



The Duke

Kerrigan Byrne

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The Duke

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The Duke Kerrigan Byrne

He is noble, notorious, and takes no prisoners...

Strong as a Viking. Handsome as Adonis. Rich as Midas. Collin "Cole" Talmage, Duke of Trewyth, is the stuff that legends are made of. He's the English Empire's golden son--until fate has its way with him. Cole's family is killed and his closest comrade betrays him on the battlefield, leaving him gravely injured. But Cole is not one to dwell on misfortune. He is a man of duty, honor--and desire. And now he's ready for the fight of his lifetime...

Imogen Pritchard is a beautiful lass who works in a hospital by day and as a serving maid at night. Years ago, when she was young and penniless, she ended up spending a scandalous night with Cole, whose tormented soul was matched only by his earth-shattering passion. Imogen entered a marriage of convenience--one that left her a wealthy widow--but she never forgot Cole. Now that her long-lost lover has turned up in her hospital, injured and with no memory of her, Imogen is torn: Is it a blessing or a curse that their past remains a secret to Cole, even as his new passion for her leaves him wanting to protect and possess her...at all costs?

The Duke Details

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Author : Kerrigan Byrne

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From Reader Review The Duke for online ebook

Carol *Young at Heart Oldie* says

3.5*

I loved the previous books in this series but **THE DUKE** fell short of my expectations because I never really warmed to Cole as a hero.

I understood how the loss of his entire family, betrayal by a man he trusted and his subsequent imprisonment and torture had left him a broken and bitter man. However, Dorian, Christopher and Liam, the heroes of the previous books, had equally dark and traumatic pasts, but each shows an emotional vulnerability that I felt was lacking in Cole. For most of the book, he blows hot and cold towards Imogen, passionate and protective one moment and cruel and contemptuous the next. When he discovers that Imogen and 'Ginny' are the same person, he treats her despicably, only concerned with his own pain and sense of loss and never considering what Imogen may have endured.

On the other hand, I really liked Imogen. She made great sacrifices to protect her mother and younger sister and I admired the courage, resilience and kindness she demonstrated. Unlike Cole, she hadn't let the past make her angry and bitter but instead she had resolved to help others to find a better life. I also liked how she stood up to Cole but, there were times when I felt she was too forgiving of his callous behaviour.

While the other books contained dark, edgy and often explicit love scenes, they always revealed something of the heroes' fears and insecurities. Whereas the love scenes between Cole and Imogen seemed more about anger, revenge and domination on Cole's part and submissiveness on Imogen's part. For me, Cole needed to have shown himself capable of tenderness, compassion and a vulnerable heart, before I accepted that he was worthy of Imogen's love.

Despite these criticisms, I still love Ms. Byrne's ability to write compelling, gritty and suspenseful plots; stories that highlight the darker side of Victorian society, its injustices and the plight of women. We see this when Doctor Longhurst refuses to listen to Imogen, a mere woman, who is sure that Cole has septicemia and not typhus as diagnosed by the doctor.

All the characters from the previous books make an appearance and I enjoyed the interactions between the Dorian, Christopher, Liam and Cole. Hints are dropped about Inspector Morley which suggest that he has an intriguing story to tell and I'm hoping he gets his own book.

Although this book wasn't a favourite of mine, I'm still looking forward to reading the next book in the series, **THE SCOT BEDS HIS WIFE**.

Victorian Rebels series so far (click on the link below for more details)

<https://www.goodreads.com/series/1427...>

I received a copy of this book from the publisher via NetGalley in return for an honest review.

Norah Una Sumner says

Mixed feelings are the worst.

I have absolutely loved the previous book in the Victorian Rebels series, however, I had a crazy love-hate relationship with this one. On one hand, I absolutely loved the main character Imogen and I worshipped her bravery, sass and intelligence. I adored seeing Cole getting his ass burned by this Queen.

“You know some big words for such a small woman.”

“And you have a small mind for such a big man.”

But on the other hand... I cringed a few times. Really hard. You see, I can read a good romance as much as the next guy but sometimes the situations in which these two got aroused were extremely weird and made me leave my body by how irritated I was. Take a scene where Cole kills five people to protect Imogen, you know what she thought?

“He’d killed for her.

Why did that make her breasts tight and heavy? Why did a thrill of unnerving heat bloom beneath the dread and repulsion?”

So, unfortunately, I haven't like The Duke as much as I liked The Highlander, but I do applaud Kerrigan for always creating interesting female characters who make their own destiny.

E-copy provided by the author/publisher in exchange for an honest review via Netgalley.

You can read this review on BookishFever.

Lover of Romance says

This review was originally posted on Addicted To Romance *Summary*

Imogen once knew and truly cared for Collin Talmage, and even though she had little choice when she was innocent, he showed her tenderness and passion. She never thought she would see him again, but Collin came back to England damaged, and as a nurse she aided in his recovery. But circumstances forced her to make a new life for herself, where she married a man who was sickly but a good friend to her and offered her a stable future and a chance to make a difference. Now Imogen is a widow, but goes out of her way to help those in need whether they be starved children, or abused prostitutes or injured veterans or even thieves who want a different kind of life. But her new neighbor isn't pleased with her at all. Imogen knows exactly who Collin is but he has no clue that she is the one girl he has been searching for years for, the one woman he gave his heart to. Collin and Imogen have sparks that fly between them, but Imogen wonders if she can tell this dangerous man the truth of their past or is it too late for them to have a future?

Plot and Story Line

Kerrigan Byrne just keeps surprising me with this series, with each installment I keep falling into the world she has created and what a world of danger and passion and the depth of true humanity that is divulged in

these books. In *The Duke*, her most recent release we have a story of lost love and discovery. Imogen and Collin have a past with each other and there are some secrets too but its quite complicated so its not so black and white as it might appear to be. Imogen has a heart of gold, and she gave her innocence and her heart to Collin. But Collin has lived through a hell of his own. Returned to England, created his own fake hand for the one he lost in order to escape alive out of the hellhole he was in. Now when these two meet up again they are next door neighbors but Collin is quite hostile at first. He doesn't realize that Imogen and the woman he knew as "Ginny" are one and the same. Tempers fly and these two go at it like cats and dogs....or some weird mating ritual because they also have powerful chemistry. I loved the bantering these two have with each other. Its quite lively and highly entertaining. Such a delight to partake of this author once again. She is unique and simply talented. She writes stories that are captivating and not what most HR authors writes now and that is what I love most about her. Its fresh and fun with dark edges that keep you coming back for more. I can't wait to see what is up next.

The Cover

What a drop dead gorgeous cover...I swear they just keep getting better and better. I love her white flowy dress, and the way he holds her from behind.

Overall View

The Duke is evidence of the pure and unique talent that is Kerrigan Byrne. A story of love that isn't easy and a romance that packs a punch to your heart!! INCREDIBLE!!

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[foogallery id="18974"]

Robin (Bridge Four) says

Sale Alert 07Jan17 at Amazon for 2.99

This is a couple I was really rooting for. In the beginning we get this wonderful night that Collin and Imogen end up in bed together. He is a bit drunk and headed on a dangerous mission for Queen and Country and she was mistaken for a prostitute but hey who hasn't had that happen to them. Still they have this great first night together where she is the first person in a long time to seem to really get the grief he feels at the loss of his family and sees something that no one else has.

"Is Ginny your real name?" he queried.

"No," she confessed.

"You'll have to tell me what it is." His words were barely intelligible now, and Imogen didn't have to wait long until a soft snore vibrated against her skin.

"It's Imogen," she whispered. A tear slid into her hair as she realized she'd shared the most physical and emotional intimacy she'd ever known with a man who didn't even know her name. They'd never even been introduced, and likely never would be. "My name is Imogen Pritchard, Your Grace. It's a pleasure to make your acquaintance."

But after Collin has been through a nightmare and lost his hand in the process he returns to England and doesn't even recognize Imogen. He might be looking everywhere for Ginny the whore with a heart of gold that he wants to save from that life but he definitely doesn't see her in the nurse that helped save him.

Oh God, nothing had at all gone as she'd hoped or as she'd feared. Her greatest fear should not have been that Trenwyth remembered her. It should have been that he'd not recognize her at all.

My heart broke for Imogen and her situation. But she still remained this entirely likeable always look on the bright side kind of girl that was just going to keep on trying to get by and push through whatever came her way good or bad. I really liked how she ended up in the country house across from Collin a year or two later.

I was on the edge of my seat wondering when he was going to see it. When all of the clouds would clear from his eyes and he'd realize that the woman he is looking for is just across the lawn from him. It is even more funny how agitated she seems to make him as he tries to deny the pull he feels for her. He is actually at most times a complete and utter jerk to her. But she throws back as good as she gets and their deadly dance is just beginning.

*He made a droll sound. "I rather think I'm not too dense to decipher real pleasure from false."
She lifted a lovely bare shoulder and rolled her eyes heavenward. "Every man assumes thusly."*

How was it that such a lovely, soft woman had such a sharp tongue? It was like being bitten by a butterfly

....

"You know some big words for such a small woman."

"And you have a small mind for such a big man," she volleyed back, raking him with a disgusted glare.

Collin made himself really difficult to like and for a while I totally had to rely on Imogen to carry the romance for me. At least there were the characters and anti-heroes from the other books to step in and tell him when he was being a down right pain in the caboose or idiot altogether. You don't have to have read the other books to enjoy this one however a few scenes become a bit funnier if you have.

There is also a serial killer running around and it is hard to be sure but it seems like he is killing women that look like Imogen and that she is in great peril. With some help from the other Victorian Rebels and their wives Collin is determined to keep her safe even if it means he might not be able to keep his own heart safe.

Overall:

I enjoy this series. The Highwayman is still by far my favorite but all of these have been fun and fluffy. I will warn you that in the middle you will have to be really patient with Collin as he acts like a jerk for a good portion of the middle of the book. This is not a deal breaker for me because I love believing in the broken hero and just waiting for that moment when it all clicks in place and he realizes that everything he never knew he wanted is standing right in front of him. If you are looking for something like that this should work well for you.

Penny Reid says

Loved it. :-)

Kerrigan Byrne is writing THE BEST historical romance heroes available today, full stop. I love that they're not perfect. I love that they're believable as 19th century characters.

Thank you, Ms. Byrne, for writing 19th century heroes in books based in the 19th century. <3

WhiskeyintheJar/Kyraryker says

I received this book for free in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

Collin "Cole" Talmage is now the Duke of Trenwyth after the death of his mother, father, and older brother. The crown still has need of him and his spy capabilities but for one night at a brothel, he's going to forget it all in the arms of a raven haired woman.

Imogen spends her days as a nurse and nights as "Ginny", a barkeep in a brothel. When Cole and his soldiers walk in, he instantly captures her attention. Their one night together will never be forgotten but the next two years will shake up both their worlds.

Cole and Imogen now live next door to one another but will pain and pride keep them miles apart?

The man had been scoundrel and saint. Heathen and hero. A dangerous man and a deferential lover.

Fourth in the Victorian Rebels series, The Duke, could be read as a standalone. The couples from the previous books all make extended appearances but while readers of the series will enjoy getting glimpses of favorites, newcomers will enjoy how they help to fill out the world the author has created; you might wonder how some relationships were formed but you won't be lost here. The author's talent of creating strong characters with dark pasts continues but I felt this one was a little slower paced. The sometimes leaning toward purple prose and tendency to wax poetic stood out a bit more in fault because of the slowness. The repetitive comparing of the hero to a beast also became redundant and left me wanting more emotional and interaction scenes instead of lines of telling me what the hero looked like.

"You haven't any idea the strength it takes to be a woman."

I really enjoyed the premise of the story, Cole and Imogene sharing one night, circumstances keep them apart, hidden identities, danger, and then coming together. This is somewhat of an enemies-to-lovers trope story, however, Cole doesn't recognize Imogene but she knows who he is the whole time. Cole's story of being captured, tortured, and then shutting himself off from the world isn't anything new to the romance genre. Yet, he's a little different because we don't usually see our heroes be on the snobby side of classism, which he is. He never crosses an unredeemable line, and is in fact probably more historically accurate, but you might want to throw your sherry in his face a time or two. Imogen also follows some trope lines but again, feels slightly different. She has to work in a brothel to work off money her father owed, deals with a sexist doctor as a nurse, and becomes a bit of a Cinderella by marrying a patient. Anstruther is Imogen's elderly patient, an earl, and ends up marrying her to save her. The glimpses we get of him here have me wanting a novella of him and his former wife Sarah; he was so kind and funny.

She was a woman of desire, of spirit and determination.

Cole and Imogen have fire and emotion but after their initial meeting, it takes a while to get there. Cole is an extremely bitter person after his capture and torture with the Ottomans and persists on being fairly rude to Imogene for more than half of the story. I think having him discover her as his "Ginny" earlier on, would have given me more of the loving time I craved between the two. I really enjoyed Imogen as a character from her strength to her compassion but I feel like we missed some parts of her by never really seeing her family. It felt extremely odd to show her working in a brothel for her mother and sister and never getting to meet them (we briefly glimpse the sister). The family dynamic would have added more emotional dimension to her character.

The ending felt extremely rushed with the reveal and wrap-up of the villain almost giving me whiplash. I

really enjoy this author's writing but the execution felt a little off here with too much focus on overwriting Cole's physical stature, a meandering middle, and not enough love between our couple. However, even when this author uses tropes, she still manages to put a spin that have them feeling new and intriguing. Plus, if you're missing all your favorite couples from previous books, their appearances here will have you smiling. I'll still be anticipating books from this series, especially a certain Inspector as he seems to have some secrets to tell.

Sissy's Romance Book Review says

The Duke 'The Duke' by Kerrigan Byrne is book four in the "Victorian Rebels". This is the story of Collin Talmage, Duke of Trenwyth and Imogen Pritchard. I have read the other book in this series but I feel this is easily a standalone book. I have truly loved this series and this book just added to the enjoyment. Collin has lost his family and now he has inherited the Title of Duke of Trenwyth. Collin happens to meet Imogen 'Ginny' when she is trying to keep her mother and sister from the poor house. Imogen has taken to working as a nurse by day and working at a bar/brothel at night to pay off her fathers debt. Imogen noticed a sadness in Collin that first night at the bar. Collin too noticed Imogen and paid for her for the night. Imogen tried to talk her boss out of taking the money and turning her into a prostitute. But the money would pay a large part of her fathers debit. So Collin and Imogen spent the night together with Imogen sneaking out before morning. Collin and Imogen didn't see each other for a few more years after that night. We learn that Collin was taken as a prisoner of war and was hurt badly during that time. Imogen is still working both jobs so when Collin is brought in she is the nurse assigned to him. It seems Collin hasn't forgotten 'Ginny' but he doesn't realize that who Imogen is. Imogen doesn't get the chance to tell him nor is she sure she wants too. Collin and Imogen story does have some drama in it when there appears to be a stalker after Imogen. This was just an exciting read that I could not put down and read it until the end. "My honest review is for a special copy I voluntarily read."

Monty Cupcake ? Queen of Bloodshed ? says

I really liked the heroine of this book, Imogen. She was smart, kind, patient, caring, and determined. The hero, meh, he was a haughty brat throwing a tantrum due to his capture while on a mission. He was just one big complainer and vat of aristocratic superiority. He improved a bit around the 55% mark and started seeing Imogen for herself vs who he thought she was. He was still a douche for all of the book. I like the tortured hero thing, but he didn't compel compassion when he's spouting ideas about how he's superior because he's a blue blood and that people can't change or criminals can't reform. I got tired of his angry views of life.

Most of the stars in this book go to Imogen, who was a saint to put up with Cole. I liked the incorporation of the previous characters from this series. The murder mystery part was a nice addition, but way easy to figure out. Here's hoping the next book has a nicer hero.

Julie says

The Duke by Kerrigan Byrne is a 2017 St. Martin's Press publication.

The Victorian Rebels series is my favorite series in the historical romance category right now. I eagerly anticipate each new installment, but then hoard it because I want to have something to look forward to and I

know once I finish it, I'll have to wait for what seems like an eternity for the next book in the series.

I couldn't hold out any longer, but I did manage to read the book very slowly, drawing it out and lapping up every delicious morsel one chapter at a time, trying to make it last as long as I could.

Kerrigan Bryne can create a dark and troubled hero better than anyone out there right now. Collin 'Cole' Talmage, the Duke of Trewyth, is tortured, but is slightly different from the heroes featured in past installments.

He's a privileged Duke who spends one night with the sweet and innocent Ginny, leaving him with a memory he can not shake. In fact, it's his memory of her that sustains him on the battlefield, where he is severely injured. She haunts him always, as his seemingly futile search for her stretches out over the years.

Imogen Pritchard, is a nurse by day, a maid by night, but after a dangerous encounter she is saved by a marriage of convenience. Now widowed, Imogen suddenly finds herself face to face with the one man she could never forget. But, little does he know, Imogen, the wealthy widow next door, is the woman he has been longing for. Should Imogen remind him of their shared past or keep it secret from him?

As a big fan of romantic suspense, I loved the element of suspense in this chapter, which was like the cherry on top!

The way the lovers seemed like two ships passing in the night also adds an element of tension to the story and of course a little frustration, too.

Cole, of course, is heartbroken and sad, but also, bitter and angry. He doesn't know what to make of Imogen and his attraction to her, which leaves him conflicted about his feelings for Ginny, while Imogen is afraid to tell him the truth, which creates inner angst and turmoil, but makes for some seriously sharp dialogue as the pair play a delightful and slightly dangerous lovers game.

The only downside to the story is that the ending was tidied up a bit too abruptly, combining the threads a little too hurriedly, but it was still dramatic and despite the dark tones, the book ended on a humorous note, allowing Cole to steal the show and Imogen's heart once and for all.

This is another terrific effort by this author. I love her style, her risk-taking plot lines, and how her stories are ever evolving and changing guaranteeing they stay fresh and original!

4.5 stars

Jilly says

The hero is a dick.

We get to see him in his "before and after" being a prisoner of war who was tortured. And, I just have to say that he was a dick to begin with, not Mr. Sweet and Wonderful.

Why:

He meets Ginny at a bar where she is the waitress, grabs her onto his lap and makes her stay with him the whole night as he gets more and more drunk. Um, ever heard of sexual harassment?

You break it, you buy it!

Next, he doesn't ask her if he can sleep with her. He simply goes to her boss and offers him enough money for her boss to force her to do it.

Well, at least he obeyed the sign.

Then, he takes her virginity without even realizing it, even though she is crying. Is he accustomed to women crying when he has sex with them? Is that just SOP?

Aww, that explains it.. Got all messy for nothing.

Then, he leaves the next day for war and is captured as a POW where he is tortured for a year. In that year, he romanticizes the "whore" he spent the night with and makes her out to be some saving angel that he will find after he's free and marry her. That's right, he's a Duke, but he plans on marrying a "whore" whose name he doesn't even know that he spent a few drunken hours with.

And, lucky him! When he is rescued and sent to the hospital, she just so happens to be the nurse who takes care of him. She even realizes he was diagnosed wrong and saves his life. Even though she was wearing a wig that night as his whore, after all of his fond memories of her, he will surely recognize his fallen angel, right?

When he is told that she saved his life and is going to give him his medicine:

"That plain-faced twit won't come near me.. Get out!"

The teacup shattered on the wall above her head, showering her with lukewarm droplets..

okay, man, we'll find you a Coke..

His little tantrum gets Ginny fired and her life falls completely apart. Luckily, a NICE old man marries her and then dies. That worked out well. Now, she is wealthy, titled, and living next door to the Duke of Dickdom. He not only doesn't remember her as his whore, but he also doesn't remember her as the nurse who saved his life. And, he hates her because she is doing charity work. Charity work!!! That bitch!!

He threatens her, degrades her, yells at her, grabs and shakes her, and rants about how the lowly poor don't deserve the help of the rich. He also calls her a gold-digging whore for marrying her husband, and is upset that she is helping reformed whores. This guy has really got whores on his mind. Only one whore is good enough for him!! His magical whore!

"Shame on you, beguiling a decent old man on his deathbed, turning his ancestral home into little better than a brothel, and not even a useful one at that."

So, brothels are cool as long as they aren't in your neighborhood, and whores are only good if they are sweet

and spent the night crying in your arms because you ripped her virginity from her?

The heroine of the book was strong, compassionate, and resilient. But, the hero was such an ass that I couldn't like the story. I was actively rooting that some other guy - a nice guy - would show up and she would fall for him.

Jessica's Totally Over The Top Book Obsession says

4 The Duke is a dick but I still liked him Stars

Spoilers

I liked The Duke better than the last book. Cole was a big dick at times but he did have kind moments too. Those moments helped balance his character. I felt the fact that he was a social snob and at times a pompous ass made him more real. Cole was more true to what a Duke in the Victorian era would have been like. But for all Cole's bad traits he was protective, loyal and when he loved someone it was fiercely. Although I liked Cole alright, Imogen made the book for me. She was strong, brave, and benevolent. I love that no matter how much she had to overcome, how much she suffered she still chose to see the good in life. She was full of life and joy and still some how down to earth and realistic. The sexual tension in this book was great. I loved that there was more action in this book than there was in the last book. It kept the pace going were as in The Highlander I felt it slowed down a bit in the middle. Overall this was a enjoyable read. The first book is still my favorite of the series though!

Mei says

I was really happy when Netgalley granted me this book to review!!!

When I started reading it the first chapter was promising!

We see Imogen as Ginny - mistreated, overworked and sold like a sack of grain.

Still, at the same time, there was something that grated. I kept asking myself why Imogen was the only one working in her family? OK, I thought, her mother could be ill, but her sister was 16 and healthy. So why didn't she contributed?

But, since during the whole novel we don't see any of them, I couldn't judge, but neither could I understand.

Then we skip a year and our hero (??? how can he be a hero when he buys a girl who clearly is not willing, I don't know...) is back from a brutal war. He's gravely ill, he's been tortured, he lost his hand, he's emaciated.... And Imogen is his nurse.

She's never stopped thinking about him and is half way there to being in love with him (another think I

couldn't understand...).

And this is where the story went downward... when Cole wakes up, he treats Imogen, who saved his life diagnosing his illness and going against the main doctor orders, like garbage, insulting her and denigrating her, giving the main doctor an excuse to fire her and throw her out from the hospital.

Ok, OK, he's just woken up, he's still out of his mind, but I started hating him then and there.

I'm not going to tell you the whole story: first because the book has not been released yet and second because you'll want to find out yourselves, but to make it short I hated the hero.

And I'm so sorry to say it, because I loved the heroes in the previous books who were also tough, broken and dangerous men, but they were also intelligent, while Cole was just plain stupid and very, very classist: he's a Duke and therefore all other people are just dust under his boots. God has given him the right to do and say whatever he wants and that's that!

And that attitude goes on and on and on... Not only towards Imogen, but also all the others without exclusion! It was intolerable!!! His arrogance was so OTT that's not even funny!!!

Imogen was slightly better. At least she was not a snob! She had positive ideas and wanted to help others. She didn't treat others like garbage!

Another thing I didn't like was an over-abundance of flowery paragon that didn't make much sense (at least to me) like: *gentle violence*.

Also repeated comparison to Greek statues and wolf, bear, panther, etc...

It's OK to make remarks like that once or twice, but they were all over, on almost every page!!! It was tedious! I wanted to shout: "**OK, I got it! He's a sleek, David statuesque, dark, brooding, huge, wolf!! Stop repeating it!!!**"

I was tempted with DNF several times, but since I love **all** the other books written by Ms. Byrne, I kept reading and hoping that something will change...

And it did: in the last chapter and in such a hasty and abrupt way that my head was spinning!

We don't see the *ass*-Cole groveling. He just orders Imogen that they'll get married and that she doesn't have a say in it! Ah, and, by the way, he's in love with her!!!

If I were Imogen I would have shot him! But, no what she does? She says she loves him too and they f*ck even if she's just woken up from a drugged sleep/attempted abduction/murder!!!

Well, my friends, I know that my review is actually a rant and it will be unpopular since many people here loved it, but that's how I felt... sorry... :(

I hope the next book will be better!

?lleskelle - teamSøren? ?I like big b00ks? says

***UPDATE* 2.99 Sale, today only**

Kerrigan Byrne, please never stop writing your wicked beastly men with caring hearts and their outrageously strong heroines *playing* damsels in distress.

I want to be part of the pack. I want to be one of your Red Riding Hood ladies. I want to tame a feral beast on my own!

Sigh. **LOVE THIS SERIES!**

And how genius and entertaining to read about love triangle including... well. 2 characters only!

Arc received in exchange for a review.

More reviews and book talk at :

You can find me here too 

Stacey is Sassy says

*****IT'S ALIVE!*****

Stop the world...I need to read.

After finishing *The Duke* I have come to a conclusion...this series is my crack. I really cannot get enough of the *Victorian Rebels* and I am enthralled from the first page to the last. *The Duke* was bloody amazing. I refuse to say this series gets better or this is my favourite so far. Each and every one of the *Victorian Rebels*, at the time of reading is my favourite. I'm addicted and I have no desire to ever be rehabilitated. If *Kerrigan Byrne* ever announces a final in this series...I WILL BE DEVASTATED!!

I'm not going to do my usual ramblings for this review because I went into *The Duke* blind and I think the experience was better for it. I can confirm that the beginning had me a little surprised, completely sucked in and even a wee bit flushed and breathless. *Kerrigan Byrne* has given us an original storyline where you question how there could ever be a happy ever after for the couple.

The author has a brilliant way of taking you to do the dark side and counting your blessings that the ruthless giant by your side is there to protect you and eventually cherish you. Yes, I am the heroine every time, so that means I have already - worked at Scotland Yard, been a beautiful and famous actress, survived a mental asylum and now I've nursed a hero back to health.

Each instalment gives me an opportunity to step back in time and experience the highs and lows of living in the late 1800's. I admire the women I become and learn to love the men who stand beside me.

Again, I have to state that *The Duke* was bloody brilliant. The heroine was strong, resilient and generous. Her life is dedicated to helping others and I admired her strength in facing challenges. The hero we meet at the start is very different to the hero we end up with. Both are arrogant, strong and intelligent but the hero, in the end, can only see the light with his heroine by his side.

The Victorian Rebels does not shy away from the dark side of our history. We see "gentleman" use their

positions to take advantage. The author does not hide the ugly side of London where prostitution isn't a choice, debts are paid by whatever means and reputations can be tarnished in the blink of an eye. Each instalment has violence, foul language and abuse but for me, it's never OTT or unnecessary. It's just part of the whole picture.

As per usual, I have finished *The Duke* desperate for more Kerrigan Byrne.

To buy *The Duke* from Amazon - <http://amzn.to/2kCfgD6>

I'm an Aussie chick who loves to read and review romance, drink coffee, be a *Style Setter* and stalk David Gandy. To see more of my reviews, fashion, food and pervathons -

Jennifer says

4.5 Stars!!!!!!

SOLD! I am sold on Kerrigan Byrne for life and will be reading all of her books. This was my first book by Kerrigan Byrne, and I was greatly impressed. She is such an amazing and creative story-teller. Her stories are definitely more plot-based, which I appreciate. This story has so many layers to it. She just kept peeling back all of the intricacies to the characters. Kerrigan took my heart and wove it in and out of the pages of this story.

The beginning is so hot. She did not mess around in breaking out the sexy times (woo!). But then the story takes a quick turn, and the story leads both Cole and Imogen through separate tragedies.

The beast was no duke. He was no man raised with genteel civility, with a care for the expense of things or the consequences of his actions. This beast was no longer dormant within him, but prowling beneath the surface of his skin, wanting to mark his territory.

And he'd found a delectable morsel just now, one he was in danger of acquiring a taste for.

My Cole & Imogen:

Cole is a soldier, a spy, a duke....an animal. He is many things in this book. He travels through war and pain and torture, barely making it out alive. Imogen is his savior, in more ways than one, but he doesn't even know it. He is trapped in the darkness, and she is light. He cannot escape and is constantly fighting against himself.

Imogen has been through her own version of hell. She has fought her own war, but she is a beacon of hope and is determined to help others that were in a situation like her own. I loved how strong she was. Even when I didn't expect it, she would stand up to Cole. The feminism in this book! Gah!

"It would take nothing to destroy you." He tightened his fingers ever so slightly, and the telltale jump of her pulse belied her unwavering audacity.

"Better men than you have tried," she remonstrated, her eyes blazing green with a maelstrom of her own primitive emotions. "Yet here I stand."

THE FEELS!!!! Lawdy, the feels. I'm usually not a fan of angst, but this book was all kinds of delicious. Most of this book is sad, but I loved it (again, not my usual opinion). I felt so much in this book. The tragedies that both Cole and Imogen have to go through in order to finally be together. They are in each other's lives, but Cole is searching and he doesn't even know he's searching for Imogen! Gah! And Imogen has to PINE for him! Oh, the pining! Curse you, Kerrigan for tugging at my heart, so!

If you are fan of Julia Quinn, you will love Kerrigan Byrne! They are very similar in the story-telling, character development, and the feels.

I have to say, I am sad that I did not read the previous 3 books in this series before this one. The characters from the first 3 books in this series were in this book enough that I was a little lost and wanted to know more about them! I would recommend reading this series in order (which I usually don't say).

ARC courtesy of publisher in exchange for an honest review

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