ashton's. In his anguish Ravenswood decides to go back to the house he grew up in and confront Ashton but along the way some wayward cows get in the way and he not only doesn't kill Ashton but he saves his life and that of his beautiful daughter. Of course love blossoms a la Romeo and Juliet until Ashton's stalwart lady, a member of the famed Douglas clan, stomps it out.

I've tried to read at least two other Walter Scott books and failed so I was thrilled with how much fun this one was. The interactions between the Lord and his long suffering, loyal servant Caleb Balderstone were priceless. The third section of the book is very sad however. Donizetti's opera of the same name is based on that section.

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## Kelly says

Seriously gothic fans, listen up: This is your ultimate indulgence. This is ridiculously over the top. The characters actually swish their cloaks and make dark, portentous pronouncements. Wolves really howl at the moon, the dudes really live in broken down castles. Ladies go mad! Men lose their inheritance and swear revenge! Old family feuds! Star crossed lovers! (Though let's note about that that they make no sense and the hero seems to be more 'Eh, well, she's a chick, she loves me. I'm pretty cool, I should have known that would happen. I am therefore obligated to love her in return! Point of honor!') This book is ridiculous. I laughed at it for half of it and loved it for the rest. It also spawned an opera called Lucia di Lammermoor, for those

inclined in that direction. The mad scene there is beautiful.

This was a surprisingly good time!

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