



I Married the Duke

Katharine Ashe

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I Married the Duke begins the Prince Catchers series by Katharine Ashe, award-winning author of historical romance.

Arabella Caulfield, one of three orphaned sisters, has clung to an ancient gypsy prophecy as the only way to save her family from endless heartbreak. Now she has twelve days to reach a remote French castle and fulfill her destiny: to marry a prince.

Along the way, Arabella meets Lucien Westfall, decorated naval captain and the new Duke of Lycombe. She thought he was a pirate. He thought she was a governess. Two wrongs have never made such a scandalously perfect right.

Readers of Regency romances and the works of Eloisa James and Lisa Kleypas will fall in love with the Prince Catchers books by Katharine Ashe.

I Married the Duke Details

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Author : Katharine Ashe

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From Reader Review I Married the Duke for online ebook

Anna Casanovas says

"Me casé con el duque" es una buena novela romántica histórica que parte de un argumento "clásico" del género -unas hermanas huérfanas que tienen en su poder un objeto (joya) de su pasado- pero al que la autora, como es habitual en ella, sabe dotar de originalidad. Es la primera entrega de la serie y como tal nos presenta a sus personajes, y quizá por eso la historia de amor no tiene el peso que, en mi opinión, debería de tener. La protagonista de la novela es la hermana seria, la centrada, y el protagonista es un supuesto pirata que accede a llevarla de Inglaterra a Francia. Evidentemente, durante la travesía surge la atracción entre los dos, pero las mejores escenas transcurren en tierra. Creo que "Me casé con el duque" es un buen principio de serie y hay dos personajes que a mí ya me han conquistado (una de las hermanas y un chico del pueblo) y de los que sin duda voy a leer su historia, pero hay puntos en su argumento que fallan y que he descubierto que para entenderlos mejor hay que haber leído "Kisses she wrote", una precuela que solo está disponible en inglés. No pasa nada si no has leído la precuela, en realidad, yo la he leído después, pero hay puntos de "Me casé con el duque" que adquieren más y mejor significado si lo has hecho.

Pepa says

Una novela entretenida. Escrita de forma sencilla y si grandes florituras. Eso sí, hay cierta palabra que se usa hasta la saciedad para hablar de sus ojos.

Es una historia atrayente, con malos, piratas que resultan ser nobles. La dulce damisela en apuros que se lanza a la aventura sin miedos ni mucho sentido común y que tiene la suerte de encontrarse en el camino al buen hombre que la ayudará.

Una novela en la que tendremos de todo un poco, un pequeño misterio (que aviso que no queda resuelto y supongo que será el hilo conductor de la trilogía), un malo, un engaño, un asunto turbio....

Eso si, los protagonistas me tenían un poco perdida con unos cambios de actitud demasiado bruscos y faltos de explicación... después de terminarlo, sigo si tener muy claro el porqué de gran parte de su comportamiento

Reseña completa: <http://masromance.blogspot.com.es/201...>

Catherine Campos says

2.5

meh

Dana Al-Basha ????? ?????? says

I haven't read an Avon book in ages but this had a recommendation from the Queen of Romance Lisa Kleypas, so I'm so excited!

UniquelyMoi ~ BlithelyBookish says

3.5 stars

Full review now posted...

There were moments I loved this story, and moments I wanted to scream because things were taking so long to work out, but all in all *I Married the Duke* is an entertaining tale!

Blurb...

Arabella Caulfield, one of three orphaned sisters, has clung to an ancient gypsy prophecy as the only way to save her family from endless heartbreak. Now she has twelve days to reach a remote French castle and fulfill her destiny: to marry a prince.

Along the way, Arabella meets Lucien Westfall, decorated naval captain and the new Duke of Lycombe. She thought he was a pirate. He thought she was a governess. Two wrongs have never made such a scandalously perfect right.

My thoughts...

It's interesting that as I read other reviews of this book, many people loved the beginning and hated the end, saying that things dragged. I feel just the opposite! The beginning drove me crazy with what felt like dialog that was forced and slow. But, by the end of the story I was hooked and immediately started reading book #1.5, *Kisses, She Wrote*, which is *fabulous!*

I truly enjoyed the secondary cast, and some of my favorite scenes were those spent aboard merchant brigantine *Retribution*. Unique locales and quirky characters have made this a story I won't soon - if ever - forget!

The bottom line...

I highly recommend *I Married the Duke* to anyone who loves Regency era romance, but please don't be discouraged by the slow start. For a while there, I had a tough time feeling much of anything except annoyance at Bella and Luc. But again, by the end of the story I was completely invested in them and fell in love with their much deserved *happily ever after*.

An ARC was generously provided by Avon Books. In appreciation I'm giving them an honest review.

Maria Clara says

3.5/Realmente me encantó. Es verdad que no aporta nada nuevo al género, pero sí cierta frescura. La única pega que le encuentro es que la última parte se me hizo muy larga. (Por eso no consigue las 4 estrellas).

Nastassja says

Real rating 3.4

As I have read all three books in *prince catchers series* already and written reviews for the two of them, I wanted to add a few words about this one. *I married the duke* is the first book in the series and the second one read by me. *I loved a rogue* was my first read and still is the favorite one. This book is my less favorite but not because I didn't like it or MCs, no, I liked them alright, just I **prefer less passion and more solid reasons to fall in love** and in this one I sometimes catch myself on a thought that I can't fully understand why MC fell in love. But, mostly this book was great and *Arabella* and *Luc* were honest nice characters. I noticed from other *Katharine Ashe* books that she knows how to create **amazing chemistry** between characters and they do feel like a perfect match for each other.

Also, the author is great with mysteries and this book has a good detective line either (though my favorite mystery is still in the second book). I'd say that if you like historical romance or romance at all - this book is a good choice for you. The language is beautiful and it has not just romance and mystery but also **touches some social issues** - in this book it is the value of a beautiful woman in society. IMO this issues are still actual in our time, so you'll also find some information to mull over.

As for me, I am a fan of *Katharine Ashe* for some time now and will wait for her future books with a great eagerness.

Becca says

I am officially a Katharine Ashe fan girl. Her stories and writing are just so much fun! As a person who loves words, I can appreciate the luxuriousness of Ashe's writing. I compare reading one of her books to eating a piece of chocolate--and not just any piece of chocolate. No, I'm talking about the super decadent Ghirardelli sea salt and dark chocolate kind. I savor each page and don't speed read simply because I love how she uses words. Now, just like chocolate, there is one draw back. For chocolate, it's the calories. For Ashe, it's the sometimes over the top sex scenes and character angst. I don't like when characters have a lot of angsty internal thoughts or the use of more crude language (in my opinion...but it's more common now with new published works) in sex scenes. However, because of the lushness of Ashe's writing, I should know that both of those come with the territory and I don't complain too much. Her books are good and she is one of the rare few to make it to my auto buy shelf.

In the opener to her Prince Catcher series, Ashe launches the reader into a swashbuckling adventure with great characters and a vivid setting. I loved the pull between the characters and seeing how they behave in different roles. I thought Luc was great and at times I loved Arabella. This story would have been 5 stars, but as I described above, Arabella suffered from an excess of internal angst that was not explained. Luc's brother also suffered from abuse in a way that was not fully discussed and was so dark yet not important to the story that it was unnecessary. However, the rest of the story was a joy to read. I also have read *I Adored a Lord* and now I am eagerly awaiting the conclusion to the series. 4.5 stars.

If you have not tried Katharine Ashe and you love words, give her a try. Her stories are delicious.

SidneyKay says

I Married the Duke, by Katherine Ashe, is the first book in a series, The Prince Catchers, about the three sisters trying to find a - Prince. This one is about the middle sister Arabella. She's a red-headed heroine who hides her hair because she doesn't want people to think she's wanton. Just once I'd love a red-head to actually like their hair. For all you red-heads out there, I think red hair is stunning!

This is my first full-length novel by Ms. Ashe and sorry to say I was disappointed in it. I'm not sure when the last time was that I wanted to bang heads together as much as I did in the case of our hero and heroine. Arabella and Luc - truly head-cracking characters - aaarrgh!

Here's the premise of the book - there is a soothsaying gypsy who says that one of the sisters must marry a prince and then they will find out their past and the reason they are carrying around a ring that's worth a fortune. Fast forward and our heroine has hung the ruby ring around her neck and is off to find the prince. Does she know who the prince is? Don't be silly, of course not and she doesn't seem to have a plan. That is just one of the many convoluted story threads wandering through this tale. Arabella is also some kind of psychic, along the order of Counselor Troi from Star Trek - she feels things. Maybe she's a Betazoid, maybe that's the family secret, maybe this is a Science Fiction book instead of a historical romance. Nah, anyway, we don't know because her ability is never fully explored in the book, it's just mentioned a couple of times and then kind of dropped. Anyway, she's off to find a prince who will know about the ruby ring but first she has to save three children and misses her ship to France. She now needs a ship.

Enter our hero, Luc; he has a ship. He's a pirate, argh ye' matey's...well, maybe he's not a real pirate. You see he is really Lucien Westfall, Comte de Rallis, and any day he may be the Duke of Lycombe. That is if the current duchess doesn't deliver a boy baby. But he does wear a patch over a missing eye. That eye came up missing not in combat but some kind of a duel with his friend, the strikingly handsome Earl of Bedwyr. I'm not sure what the back story is on the missing eye, but it involves a twelve year old girl and jumping to a conclusion. And, as happens often in this book, it is something that is mentioned but not fully developed. Sometimes I thought I had lost my ability to comprehend the storyline (this is a romance for Pete's sake) but I did lose my way occasionally and had to backtrack to find it. There were a lot of things that were hinted at but never revealed and that was irritating. Did I happen to mention that the current duchess hadn't lived with her husband for a long time, but she's with child and she has an evil brother who is a bishop. There's also Christos (Luc's brother whose past is a secret), Prince Reiner, Reiner's sister, Anthony (Luc's other friend)...on and on. Characters were introduced but never fully developed, but nothing comes close to my major complaint...the walking out.

Almost every time our couple are at logger-heads (and they are there a lot) one of them leaves - just walks out that door, turn their backs and exit. Sometimes they stomp, sometimes they stroll, but I became very irritated with this juvenile exiting. And, I'm not even going to talk about Arabella's TSTL moment or Luc's falling in the water and losing his sight in his good eye. These were Puleese moments.

So, sorry to say, I was disappointed in this story and I'm not sure I will continue with the series. KaysBlog

Caz says

I've given this a B+ at AAR, so that's 4.5 stars

I Married the Duke is the first in a trilogy subtitled “The Prince Catchers”, in which three sisters – Eleanor, Arabella and Ravenna – attempt to discover the truth about their family and find love along the way, and on the strength of this one, I’d say it promises to be a very enjoyable trio of stories.

This being the first book, it sets the scene and in the prologue, we meet the sisters as young girls who have gone to have their fortunes told at a local fair. They are orphans, the sole survivors of a shipwreck, and although an attempt was made to find relations to take them in, the search was unsuccessful and the girls ended up in a foundling home. From there, they were adopted by the Reverend Martin Caldwell who has given them a secure – albeit austere – upbringing.

The only thing the girls have of their mother’s is a gold signet ring inlaid with a large ruby, which the gypsy tells them belongs to a prince. A prince that one of them will wed.

This is the story of Arabella, the middle sister, who, when we meet her again some thirteen years later, has made her living as a very successful finishing governess, and is on her way to her new situation in the household of Prince Renier of Sensaire. Over the years, she has worked her way steadily through various households, moving through the ranks of society until she is able to find work in houses of the very highest rank, her eye still on the prize of netting a prince.

Renier requires his sister, Jacqueline, to be given some “town bronze” before she is launched into London society and has engaged Arabella’s services for that purpose. She is to travel to Saint Nazaire in southern Brittany and then on to the Château Saint Revée-des-Beaux where she will reside with the family and instruct the princess until they remove to London.

Unfortunately, Arabella has managed to miss the ship on which she was supposed to have sailed, and in desperation, approaches the compelling and enigmatic Captain Andrew of the *Retribution* to ask him if he will convey her to Saint Nazaire. He turns her down flat, believing her to be on the run and therefore trouble - but relents when he discovers her helping a trio of abandoned children.

Captain Andrew is, however, not all he seems. He is in fact Lucien Westfall, naval hero, Comte de Rallis, heir presumptive to a dukedom – and owner of the château to which Arabella is travelling. He joined the Navy as a youth in order to escape life under the guardianship of the cruel and vindictive Absalom Fletcher, and to protect his younger brother who has some sort of mental illness, the nature of which is never explicitly revealed. His naval career has been a distinguished one, but in forging it, he has left behind the trappings of his title(s) and is reluctant to assume the duties that such things entail.

Luc is drawn to Arabella from the start and finds amusement in trying to flirt with her and saying outrageous things to her. He senses that she is not telling him the whole truth – and also that she is desperately suppressing an attraction to him, the strength of which rivals his to her.

On board ship, Arabella makes the acquaintance of Mr. Miles, the Captain’s steward (and in reality, his valet) and Gavin Stewart, a brusque Scotsman with a twinkle in his eye who serves as both ship’s surgeon and chaplain. Both are clearly devoted to Luc, and Gavin especially isn’t above telling him when he’s being an idiot. I enjoyed their exchanges very much.

The sea voyage also gives Luc and Arabella the chance to interact and become better acquainted and for the sparks to well-and-truly fly as Arabella’s somewhat buttoned-up attitude towards him continues to incite Luc to flirt ever more obviously and outrageously with her.

Once the *Retribution* reaches its destination, the pace picks up considerably, as Arabella finally lets herself succumb to Lucien’s many charms, only to be immediately plunged into a nightmare of evil schemes and murder. An incident aboard ship had suggested that perhaps someone with a grudge was seeking to injure

Luc, but when he is violently attacked and left for dead it's clear that there is more at work than a grudge. The scene on the beach where Lucien is dying surrounded by his friends, and in which he implores Gavin to marry him to Arabella is quite affecting, and the depth of her grief at his loss left off the page for me.

Arabella travels to the château alone to take up her post, subdued and broken-hearted for the man with whom she now realises she has fallen in love – only to meet, several weeks later, the mysterious – and recuperating – Comte de Rallis and to discover that she is a Comtesse.

Naturally she is astounded, and deeply conflicted. On the one hand, she is overwhelmed with relief to discover that Luc is alive, but on the other, he kept his true identity from her and let her grieve for weeks on end, so it's not surprising that she is somewhat unreceptive to his overtures.

The rest of the story sees things move up a gear or two as Lucien and his friends seek to discover the identity of the person behind his attempted murder, or rather, to find the proof they need to expose him; and Lucien seeks to convince Arabella of the truth of his affection for her and to remain with him as his wife.

I found Arabella to be rather prickly and hard to like at times because she was so determined to hold herself aloof from Lucien and from everything he was offering her. That said though, her caution is justified; as a governess, she was frequently subject to unwanted advances and quickly acquired a distrust of men and their promises. As a child, she was the more rebellious of the three sisters and was frequently the subject of the Reverend Caldwell's wrath for her disobedience, as well as his pronouncements that her flaming hair was an advertisement for her propensity to sin and his implications that the girls' mother was probably a whore. Given those conditions, I suppose it's not surprising that she would be wary of Lucien, even when her deepest instincts are telling her that he's the man for her.

Like Arabella, Lucien is a care-giver, fiercely driven to protect those closest to him. He sent his younger brother away from their guardian's house in order to protect him from abuse and then got away himself to join the Navy where he served with honour, ending up as the captain of the Victory. As this story begins, he learns of the death of his uncle, the Duke of Lycombe, and that he may well be the duke now, if the child carried by his aunt is a girl or is stillborn as her other babies have been. It is a title he will assume somewhat reluctantly as he has never been particularly interested in the running of a great estate and has so far chosen to ignore the information coming from the estates at Combe that Fletcher – the duchess' brother – is running things into the ground so that he can enrich himself.

One of the things I enjoyed most about the book was seeing Luc transform himself from piratical sea-captain into the ducal scion he was always meant to be. He finds that he wants to go home to Combe with his wife and to do what he can for his tenants and dependents while the title is in abeyance, because if the dowager gives birth to a boy, Fletcher – now the Bishop of Barris – will undoubtedly continue to control the dukedom.

I found *I Married the Duke* to be a compelling read – I think I finished it in two sittings. It's well written and tightly plotted, there's a well-rounded and engaging set of secondary characters and the flirtatious banter between Luc and Arabella was superbly done and felt very natural – sometimes, it can feel forced, as if the author has to make an effort to maintain the humour and the 'zing', but that's certainly not the case here. I found Lucien to be the more likeable of the two protagonists for the most part, possessed of humour and charm whereas Arabella was sometimes a little cold and too intent on maintaining her self-possession which made her come over as less than sympathetic.

But all in all, it was an excellent read and I'm really looking forward to reading the other books in the series.

Jessica says

Absurd is the first word that comes to mind when trying to describe this book and after that comes disjointed, closely followed by gross. I have no tolerance for books that unnecessarily use the topic of child abuse particularly sexual in nature, or that of rape attempts as book page filler material. While I try to avoid spoiling the plot for anyone, trust me, you'll thank me for it. This was a sub-plot and was not well addressed or even necessary at all.

Setting aside that part, I am fairly certain the heroine is bi-polar (with no offense intended, I just cannot think of any more appropriate term). She is constantly saying "No", I (hate) you, & whatnot, but then in the next breath is hurtling herself at him sexually. Their first time together is so improbable it boggles the mind, oh and bonus it is immediately! following a rape attempt by unknown assailants... seriously?!?!

The hero is a bundle of contradictions and not offensive, but he just doesn't make sense. He is permanently disfigured over a topic the main characters just figuratively shrug over...? Pardon me but if a family friend maims me over something, my fault or not, we would not just shrug and hug it out. Maybe that's just me.

Hmm, my irritations with this book are many so I will narrow it down to one more to mention, the question of the ducal succession. The way the hero possibly inherits is simply unbelievable that the current duchess would act contrary to her own interests, her child's interest & the likelihood of a mystery lover acting as the book claimed is simply ridiculous! No way, no how.

Anyone rating this book above two stars, please go read ANY of the following authors and then re-consider your rating: Julia Quinn, Lisa Kleypas, Eloisa James, Julie Garwood, Tessa Dare, Stephanie Laurens, or Lorraine Heath (who has a maimed ducal hero with a good storyline, *She Tempts the Duke*).

Mary - Buried Under Romance says

Posted on my blog: <http://www.buriedunderromance.blogspot...>

A fantastic debut to Katharine Ashe's new series, *The Prince Catchers*!

With a mysterious opening, three orphans are introduced: intrepid Ravenna, beautiful Arabella, and scholarly Eleanor. In their search for answers to their past, a gypsy woman tells them the answer lies with a ring given by their mother - a ring that belongs to a prince. One of the three will wed a prince, and upon their wedding, the truth will be revealed. Thus begins the middle sister Arabella's quest to catch a prince.

Years later, Arabella has become a renowned finishing governess, traveling to Saint-Nazire to prepare a princess for her season, hoping she would catch the prince's eye at the same time. Her journey to France was hardly smooth; first she encountered the rakish Captain Lucien (Luc) Westfall, who had the audacity to ask to purchase her, then encountered food poisoning and Luc's dangerous seduction, finally to arrive in France and nearly experienced rape before Luc stepped in to save her.

Luc, the new Duke of Lycombe, had desired Arabella from the first moment he saw her. Despite his gentle seduction to Arabella, he restrained himself until passion overtook him following their emotional bonding in France. However, when his life is in danger, he had to propose a marriage-of-convenience to Arabella, for she could be carrying the next heir to the dukedom. As he attempts to secure his place as the duke and escape from the clutches of his villainous uncle, will his lust for Arabella turn into something greater? And will Arabella be willing to settle not for a prince, but a duke?

This book has hit a high note with superb characterization and dialogue, though the plot lacked a little refining. Arabella stands out in particular as an independent woman who has, with a steely determination and mentality, resisted her stereotype of being a red-haired harlot and emerged from a turbulent childhood not only with a caring heart and loving nature, but also with the will to bring her family home and uncover her past. Initially, she appears cynical, but underneath her necessary facade is a heart of gold, always willing to sacrifice her own comfort for those of others. She is undeniably a most wonderful heroine.

Luc, on the other hand, is a queer mix of a tortured hero and a typical aristocrat. He ran away as a boy from his cruel uncle's hand, protecting his brother (who has borderline personality disorder) and escaping his duty as the future duke. Upon meeting Arabella and embroiled in the series of adventures that befell them, he began to truly take on the responsibilities of his title, the care of his tenants, and shed his self-imposed misery for a gallant mantle to protect those he loves. His transformation throughout the novel is a journey in itself, and a wonderful accompaniment to Arabella's noble qualities.

The only complaint I have is with the plotting in the latter half of the book. The climax with the villains came as a slight disappointment to the crescendo of emotions that had built up the action, and the resolution in the end resulted in an almost defeat for the hero, which is too precarious a device to employ. This may just be my preference, but I would have liked the villain to receive a more just ending, and to have the hero emerge fully victorious from his external and internal conflicts.

All in all, with a highly engaging plot, a riveting set of secondary characters (I can't wait to read Ravenna and Eleanor's books), and magnificent protagonists, Katharine Ashe has penned a most marvelous story that I highly recommend to all romance readers.

Plot: 7/10

Characters: 9/10

Writing: 9/10

Structure: 7/10

Overall: 8/10

*ARC received from the publisher via edelweiss

Issis says

Que mala suerte estoy teniendo con mis lecturas... Buscaba un histórico para romper un poco con lo que he ido leyendo pero ha sido mala elección.

"Me casé con el duque" me ha parecido aburrido, aunque rápido de leer. Los acontecimientos ocurren con una rapidez pasmosa, sin transición ninguna entre escena y escena. No he conseguido conectar con ningún personaje, no ha habido emoción ninguna mientras lo leía.

Vamos... Que no me ha gustado nada.

Jacquelyn says

I enjoyed this book, I haven't read many adult romance novels but I thought this would be the perfect book for me to dip my toes in the water. I love reading about this era and I really fell in love with the characters (minus Luc's strange fetish about her hair lol). I did feel that the plot could've been more elaborate and I felt the second half tended to drag on. All in all, I enjoyed it and I love the fact that each book is based on a

different sister. I'm tempted to pick up the sequel.

Mona says

En líneas generales diría que tiene una puntuación de 3 excepto en momentos puntuales que es cuando más destaca y que le sube un poco la nota. Creo que tiene mucho potencial y que le falta explotarlo al máximo. Fue una lectura bastante predecible pero muy entretenida. Debo admitir que hay un evento que me descolocó un montón. Luego ya empecé a entender de qué iba la cosa y ya pude volver a predecir la historia. Lo que sí que me costó entender a ratos es la motivación y los cambios de actitud de los personajes. Pero tampoco me parecieron tan incoherentes como para hacer que perdiera los nervios.

Las escenas de cama no pasarán a la historia, y sin duda le faltan preliminares de todo tipo. Ahí lo dejo.

Ha sido una lectura que me ha enganchado y que he leído en un día y a la que le he encontrado momentos tiernos y románticos sin ser demasiado cursi.
