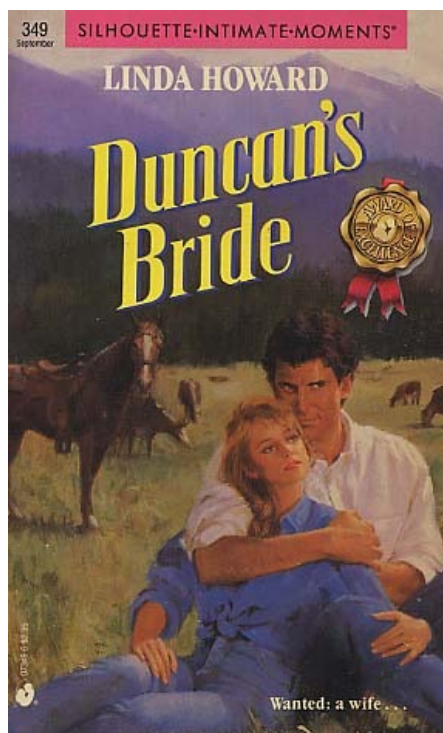




Duncan's bride

Linda Howard

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Reese wanted a wife. Someone to have children with, someone to help rebuild his ranch, someone uncomplicated, and very different from his first wife, the woman who'd destroyed his life. Now he had Madelyn--sophisticated, citified, willing to herd cattle, keep house and start a family. The only thing she asked for in return was love--one thing Reese couldn't guarantee.

Duncan's bride Details

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Author : Linda Howard

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From Reader Review Duncan's bride for online ebook

Jane Stewart says

Really good characters and relationship development. I didn't want to stop reading.

I liked the audiobook better than the physical book due to the narrator's wonderful interpretations.

BACKSTORY:

Reese was wealthy land owner/rancher in Montana. He married Alice who divorced him after 2 years and took half of everything he owned. For 8 yrs he has been under a mortgage and barely existing with half of the land left and a small herd of cattle.

THE STORY BEGINS:

Reese wants a wife and kids so he places an ad in a newspaper. Madelyn (Maddie) a city girl sees the ad and visits him. It is lust at first sight for both of them, but Reese does not want to marry her because he thinks Maddie will be like Alice. But no one else suitable responds to the ad, so Reese marries Maddie. Reese then limits his emotions for Maddie due to his past relationship fears.

AUDIOBOOK AND NARRATOR:

I read the physical book several years ago and just now listened to the audiobook. The narrator Lesa Lockford made it even better. She does a wonderful interpretation of Maddie. And she was good with men too. I was pleased that her breaths were removed.

DATA:

Narrative mode: 3rd person. Story length: 245 pages. Swearing language: none that I recall. Sexual language: moderate. Number of sex scenes: about 5. Setting: current day before cell phones mostly Montana with a little New York. Book copyright: 1990. Genre: contemporary romance.

Didi says

4.5 STARS

I'm so glad I read this book! I was thisclose in returning it to the library, thinking it might not be as good as I hoped for. I don't even know why I thought that, but it was excellent. Reece Duncan is a Montana rancher hard on finances and time. He'd been burned before by an ex-wife determined to wreck him and bankrupt his ranch. Not again. This time, Reece was going to advertise for a woman built to withstand labour and the expectations of living on a ranch. So what if he doesn't love her? He doesn't need to be at the mercy of his heart ever again. But he does want children, and he doesn't have time to court, so a newspaper ad is what he takes out.

When Madelyn answers Reece's ad for a wife in the country papers, she doesn't seriously consider it working out. But I loved seeing her reaction to Reece, in all his alpha-male, masculine glory. She fell hard and fast, and although I'm not much for insta-lust, I thought it worked here. But I did feel bad for Maddie. She didn't bargain on Reece being so bitter and jaded by his experiences with his ex. There were times he was cruel even, saying things out of anger that wouldn't be so easily forgiven after he cooled down. He was such a cannon at times, but at others he was so sweet, kind, funny and considerate.

He took a while coming to the conclusion that Maddie wasn't like his ex, nor had anything in common with her. The patience Maddie had dealing with him, gheesh! Reece would try the calmness of a saint. I loved how Maddie finally decided to do something drastic. She didn't deserve to be treated badly, although I could understand why Reece reacted the way he did to what she had done. Anyways, this was so good, and steamy, too. LH writes some pretty sensual scenes. They're not drawn out but are so potent and I wish more authors would get with the 'quality over quantity' program, otherwise known as LESS IS MORE.

Maddie was a fantastic heroine. She truly gave over herself for Reece and brought out the best in him. I think he needed a woman like her, a woman who accepted him for who he was. He was so manly, and the ranching scenes were so well done showing all the work and effort required in managing one. I wish there was an epilogue, but I've gotten used to LH's lack of them.

I'm also very interested in knowing more about Robert Cannon, Maddie's step-brother! He intrigued me with his mysterious ways and I'm so excited about his book, Loving Evangeline. This was great though, loved it.

KatieV says

Great classic, contemporary mail-order-bride story!

There are times when Reese will make you want to smack him, but other times he's so swoonworthy. I love how protective he is.

He has a huge chip on his shoulder because of his ex taking him to the cleaners and some of the things he says to Maddie are infuriating, but she gives as good as she gets and figures out just how to handle him.

The parts about ranch life were interesting and sad at times. The blizzard made me sad for the poor animals.

This book stands out for having one of the best extended grovels....well not so much groveling, but he did have to work to get her back and recognize what an ass he was. So happy with the ending for once :)

Crista says

Linda Howard is legendary in the romance genre, and this may be one of her finest. I recently reread it to see if it would live up to my fond memories and I am pleased to say, if anything, it surpassed them.

Reese Duncan is the quintessential Howard hero..... strong alpha, stubborn, sexy, and prideful. However, Duncan's Bride stands out to me NOT because of the hero, but because of the heroine. Madelyn is everything that I love my heroines to be. She has a ton of class, heart, devotion, work ethic, and the determination to win over Reese Duncan (a seemingly impossible task).

This book has the ability to make you laugh one minute, cry the next, feel anger and then happiness in the space of a few paragraphs. The ability to draw the reader in is one of Howard's biggest gifts, and in Duncan's Bride..... she outdoes even herself.

Madelyn is EXACTLY what Reese needs. He is an embittered and angry man. Madelyn is all warmth, laughter, hope, and love. Slowly she teaches Reese how to love and trust once more. It takes some time...he's a stubborn man.....but the payoff at the end is worth everything. I highly recommend this favorite of mine.

Booklover says

KNOCKED OUT! This is a 5+++++ rating book. Absolutely wonderful awesome heart warming emotional read. Loved Reese-Maddie both are cute adorable caring strong intelligent characters, Reese is a man full of integrity and his ranch is his pride and when that pride was attacked and half snatched he was filled with bitterness but Maddie came into his life and completely healed him though it took some time but he did come to his senses

Reese-Maddie's are now on my top 10 favourite couples shelf, in start of their marriage their relationship lacked all essential emotions required-trust love understanding support, but as time passes by and they start spending time knowing each other and understanding each other, making each other realise their mistakes and most importantly their relationship survived even without trust-love-understanding cause both supported each other through thick n thin

Reese had a lot to work on-his mistrust, his bitterness, his anger and his habit of seeing everything through April's eyes and making decisions based on what April did. I completely understand he was attacked brutally cause his pride was attacked and its the worse blow anyone makes which left him wounded, that is why i am not angry at his words-actions and way he judged Maddie and most fun part was way Maddie always proved him wrong and made him realise and accept his mistakes and finally he comes to his senses

Enjoyed their bickering-riddles so so much, Maddie stood and fought Reese and made him realise his mistakes and healed him completely, this is one couple who accepted each other with their flaws and they didn't tried to change each other but completely accepted each other, Maddie's fighting techniques were fun, after so much anger fights pain hurt Maddie's hard work and love wins and they both get their happiness and truly deserved HEA

Overall a fabulous read
Recommend it

Mo says

3.5 stars.

Did a re-read... think it might drop a half star for me. He was a bit of a jerk. She was a bit too naive! Still a good read though. But my reading tastes have definitely changed over the years.

ORIGINAL REVIEW:

I love anything by Linda. Serious, Gruff Hero who eventually succumbs to the love of a good woman. Need to get more of her older stuff out on Kindle. Thanks Jenna for the book.

***TANYA* says**

Kudos to this book because it's set back in the 80's and it mentions electric typewriters and people still communicate via mail. Lol. But I've NEVER been so upset with a book character before!!! EVER!!! Reese was so stubborn. Ugh. Nevertheless, this was an adorable book!! I. Must. Read. The. Follow up.

Vintage says

I fully expected Duncan's Bride to be one of those weepy, Hallmark, watch the dove fly into the sunset and wipe away a tear kind of book. Sweet and schmaltzy. Hell on wheels NO! Madelyn is a kick-ass, spine of steel heroine that made laugh out loud. I want to be her. Madelyn, her reactions as well as her actions to Reese and her circumstances are the primary reasons to read this. The steamy sex doesn't hurt. Not overly explicit but hot.

Reese is an emotionally and financially bankrupt Wyoming rancher with a heart of stone. Fleeced by his evil ex-wife, he wants a cool MOC with a "breeder" so he writes a want ad. Madelyn, a sophisticated and sweet New Yorker, sees it and thinks what the heck: a trip to Wyoming couldn't be worse than a blind date or meeting someone in a bar. Reese and Madelyn are both poleaxed by their visceral reaction to each other. Initially, Reese rejects her as she is too much like his old wife, a painted up big city woman to quote *I Love Lucy*, but they end up together anyway.

It is obvious from the beginning that Madelyn is head over heels with love and lust for Reese. He's got the lust part down all right. From the get go, he is an unmitigated, grumpy bastard, but she can hold her own without succumbing to tears, wimpiness or manipulation. (view spoiler)

Madelyn handles Reese the way I wish I could have handled my exes and my current guy aka my husband. She doesn't react; she acts. Believe me, when she does get a head of steam going it is quite effective.

Reese is a little harder to love as he is so incredibly bitter. All I could think was this guy needed a good lawyer with his first wife. He is drawn to Madelyn and can't figure her out. He crosses the line with her one last time, and without spoiling it she makes him suffer. Smart girl.

There are some great secondary characters; namely Floris the hatchet faced owner of the diner.

My only regret is that when Madelyn finds out how bad April, the ex, took Reese, she tells her cool and probably somewhat evil step-brother to ruin them. We never hear about that which is too bad.

A great read. Thank you Goodread reviewers.

Re-read

Just as good the second time. Madelyn just makes this book. She's strong, sweet and loving without sacrificing her sense of self and self-respect, as task few heroines seem to grasp. She is one of the rare heroines that you would want as a friend.

Naksed says

The scene in the pick-up truck.

That is all.

Europa says

Home means many things to many people. To Madelyn, it represented something she longed for-- a husband and family. She wanted those things so much she was willing to take a huge risk in answering to the newspaper ad of a Montana rancher looking for a wife.

Reese Duncan was lonely; he wanted a wife and family, but not an emotional involvement that goes along with it because of the nasty divorce that he went thru a few years back which made him and his ranch financially ruined. It made him hard and bitter and he was busy working too hard to find a wife by the more conventional means of dating and courtship. A newspaper Ad was the most efficient way and it brought Madelyn to him.

Madelyn was struck the moment she first saw Reese. For the first time in her life she had experience the feeling of being poleaxed. Everything in her knew this was the man she had always known the right one for her...

On the other hand, when Reese first saw her, he knew immediately that she was perfect for his bed but not in his life. She was stunningly attractive and an embodiment of elegance, clearly unsuitable to his ranch and to be a wife he was looking for. He wanted someone rather plain and reliable woman, not someone who wreaks havoc in his senses. But none of this rationale had alleviated his physical attraction to her one bit.

I find this novel shorter compare to the previous Linda Howard books I've read before. It only got 196 pages on a softbound but that hadn't kept me from being entertained. There were lines in this book that really had me laughing. I love the part where they had spent their first meeting with the hilarity of exchanging bizarre trivia about anything towards the other in the midst of blatant sexual tension they've been trying to deflect. However, Reese had been a perfect gentleman knowing that his visitor possessed none of his requirements.

The following day he regretfully sent Maddie to the airport back to New York. While Maddie though silently disappointed, was too determined to keep her pain to herself. It was only then at the terminal they had shared their supposed first and last kiss. It was poignant knowing that would be their last and their goodbye kiss wasn't at all polite. It went nearly carnal and too earth-shattering considering they were on a public place.

Maybe it was because of that kiss Reese had decided Madelyn was the one he's going to marry after his two unsuccessful "applicants" of a wife. Regardless of the odds he might be going to take and could be making a terrible mistake with his decision, his desire for Maddie was too potent he had to have her. So after two weeks of sleepless nights and turning his bed in shambles, he finally called her and asked her if she still would be willing to marry him.

I'm telling you it was one of the most unromantic proposals in my record. But given his oozing maleness and raw sensuality he exudes, who needs a promise of the star and the moon? You would openly accept him in total abandon.

After they were wed was only the beginning. Especially for them who were basically strangers to each other. I love the spirited character of Maddie that managed to put up with a very complex man that was Reese Duncan. She's very passionate and believes in love but very quick-witted and always up to the challenge. She's a woman who knows her boundaries and knows how to exchange blows with her man without disgracing his authority.

I especially love the scene where she, a city girl had to chase a hen for dinner in front of her husband after saying, "You don't think I can do it, do you? You want to show me how much I don't know about ranch life. Well you'll have your damn chicken for dinner, if I have to ram it down your throat with feathers and all!" I got carried away I read it aloud. Haha! And oh the next scene after that was so sweet. :D

The dialogues were funny especially the out of the blue trivia which had become the couple's hobby.

Reese was thoughtful and sweet but grouchy the next. He was fighting his growing feeling of attachment to his wife day by day. Reese' bitterness about the ugliness of his first marriage was the root of their problems along with their day to day challenges of being husband and wife.

There goes the Carpenter's song .. We've Only Just Begun... Sharing horizons that are new to us.. watching the signs along the way.. talking it over just the two of us.. working together day to day.. together... together.."

This was my first (thin and purely romance) Linda Howard book and it didn't disappoint. I've read a lot of romantic mysteries written by her and sufficiently enough I could say that she has this way of turning a simple plot into marvelous one thru her characters which I find exceptionally compelling.

"Duncan's Bride is the story of how Madelyn fought Reese's bitterness, his lack of trust and of how she finally managed to make him see that home is many things, but the home represented by LOVE and family is far more important than the home constructed of four walls."

Favorite lines:

*

"Never run if you can walk. Never walk if you can stand. Never stand if you can sit. Never sit if you can lie.
"Never talk if you can listen."
"Then you listen, and I'll talk."

**

"Come home with me, Maddie"
"Give me one good reason why I should."
"Because you love me"
"I loved you when I walked out the door. If it wasn't reason enough to stay, why should it be reason enough to go back?"

"Come home with me and I'll take care of you."
"Give me one good reason why I should."
"I love you."

#

~Europa

Sruthi says

I Liked it, Yes. But I did not love it.

I was initially impressed with the writing style and the happy-go-lucky type h, She was strong, stubborn and

has her mind set on all good things, I was jealous of the H's ex-wife myself, I expected the h to be aswell instead she felt sorry that he could not move on. Oh Well, She has a Big heart all right.

Now, you must be wondering if the h was so good why such mediocre rating? Credits our H, I don't think he has any positive, appreciable traits in him, He was not even a good lover to the h in the beginning and the way he keeps comparing his ex-wife with h was irritating. He could have been better and the bitterness with which he accused h really hurts and I dont know how she was able to forgive him so easily. He says those three magical words and all the bullshit he thrown was forgotten , I needed a lot more grovelling.

His Broken-soul character was really good in the beginning, but being the same thing till the end sucks especially when he had such an angel like h beside, mending him.

Bark says

Duncan's Bride is sexy, sassy, a real page turner, it's all the things I've come to expect from Linda Howard.

Reese Duncan wants a wife but not for love or any of those sappy reasons. He has a strong sex drive, he wants children and a strong woman willing to help him rebuild his ranch. In the heroine's words he wants a brood mare. He's been burned by his ex-wife who wasn't willing to rough it out as a ranch wife and took half of everything he owned in the divorce settlement, leaving him nearly bankrupt. So he places an add and gets three measly responses. Madelyn Patterson is the only applicant who sets his blood boiling but she's all citified and completely wrong for the job - or so he thinks. His lack of choices, her determination and her sex appeal win her the job and they marry.

All of the above takes place right away and the remainder of the book is spent watching Maddie prove to Reese that all woman aren't like his ex-wife. He's got a lot of baggage to deal with but Maddie handles him with humor and tenderness, two things he isn't used to but over time learns he desperately can't live without. He is an extreme alpha man, one who wants his wife to give him babies, cook dinner, clean the house, and jump when he snaps his fingers, all without a complaint. He is overbearing and sometimes he annoyed me but as much as I wanted to give him a swift kick in his pretty rear, I understood why he was this way. He'd been hurt and destroyed and was only protecting himself and his future children. So, I could deal with all of his chest pounding and I liked the fact that Maddie handled him maturely and never lowered herself by giving into a fit of whimpiness or "poor me's". She didn't out and out tell him off which would not have worked with this guy anyway, but she did it in more subtle ways, getting under his skin and teaching him to love again. She was an admirable character and the only thing I couldn't figure out was why such a sweet, sensual, twenty-eight year old woman had no steady boyfriend or sexual history previous to meeting Reese. It wasn't really explained, unless I missed it. But I'm being nitpicky, I liked this book, the characters were three dimensional, the love scenes were steamy, and most importantly it made me feel.

Lisa Kay says

May, 2012 Update

Read this last May and had to read it again for 2012! Loved it! With all the recordings of less-than-desirable books from the 80's & 90's, why can't they put *this* one on audio?

★★★★★ Five full stars! It has been 21 years since I last read *Duncan's Bride* and it still holds up to the ravishes of time and my fickle changes in reading material. I love Linda Howard at her best and I found her here in this quick-read of a *Silhouette Intimate Moments* publication. Ms. Howard has the ability to show us the magic of stubborn people falling in love whilst dealing with the everyday realism of daily life. The dialogue is believable, yet held my interest. The characters interesting, the setting beautiful, the love scenes intimate.

He leaned against the kitchen cabinet and crossed his arm. "Are you scraping the house?"

"Yep."

"Don't pull that Gary Cooper routine on me. I want it stopped right now."

"The routine or the scraping?"

"Both."

"The house can't be painted until the old paint is scraped off," she said reasonably.

"I can't afford the paint, so it doesn't make any difference. And I don't want you climbing around on a fourteen-foot ladder. What if you fell while I'm out on the range?"

"What if you got hurt out on the range by yourself?" she retorted. "I'm careful, and I haven't had any trouble so far. It shouldn't take too much longer."

"No," he said, enunciating carefully. "I can't afford the paint, and even if I could I wouldn't let you do the scraping."

"You don't have time for it, so who else is going to do it?"

"For the third time," he yelled, "*I can't afford the paint!* What does it take to make you understand that?"

Yes, Reese Duncan is a **"bold and arrogant and quick-tempered"** Montana rancher, but Madelyn Patterson is just the New Yorker to calm him down while conversely stirring his blood to fever pitch.

Reese is determined not to give his heart a second time and Madelyn is just as determined to win it. Some of the best scenes, the ones that made me giggle with glee in the back of my throat, take place in grumpy Floris' café, provided by her acerbic nature; however, it is the Duncans, in the end, providing the area's best entertainment for miles around.

Well worth the read!

◆ Anna's ?^?????g\$ ◆ says

[What is it with authors and thirty-year-old virgins?

This is my fourth read this month with a thirty-ish virgin.

Am I supposed to believe that a rich, upper-class, beautiful, smart, educated, *virgin* heroine from New York City leaves everything behind and moves to the country because she fell in love after a few exchanged sentences? (hide spoiler)]

Chantal ♥? says

I will be brutally honest and say that I did like parts of this book but I did not loooooove it.

The heroine was just about the most amazingly understanding woman to put up with his bullshit.

OR SHE IS A DOORMAT!?

You decide here.

Not only does he treat her horrible but he is a really terrible lover to the heroine.

That's a first for me! Normally, even if they are asshole, they are at least good in bed.

Sorry about my **strong language** here.

I just knew when he got out the lube for their first night together, I was NOT going to like their intimacy.

Which was for the most part consisted of her loving him and putting up with REALLY CRAPPY SEX.

Come on, he could have at least given the poor girl an orgasm before he took her virginity!

But this zero hero could not even do that right!!

After that it just goes from bad to worst for me, because he was always about what is mine never was is theirs.

She literally saved his ass and got him out of the crap house he was in and he all he kept repeating was *This is my place, you get no say in it," and "I choose what I want to do with it."*

Really!!?

After everything that happened and with her saving your sorry excuse of a human being, you go and treat her like absolute garbage?

Sorry to say this but the hit and miss sex combined with the treatment of a house slave and the whole it's mine and I am the boss, really had me wanting to call a hit on him. (And I'm not even in the Mafia, lol)

This is not my favorite and not going to keep it either. I guess, I am not following the popular opinion here, as I did **not love it**.

It's needed some hot sex, to make up for all that is was lacking.

He needed to grovel way more....I mean an industrial amount.

So we are clear, it's not worth a reread and I will not recommend it to anyone.

Again these are just my thoughts and how I saw things.
