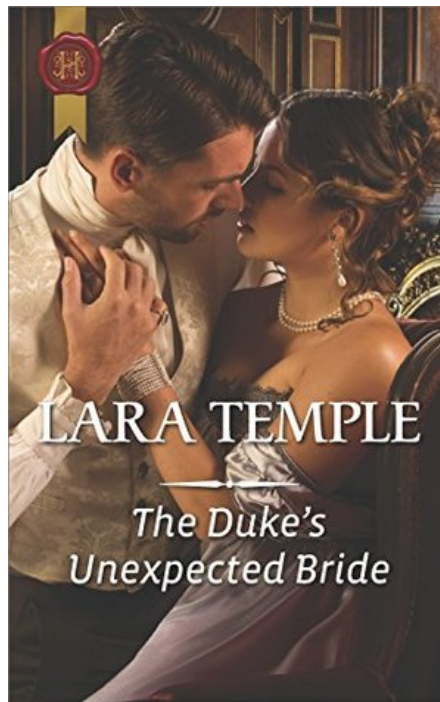




The Duke's Unexpected Bride (Harlequin)

Lara Temple

Download now

Read Online ➔

The Duke's Unexpected Bride (Harlequin)

Lara Temple

The Duke's Unexpected Bride (Harlequin) Lara Temple
From country missto London duchess!

Sophie Trevelyan has been enjoying her visit to London, even *if* her closest companion is an overweight pug! Then she encounters the dashing Duke of Harcourt, who intrigues her more than is strictly proper

Max knows he must marry. He's looking for the opposite of his high-spirited fiancée, who died some years ago, so he tries to keep his distance from bubbly Sophie. But when her life is endangered, Max feels compelled to rescue her with a very unexpected proposal!

"

The Duke's Unexpected Bride (Harlequin) Details

Date : Published May 1st 2017 by Harlequin Historical

ISBN :

Author : Lara Temple

Format : Kindle Edition 288 pages

Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Historical, Regency, Regency Romance



[Download The Duke's Unexpected Bride \(Harlequin\) ...pdf](#)



[Read Online The Duke's Unexpected Bride \(Harlequin\) ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Duke's Unexpected Bride (Harlequin) Lara Temple

From Reader Review The Duke's Unexpected Bride (Harlequin) for online ebook

Amy Ella says

A regency romance set to rocket your pulse and have you swooning over characters that deserve your undivided attention! Sophisticated and sexy but also endearing and funny. Riveting. Without a doubt, 5/5 stars from me.

This regency romance wholeheartedly champions being different and loving ourselves for who we are. My first Lara Temple title but, oh my, will I be going back for more.

Our hero Max Harcourt, well... Any man that makes their significant other feel free to be themselves, is a winner in my eyes! And this hero is a winner! He is cool and composed, with deep dark secrets that keep him in complete control of his carefully planned life. But control is lost when the 'peculiar', "eccentric blue-eyed sprite" Sophie Trevelyan brings him to heel.

Sophie Trevelyan a heroine I'd happily hang out with in my P.J's or have a girls night out on the town. Adorable, honest and compassionate. But still full of fire and a complete love for life. Her character is infectious and made me want to break out laughing on several occasions. I do love a woman that can't curb her tongue but in the most sincere way... I can see why she completely had our hero Max in a tale-spin.

'...She is my betrothed and if I see you near her again or hear that you even mentioned her name I will break your hand. With pleasure.'

Oh me, oh my! Violence is never becoming, unless, it is completely justifiable. This threat is completely justifiable and highlights Max losing his control to protect our heroine! And I have to confess, I was cheering him on at this point. He is the all round hero that you would want to take home to your Mum but just as quickly somewhere less innocent.

Candace Nagy says

I thought this was a charming and witty read. There is a lot of humour and I laughed quite a few times. The writing is wonderful and I really enjoyed the story and characters. The story seemed predictable, I thought I knew, but I was wrong. It was pretty unpredictable. Max and Sophie had great chemistry and there is some definite steamy parts. Loved them. Lord Wivenhoe, I thought he'd end up being this super bad villain but he's not and I'm completely intrigued. I really didn't want to put this book down.

Amanda says

Wow, I was captivated and intrigued with this story the moment I read the first line! Ms. Temple whisks you down an entertaining path and offers you a delicious reading treat where drama, humor and romance meld

together to form an intoxicating read. Sophie is hilarious, spunky and I loved her antics every step of the way. Her sparring with Max and Marmaduke is pure gold! On the other hand, I found Max to be a reserved man yet beneath the façade he portrays to the world is a man who can make a good joke. His secrets add layers to his story and intrigue. I rooted for him from the start. And Marmaduke is the sweetest most hilarious pug ever!

‘Nothing. Not a quiver of his pudgy body. She knew he was awake because his eyes were open, but otherwise he might have been in a trance, his frog-like eyes fixed on the faded gold and crimson wallpaper, his backside defiantly pointed in her direction.’

One of my favorite paragraphs in the book is when Sophie sees Max for the first time. Of course she doesn’t know him at that point but the imagery that Ms. Temple paints is brilliant. I can actually visualize Max.

‘The woman, her dark hair tucked into a fashionable bonnet lined with lilac silk and dressed in a very dashing indigo military-style walking dress with silver facings, looked slightly shocked, but then she glanced up at the tall man beside her and giggled, an incongruous sound from someone so elegant. Sophie, having fully and rather enviously surveyed her fashionable clothes, turned her attention to the man and had the strange sensation of standing before a carefully and magnificently crafted statue of an avenging warrior.’

Avenging warrior? Swoon.

Final Verdict:

The Duke’s Unexpected Bride by Lara Temple is a fast-paced, engrossing historical romance that hooks you from page one. It is well-seasoned with a good dose of humor, raw emotions and engaging dialogue. Overall, it’s a well-written story with a HEA that’ll make you sigh with contentment.

Highly Recommended
5 Stars

Michelle Cunliffe says

It all starts when a naughty pug runs away and a sketch that Sophie draws in a garden
She had no idea desire could be beautiful, a threat and a promise...

My Review

I really liked this book and loved how the characters came together.

Sophie Trevelyan is from the country and staying with her Aunt Minnie, who has a very overweight dog called Marmaduke (or Duke) who is lazy and would rather stay on his pillow and he also likes Max's boots, (this will become clear further on in the book), but Sophie has other ideas. Sophie likes sketching and painting when ever she can and its through this that she meets the man she will love.

Max The Duke of Harcourt is in London and with the help of his sister Hetty is looking for a bride, through a chance encounter they are nearly knocked over by Marmaduke who has runaway from Sophie. From here Sophie receives a mysterious gift and she encounters Max in the gardens from across the road from where her aunt lives. (I don't want to give too much away this where Sophie gives Max a sketch who he gives to Hetty, Sophie also finds out that Hetty is Max's sister and also Sophie wants to paint Max).

We also meet Lord Wivenhoe, who meets Sophie and Max at the Royal Academy and we come to realise that Lord Wivenhoe and Max have known each before and that Max was engaged to Serena she died ten years ago. (I'm not going to say how she died, but what I will say is that Max and Lord Wivenhoe blame each other).

We also meet Lord Bryanston and Lord and Lady Cranworth who are friends of Max and Lord Bryanston likes to flirt with the ladies and Sophie which makes Max jealous.

Finally we meet Lord Morecombe who is Serena's father. Who indulged his daughter very much and couldn't say no to her every demand.

I hope I have kept you guessing on what happens, but if I give to much away then this would spoil the story. All I will say is that I would love to have pug named Marmaduke.

I give this book 5/5 stars

Jan says

Max has decided it really is time to get married. He thought he knew the type of woman he wanted as his duchess. Unfortunately for his well-laid plans, he accidentally meets Sophie, thanks to a distinctly lazy and over-weight pug called Marmaduke.

Sophie is rather an unconventional Regency miss but that doesn't stop her from losing her heart to the duke almost from the moment she meets him.

Of course, true love doesn't run smoothly. There's a shadow from Max's past that puts more than one obstacle in the path of his future with Sophie.

This latest book from the very talented pen – or rather keyboard – of Lara Temple is a sensuous and sexy tale which is totally satisfying and left me with the determination to continue buying her books.

Erin Kelly says

I am having some trouble putting my thoughts together about this book. I've never read Lara Temple before, but I love historical and Regency romance, so I couldn't say no to this one. On one hand, this was cute and hilarious, on another, it was pretty dark and disturbing. Actually, that is a pretty good description of the two mains.... Let me try to break it down for you.

The Story-

Sophie is a country-girl, staying with her wealthy aunt (? can't remember...a wealthy old lady that never shows up in the plot), and she has out-lastred other members of the family who came to stay due to her willingness to take care of the aunt's dog, Marmaduke. The pug is hilarious and is really another character in the story. Duke something-or-other, Max, runs into her on a walk with the dog and is captured by her enthusiasm and spirit. (Although he won't admit it for most of the book.) Max is dealing with some dark

things that happened in his past, but is seemingly continually drawn to Sophie which leads to an engagement of convenience sort of thing.

My Thoughts-

The first half of the book is an enjoyable piece of fun and is a unique take on a Regency romance. The second half feels more like a book you've read, albeit with some twists and surprises, but it misses some of the joy in the beginning. The characters, especially Sophie, are masterfully developed, and the secondary characters make me want to look through this author's backlist to see if their stories have been told. I guess the somewhat dark turn of the plot threw me a bit considering I had been laughing at the highjinks of a pug getting his portrait painted in an earlier chapter.

The Bottom Line-

If you like dogs or humor in your historical romance, this is a no-brainer. If you like historical Regency romance, this is much better than many that are out there. The characters are well-written, and the story clicks right along. I will be reading more by this author and am going to check out her backlist now. 4 stars

Gwessie Tee says

Was extremely lucky to receive this as an arc, and I absolutely loved every page, beautifully written, from drama to high Jinx and an awesome pug this is definitely an amazing read and one I would recommend to any who love Historical Romance or romance in general why limit yourself. Seriously Lara is a new author to me but one I will undoubtedly be stalking for any new books coming out as well as collecting her others of which I have two but read this first as its out shortly for all to enjoy. Thank You Lara xxx

Caz says

In ***The Duke's Unexpected Bride***, Lara Temple has created a charming and entertaining riff on the “stuffy aristocrat meets breath-of-fresh-air heroine” trope in which the hero and heroine find themselves unexpectedly betrothed and having to find a way to reconcile their very opposite personalities.

Miss Sophie Trevelyan is enjoying the temporary escape from her overcrowded family home in the country afforded by her current visit to London to act as companion to her eccentric Aunt Minnie. Her aunt rarely rises from her bed so there is little for Sophie to do, but she is nonetheless enjoying having space and time to herself for a change, and is determined to beat the previous record for a Stay With Aunt Minnie (two weeks) set by one of her cousins.

Deciding that one of the most likely ways to earn her aunt's approbation will be to take care of her overweight pug, Sophie manages to coax the dog out of the house and get him to waddle across to the gardens opposite her aunt's town house, where, in spite of his bulk, he promptly discovers a liking for chasing birds. Unfortunately, he gives her the slip, running right into the path of a fashionable couple out for a stroll, who turn out to be her aunt's neighbours. Chatting happily away, explaining who she is, why she's in the garden and apologising for the dog's escape, Sophie doesn't notice that the gentleman is rather taken aback at her lack of propriety in speaking thus to a couple of perfect strangers – and cheerfully makes her way home, thinking that the couple are the most elegant people she has ever seen.

Max, Duke of Harcourt is simultaneously fascinated and irritated by the young woman's lack of decorum, finding her outspoken friendliness and the absence of any trace of artifice in her manner refreshing while

also thinking her rather too forward. Realising she must be one of Lady Minerva Huntley's many relations, Max's sister, Lady Hetty, suggests she might call upon the her at some point, after which they resume their discussion about Max's search for a bride.

Bound by a promise to his late father to marry by his thirty-first birthday, Max is seeking a wife who is the epitome of modest womanhood and correct behaviour, someone who will never cause him a moment's unease – in short, a woman the complete opposite of his previous fiancée, who was unconventionally lively, impetuous and highly-strung. The betrothal ended tragically, and Max has eschewed anything and anyone that smacks of impulsiveness or recklessness ever since. Yet when, a day or so later, he sees the young woman with the pug sitting in the gardens, sketching, he finds himself stopping to speak with her. And when, the next day, he meets her on the street, apparently on the way to see the exhibition at the Royal Academy, he offers to take her there himself, he's unable to account for his behaviour. They haven't been properly introduced, he had absolutely no reason to converse with her and none – other than concern for her safety and reputation – to act as her escort. Max still doesn't know whether to be annoyed or amused by Sophie's lively conversation and her disregard for – or lack of knowledge of – proper behaviour, but there's no question that he's well and truly smitten.

Having seen some of Sophie's sketches, Max already knows that she is a talented artist, but during their visit to the exhibition, and as their conversation begins to take a turn from the awkward to the mutually enjoyable, he also realises she's intelligent, witty and insightful. He enjoys both the afternoon and her company, until they are approached by Lord Wivenhoe, who proceeds to flirt with Sophie, much to Max's annoyance.

When the rumour mill starts grinding with the news of Max's having escorted an unknown young woman about, he chastises himself for his impulsive behaviour. But he can't seem to help himself around Sophie; something about her has utterly bewitched him and he thinks that the sooner he is married to a suitably demure, ladylike young woman, the better. The problem is, however, that the ladies whom he is considering for the position of his duchess have all begun to seem stiff and uninteresting, and although he tries to tell himself that his desire for Sophie is simply a momentary aberration, he can't quite convince himself and determines that the safest course is to stay away from her.

This proves to be more difficult than he had anticipated, however, especially when Lord Wivehnoe seems determined to pursue Sophie, in spite – and probably because - of Max's attempt to warn the man off. When Sophie is placed in a very uncomfortable situation, Max declares publicly that she's his betrothed – and their fate is sealed. Max is torn. On the one hand, he's appalled at the sort of rash behaviour he thought he'd left behind him long ago, and on the other, he's pleased at the knowledge that Sophie is now his and that he will soon be able to slake his lust for her in all sorts of extremely pleasurable ways.

I admit that during the early stages of the story, I had reservations about both protagonists. I wasn't wild about Sophie because her innocent, quirky, girl-from-the-country-who-doesn't-know-what's-what persona rang slightly false; and while Max is presented as the model of propriety, he is fairly quick to break his own rules when it comes to Sophie, spending time alone with her and escorting her about unchaperoned – all of which made it difficult to completely accept him as the uptight, stuffy aristocrat he is supposed to be. Fortunately, however, my apprehensions were quickly dispelled, because Sophie is revealed to be clever, self-aware and perceptive; she knows she's not perfect but doesn't feel the need to apologise for her shortcomings and is all the more likeable because of it. And as the story progresses, Ms. Temple clearly shows that Max is struggling to work out what he truly wants as opposed to what he thinks he wants. His insecurities about the past are impinging upon his present and he has to decide what type of man he wants to be; one who embraces his present and looks forward to the future, or one who allows his past to push him down a path which isn't right for him. Ms. Temple does an admirable job of flipping the "sophisticated hero/innocent heroine" trope on its head here, by having Sophie's empathy and love for Max take the lead in their relationship, gradually bringing him to see that he can't continue to look back, and I loved watching him come to thoroughly appreciate Sophie's unique personality and to realise that he loves her *because* of it,

rather than in spite of it.

The one false note struck in the book is in the final plot twist, which is somewhat melodramatic, and felt like it had simply been included in order to introduce a bit of last minute tension into the story.

In spite of the reservations I've expressed, I enjoyed **The Duke's Unexpected Bride** and would definitely recommend it to others. The romance is superbly developed, the chemistry between Max and Sophie is palpable and the love scenes are sensual and well-written. This is the second book I've read and enjoyed by Lara Temple, and she's earned herself a place on my list of authors to watch.

Frankie Reviews says

This is a classy, well put together and superbly entertaining book about how people who are so different can find love in the most unexpected places. Sophie and Max are a joy to get to know, I also love the third main character in the tale; Marmaduke, the fat, temperamental and spoilt pug who is such a fabulous addition to the story, it is one of those homely and everyday details that everyone can relate to. I do like Lara's work, she writes solid and strong Historical Romance which can be enjoyed across the generations.

This was an ARC complimentary copy from the author in exchange for an honest review.
[https://chicksroguesandscandals.wordpress...](https://chicksroguesandscandals.wordpress.com)

Sommertime says

Great book with a stuffy H and a fresh, full of life h. Sophie and Max get betrothed almost by accident. But it's fun to watch Max fight his feelings and Sophie try to break down his icy walls.

My only complaint would be the last minute plot twist which felt tired and was completely unnecessary to the story. But that is a small issue and does nothing to diminish the enjoyment of the story.

Definitely romantic. Definitely recommend.

Ruth says

Okay, any book that starts out with a spoiled, obese pug being instrumental to the meet cute is okay by me. Marmaduke is awesome, and even though the book has some dark moments, there are some absolutely adorable moments that will make you laugh. I'll definitely be looking for more by Lara Temple.

Coral says

Plot: 3.5/5

Characterisation: 4/5

Prose: 4/5

How much I enjoyed it: 4/5

The plot is pretty much the standard run-of-the-mill regency but the characters especially the heroine made it fun.

Roses R Blue says

4.5 Stars, As reviewed at Roses Are Blue and The Romance Reviews:

<http://wp.me/p3QRh4-AK>

<https://t.co/h9i8J4v4uF>

Sophie Trevelyan has been summoned to town to visit her Aunt Minerva, aka Mad Minnie. Sophie relishes the chance to leave her crowded home, though she suspects that her sojourn won't be of a long duration. Several of her relations have each had their turn, and have soon been sent back to the country by Aunt Minerva, who finds some fault with them. Sophie is determined to at least hold the record for longest stay, and if that means she has to find a way to coax Minerva's lazy pug, Marmaduke, out for a walk, she'll do it.

Surprisingly, Sophie is able to lure Marmaduke outside, and even more shocking, he finds that he has a liking for chasing birds. His exuberance almost has him barreling into a gentleman and lady out for a stroll. Unbeknownst to Sophie, the gentleman is Max, Duke of Harcourt, and his sister Hetty, and they are neighbors of her aunt. Sophie happily chatters away, charming Hetty, while leaving the straight laced duke both attracted and appalled by her outgoing friendliness.

Max's sister Hetty is in town to help him find a wife – a proper wife with a pedigree who will always behave with decorum. Max promised his father to marry by age thirty-one, and the deadline is approaching. While a young man, Max was engaged to, and thought himself in love with, Serena, an outgoing and unconventional young lady. That relationship turned out to be disastrous and ended tragically with Serena's death. Since then, Max has been a model of decorum, and is determined that his marriage will be tranquil and civilized, and love is definitely not a requirement. Still, Max is drawn to Sophie despite himself. As they continue to meet, he finds himself falling for her. When a sticky situation happens, Max impulsively declares them engaged.

I enjoyed reading this story so much! I loved seeing the ever proper Max shaken out of his ducal doldrums. It was obvious that he's a good man who was scarred by his previous fiancée's actions and was trying to do the right thing, even at the expense of his own happiness. Sophie was pure delight, and her honesty and joie de vivre brought light and fun into Max's life. The developing romance is very sweet, while their attraction is steamy. The lazy pug added some smileworthy moments, and a twist near the end added some drama. THE DUKE'S UNEXPECTED BRIDE was excellent entertainment from beginning to end and was a joy to read.

Rachel Burton says

I don't believe in guilty pleasures (love what you love and own it), but if I did Regency Romance would be

mine - since I first became acquainted with Georgette Heyer as a 15 year old.

This is the first Lara Temple I've read and I have already added her backlist to my wishlist! What an absolutely glorious read - a perfect mix of fun steamy romance and dark backstory.

Sophie is a delight - reminding me of myself with her need to blurt out whatever comes into her head - and Max is romantic hero perfection in my eyes; overly passionate beneath a very buttoned up exterior and, as Sophie herself puts it "so unfairly male" (sigh....*heart eye emojis*).

A wonderfully romantic read - 5 big stars! Current status: hopelessly in love with the Duke of Harcourt.

Emily says

This was a sweet regency romance between two people who appeared to be mismatched.

Max, the Duke of Harcourt is on the hunt for the perfect bride. Ten years ago, he was engaged to a woman who was horribly mismatched to him. She was a beautiful, high strung, spoiled woman, and at first, he was enthralled by her, but he quickly learned just how wrong for him she was. Their engagement ultimately came to an end with her death. Not long after her death, he joined the army to just get away from everything, but he made a deal with his father that he would marry within ten years. He's looking to fulfill that promise now and just wants a calm, cool bride who is the opposite of his former fiancée.

Sophie is a vicar's daughter new to London. She has an aunt, Mad Minnie, who is a dowager countess and regularly requires various nieces and nephews and cousins to come and act as her companion, but each one only lasts for a few days. Sophie is the newest victim, and she's looking forward to it. She wants to get away from her large family for a while, and she wants to beat her jerk cousin's record of two weeks with their aunt. Sophie is convinced that the way to victory is by winning the affection of her aunt's favorite pug, Marmaduke, and she is determined to bring him outside and exercise him. Once she manages to get him outside, the lazy dog discovers that he does like chasing birds and gets away from Sophie, only to lead her to Max.

This is the start of several informal meetings between Sophie and Max, and despite himself, Max is drawn to her. She is a wild country miss, nothing like what he should be looking for, but he is also worried about her wandering around London with only an overweight pug to accompany her, and he ends up escorting her to the Royal Academy once it comes out that she has an interest in art. Once they're there, Sophie meets Lord Wivenhoe, a fellow artist and enemy of Max's. Wivenhoe immediately takes an interest in Sophie, and to protect her, Max accidentally engages himself to Sophie.

The start of this book was funny and sweet. Sophie is bit zany, but it's mostly because she isn't used to Town, and Max has high standards for propriety. There is an immediate connection between the two of them, but it takes a long time for Max to admit to himself and Sophie that he wanted her, and that he wasn't just marrying her to protect her. I really enjoyed the second part of this book as Max and Sophie grew into a couple. Sophie was actually more emotionally mature than Max. He's still hurting from the betrayals and horrors of his first engagement, and Sophie brings all of his old fears and doubts to the surface. Although he recognizes that Sophie is in truth very different from Serena despite their surface similarities, it's hard for him to separate his two relationships because of Wivenhoe.

As it turns out, Max isn't the only one who has difficulty with separating Sophie from Serena. Wivenhoe does as well, as does the villain. I do think that the villain was a touch over done, and the story might have

worked better without him. I also think that Wivenhoe was a touch too redeemed in the end, and Serena was made out to be utterly without redemption, but I understand why the author did that. After all, if Serena wasn't so bad, it would be hard to emphasize with Max.

Max is tortured by the past, but Sophie is the first person who helps him move on from it. He can talk to her about it, and because she isn't emotionally connected to the events, she can see them clearly. Max also appreciates Sophie for who is. Her own family doesn't really value her, and the letter they sent her after she told them of her engagement was sad, and her previous suitors didn't either. But Max admires her for who she is, and with her, he isn't quite as cold and proper as he typically is.

The secondary characters were also well developed. I really liked Max's friends, Bryanston and Cranworth, and thought they added nicely to the narrative, and both Hettie and Sylvie were good friends for Sophie. Wivenhoe was a strong villain, but I would have preferred less of a redemption for him.

On the whole, a great read. This is the second book I've read by Lara Temple, and I liked the other one as well, so I look forward to what else she'll be putting out in the future.
