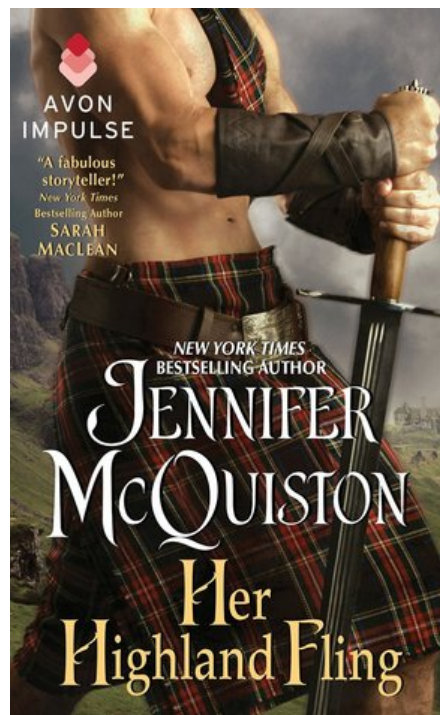




Her Highland Fling: A Novella

Jennifer McQuiston

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Let the Games Begin ...

William MacKenzie has always been protective of his Scottish village. When Moraig's economy falters, he has the perfect solution to lure wealthy Londoners to this tiny hamlet: resurrect the ancient Highland Games! But for this to work, William knows he needs a reporter to showcase the town in just the right light.

A female journalist might be a tolerated oddity in Brighton, but newly minted reporter Penelope Tolbertson is discovering that finding respect in London is a far more difficult prospect. After receiving an invitation to cover Moraig's Highland Games, Penelope is determined to prove to her London editors just how valuable she can be.

Penelope instantly captures William's heart, but she is none too impressed with the gruff, broody Highlander; however, as she begins to understand his plans, Penelope discovers she may want more from him than just a story. She's only got a few days ... but maybe a few days are all they need.

Her Highland Fling: A Novella Details

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From Reader Review Her Highland Fling: A Novella for online ebook

Becca says

I have never read Jennifer McQuiston before but I can tell you that I will be rectifying that very quickly! This novella was charming, funny, and heartwarming.

Jennifer McQuiston has been known to create unique, compelling characters and establish setting with a single, eloquent paragraph. This talent was on full display here. I was immediately transported to the wild outdoors with this simple paragraph:

It was still warm, but with the night air came a mixture of scents she had missed when she first arrived. Sharp pine and mellow heather. The coastal tang of the breeze coming from the west. And beneath it all, growing stronger now as Pen picked her way along the dark path, the dusky scent of water and bogs and lurking animal life.

Or how about this one:

The lawn swept down to the edge of a cliff, shimmering against a kaleidoscope sky. The clouds seemed set on fire and all too happy to burn. She could see white-capped surf in the distance and, as the coast curved out of sight, magnificent stone cliffs plunging to the sea.

Poetic eh? I had to stop myself from highlighting everything McQuiston wrote. Her ability to put a picture in my mind is unmatched.

McQuiston is also talented at setting up characters. Pen, an independent woman determined to prove herself despite her stutter has come to the small Scotland town to write a report on the Highland Games they are hosting. William has put together the whole event in an effort to bring much needed tourism (and hence profit) for the residents. Pen and William have an awkward start, but quickly find a spark that quickly flares out of control. Both of these characters have insecurities and an intense drive to do what they think is most important. While this is a novella, the characterization did not suffer from its short length. Pen and William immediately recognize kindred spirits in each other, even if their motivations, while similar, manifest themselves in different ways and seem insurmountable for them as a couple.

She was a reporter. It was her lot in life to ask probing questions. But it was equally clear that his lot in life was to protect his family and his town, and that was something she could not help but respect.

Despite being on seemingly different sides of the fence, their chemistry is explosive:

He tasted of Scotland: dark and smoky, heat and salt. The scrape of his whiskered jaw and the solid strength of his body made her hum with an unspoken awareness.

I loved how this story unfolded. The setting, awareness between the characters, and their fun banter leaped off the pages. This story truly was charming. Pen and William circle each other and carry on conversation

"filled with enough innuendo to sink a ship." It is funny, it is delightful, and I never wanted it to end.

I relished the glimpse of town life, I smiled at how all the townspeople gossiped and looked after one another, and I sighed seeing Pen fall in love with the town, its people, and most importantly, its gruff, awkward, and completely adorable leader. Don't miss this one guys. It is a fling I am glad I had.

KatLynne says

Who can resist a brawny Scotsman in a kilt? Jennifer McQuiston is one of my favorite authors and she doesn't disappoint in this short, fun read featuring a sexy highlander along with a smart, unconventional heroine. Witty dialogue, believable plot, and blazing chemistry abound in this quick tale, leaving this reader anxious for her next release.

Noura says

This book is really funny in a haha and weird way. I'll tell you why:

Funny haha:

Love the characters, and love the dialogues. Love the part where William MacKenzie, the supposedly very proper and responsible big bro of Jamie is reduced to a somewhat silly blundering man because he is so smitten with the heroine, Penelope (Caroline's of book 2's elder sister). Penelope also happens to be the newspaper reporter assigned to write about the Highland games event that he organized to help with his people's income.

So he goes around making various blunders and she finds him very adorable. Hence the cutesy romance between them that ends up with a nice HEA,

Funny weird:

In this story, it was hinted that Goergette has already given birth to her baby. Now this book is supposed to come right after book two. But when I read book 3, Goergette was still pregnant. I'm confused. Has there been a mix up in timeline?

Anyway, a great read and an excellent side story.

Jennifer says

3.75 Stars

Highlanders are another of my weaknesses especially when they are big and broody like William. I adored him for his devotion to Moraig and his willingness to do anything to make the Highland Games succeed. Penelope was fun to read about especially after I met her in Summer Is for Lovers. She had a lot stacked up against her as a female reporter at this time and I admired her ambition. As a couple, these two were very cute yet they had some actual issues to overcome to get their happy ending. As with most novellas, I wish

there had been more to the book, but it was very enjoyable.

Roses R Blue says

William MacKenzie loves his little town of Moraig in Scotland, but in order for the town to thrive, it needs an influx of tourist dollars. When an opportunity arises to have a London reporter visit and write an article about Moraig, William jumps at the chance. Dressed in his kilt, he meets the stage, and is shocked to find that the reporter is a woman, Penelope Tolbertson. Normally an eloquent sort of fellow, William finds himself staring and stuttering a bit, as he is truly dumbfounded by the lovely reporter. Penelope, who has a bit of a stammer, first thinks that William is mocking her, then finds him a bit of a lummo, as he seems to have lost his ability to function around her.

Eventually, William pulls himself together enough to show Penelope his town. The two of them develop a fast friendship, and a passionate attraction. After only a few short days together, William finds himself in love. I adored this man. He was not afraid to admit his feelings, or to make sacrifices to try to build a future with Pen, who is torn about what to do. She has never thought she'd marry, and she worked hard to become a reporter. Will she be willing to alter her plans for the future?

This novella is a short, but very enjoyable read. It can stand alone, although some of the characters are from previous books, which I must now go back and read because I like Jennifer McQuiston's writing very much. This story has warmth, charm, great characters, and a very satisfying resolution. A solid four stars to Her Highland Fling.

As reviewed for Roses Are Blue:
<http://wp.me/p3QRh4-6m>

Aoi says

3.5 Stars

Brawny highlanders dressed in kilts to greet unsuspecting lady reporters! This novella was such fun. I loved how the normally articulate hero turned into a great, lumbering buffoon in front of the heroine!

Julie says

Her Highland Fling by Jennifer McQuiston is a 2015 Avon Impulse Publication. I was provided a copy of this book by the publisher and Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review.

I have a big weakness for men in kilts. (Who doesn't?) So, I rarely pass up a book with a hot highlander on the cover. (Who would?) So, this book captured my attention right away.

Fling (n): "Vigorous dance" (associated with the Scottish Highlands), from 1806.
"Period of indulgence on the eve of responsibilities," first attested 1827. - From the online Etymology Dictionary-

Penelope, a reporter, has traveled from Brighton to Moraig, Scotland circa 1843 to cover the story of the highlanders and their “games” and the beauty of Moraig.

William and James MacKenzie are all dressed in plaid to promote Scotland and hopefully encourage tourism, when they set out to meet the reporter who will hopefully write a very flattering article about Moriag. But, they are stunned when instead of a male reporter, they are met by a the beautiful Penelope, or Pen to her friends.

William and Pen get off to a rough and awkward start as she feels he is mocking her stammer and she assumes he is a little dense.

But, William takes his role as tour guide seriously and soon Pen finds Scotland's scenery quite pleasing and I'm not referring to the landscape.

The problem is William needs Pen to return to London to publish her article and Pen wants to maintain her independence. Will they be happy with a brief fling, or will William and the breathtaking Scottish Highlands work their magic and lure Penelope into a more permanent stay?

This novella length story truly captured the beauty of Scotland and William was swoon worthy!! The author's description of the scenery had me wishing I was there in person and well, maybe I'm not just talking about the landscape. (grin)

I would have liked the story to have been a little longer perhaps and maybe with just a touch more conflict.

I loved seeing Penelope realize her handicap did not define her and she was worthy of love and respect, and William found her very desirable. I enjoyed the story and liked getting to know these characters. Over all this one is 4 stars.

Pj Ausdenmore says

I'm frequently intrigued by secondary characters in the books I read and often left wondering what happens to them after the final page. Such was the case with Penelope "Pen" Tolbertson, sister of the heroine of Summer Is For Lovers and William McKenzie, brother of the hero of What Happens In Scotland. You can imagine my delight when I discovered Jennifer McQuiston's plans to write a story for the two in the novella, Her Highland Fling. I'm happy to say it more than met my expectations!

Readers - and characters - are taken on a fun, fast-paced, heartwarming journey in Her Highland Fling. With witty banter, quirky secondary characters and intelligent writing, McQuiston brings us an entertaining tale with plenty of humor and heart. I've been rooting for Pen since meeting her in Summer is for Lovers. She deserves a man who will show her there's more to life than her pencils and notebooks and who will love her for who she is but first, she must learn to accept that love. I was intrigued by William in What Happens in Scotland but fell head over heels for him in Her Highland Fling. When he finally declares himself, I decided if Pen didn't want him I was ready to travel back in time and claim him for myself.

The village of Moraig is brought to life through McQuiston's words. Characters from previous books are an integral part of the story, adding richness without detracting focus from the hero and heroine. Touches of whimsy add charm while quiet moments between William and Penelope fan the flames of desire in addition to gradually deepening the emotion and feelings between them.

As I mentioned earlier, Pen and William were secondary characters in McQuiston's first two books. Do you need to have read those books in order to enjoy Her Highland Fling? No. McQuiston has crafted a humorous, sexy, whimsical, tender story that stands well on its own. Having said that, however, there are occasional

references that you won't "get" without knowing the previous stories and while William and Pen are fully formed characters, knowing their back stories will only add a greater depth of richness to the people you meet in Her Highland Fling.

~PJ

The Romance Dish

Tin says

Having read a number of Highland-based romance novels with kilt-wearing heroes, I had always wondered about what happens when it gets windy ... and, to my mind, only Jennifer McQuiston has addressed the question.

As though summoned by his brother's fateful words, a ghost of a breeze stirred the wool that clung to William's sweat-moistened skin. He clapped a hand down over his sporran, ensuring the most important parts remained hidden.

- loc 47

For this passage alone, I'd rate McQuiston's novella 5 stars. I think it also sets the tone for the story: that a reader should expect an unusual point of view and, therefore, a unique insight into love from this story.

William MacKenzie's town of Moraig desperately needs an income for the people to survive, and William has decided to host a Highland Games, hoping to attract tourists from London. William's plan also involves promoting Moraig, and they've invited a newspaper reporter from a London publication to highlight the town's charms and appeal. Imagine his surprise when the reporter happens to be female -- a very beautiful female. William finds himself tongue-tied and befuddled -- two things he is unused to experiencing.

He wanted to say something witty. Something better than a stammered greeting. But despite the fact he counted a Cambridge education among his list of accomplishments, his tongue was apparently still as tied tonight as it had been this afternoon.

He paused in front of her table and grunted like peasant.

- loc 272

Our hero is a surprisingly down-to-earth heir to an earldom. He's very focused on making sure Moraig earns an income to offset the poor harvest season. He's so focused on helping his town. He never really thought about his own life, but Pen's arrival forces him to refocus and reassess -- and discover that he also has wants, desires and needs.

There were times when William could not help but battle a bit of envy at his brother's good fortune. Seeing this child he loved sitting on Pen's lap made that envy shift into something more defined.

Want. He wanted what his brother had. A wife, a child. Happiness.

...

And with a startled bit of insight, William realised as he looked at Penelope Tolbertson holding this small, blond-haired baby on her lap, he might find those things with this woman. It wasn't even an outrageous thought.

- loc 777 to 787

Pen is female and has a stutter -- both perceived obstacles by society, which she had overcome in order to build a career as a writer. The Moraig assignment is her first major piece. Pen has had to struggle to prove herself equal to others in her field ... And she's now living her dream life. When William enters the picture, Pen realizes that her own dream was incomplete.

It's fun to read about a couple who aren't really looking for love, but who accidentally stumble upon it. Pen takes William by surprise (with their first meeting), and vice versa, and Love takes both of them by surprise, and leaves them asking the difficult questions: what's next? William has duties and responsibilities in Moraig, and Pen has her job in London. When I'm reading, it's very rare for me to think of the character's life before the story -- but McQuiston sees it as part of the question: *What now?* It's a very real reminder that "happily ever after" doesn't come easily or without sacrifices -- and our hero and heroine realise this.

When I started reading this novella, I had expected something quick and fun and light -- but, I should've known I would not emerge from a McQuiston novel unscathed. This one made me laugh out loud quite a bit and did some major tugging at the heartstrings as well.

Her Highland Fling, a novella, is connected to Jennifer McQuiston's **What Happens in Scotland** , and **Summer is for Lovers** .

Angelc says

This novella is a quick, fun, historical romance. I think the 'fling' in the title is very fitting. It's nothing too deep, just a really fluffy, quick romantic tale. The characters are sweet, but nothing extraordinary. Just a fun afternoon read.

I think I was drawn in the most by the heroine's stuttering. The first time we meet Penelope, we learn that she has a stutter, and she even feels like William is making fun of her (he isn't, don't worry!). Seeing that vulnerability right off the bat, just made me really pull for her as a character.

William is a fun leading man, but at first, I had trouble differentiating him from his brother (I haven't read any of the other books in the series, but I assume his brother was the lead in another book). It was difficult for me to keep them straight at first and I think that hampered my understanding of William's character for the rest of the story.

This short and sweet novella really is a Highland Fling! What are you waiting for? Kick your feet up and enjoy a lighthearted Highland romance!

reviewed for <http://inthehammockblog.blogspot.com>

e-ARC sent by the publisher in exchange for an honest review

Michelle says

I've never read anything by Jennifer McQuiston before, but bought this novella to read for a book group discussion. I was blown away by the author's writing style and am so impressed that she managed to convey so much in a novella. Whimsical Scottish lore, amusing antics among the highlanders, and a discerning, self-sufficient heroine all worked together flawlessly to create a story that charmed me from beginning to end. Without a doubt, I'll be reading the other stories in this series!

Zoe says

It must be the vacation because I am feeling generous with my stars this week.

This novella is a 2 stars book in my honest opinion. In the sense that "it is ok". Nothing memorable or special for me. But I liked the style, which reminds me of Julia Quinn somehow. I thought the style rather sweet. So I decided on 3 stars in the end.

Keeping the review short because my iPad is driving me nuts. Will review the book in more details when I have my laptop.

Izy says

Rating~ 3.5 stars

William MacKenzie is the heir to the Kilmartie earldom and as such is protective and proud of his village 'Moraig'. He comes up with a plan to help his village and it's economy by allowing a journalist to cover the Highland games and show him the beauty of Moraig. Unfortunately for William, the reporter is a woman, a rather fetching one at that, who turns his Cambridge educated brain into mush, making him look like an 'idiot'

Penelope Tolbertson is a new at her job journalist, she's visiting the village 'Moraig' for an of article about the Highland games and the town. Penelope has a stutter, she considers herself a spinster but she's also an independent, slightly odd and intelligent woman.

This is a novella and is quite short so the complete focus of the story is on the couple. Both have some first misguided impressions of each other but they soon get to know more about each other and can't help but fall in love with each other. I really liked William, he was so adorable, I don't know but there's something very enchanting about a smitten and slightly baffled guy that I can't help but like *dreamy sigh*. For a historical novel, the book sure had a very modern feeling to it.

Quibbles: I felt like I knew a lot more about William than about Pen which isn't how I prefer my protagonists, I want to know both of them equally well. It should have been a bit longer and the ending felt slightly rushed to me.

Overall, it's a sweet and entertaining story about two unique individuals filled with some humor and soft romance. *Happy Reading!*

ARC generously provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Carole (Carole's Random Life in Books) says

This review can also be found at Carole's Random Life.

4 Stars!

I loved this little story! This was one of those fulfilling yet short reads that I just love to pick up every once in a while. Although this story is listed as #2.5 in the series, it can easily be read as a stand-alone. I actually haven't read anything by Jennifer McQuiston before this story and I followed everything without any issues.

I fell in love with the two main characters in this story. I really liked the fact that they weren't perfect. William gets completely flustered at times and Penelope has a stutter. It was so nice to see the human side of these characters complete with flaws. It really helped me relate to the story.

The chemistry between the pair was wonderful and the emotions between them felt so authentic. I loved that Penelope made William nervous. It was also very nice to see such an independent female character in a historical story. Penelope knew what she wants and worked to get it. It would have taken a woman with a lot of guts to be a reporter during this time period and I believe that Penelope would be able to do it.

I was really impressed that a little bit of humor made its way into this story. The butcher and the rest of the townspeople were just wonderful characters. All in all this was exactly the kind of novella that I like to read. It was a fun, touching story that left me feeling completely satisfied after a short time reading. I would highly recommend this story to all fans of historical romance.

I received a copy of this book from Avon Impulse via Edelweiss for the purpose of providing an honest review.

Jenny Koch says

I am usually very wary of involving Scottish male leads. All the "dinnas", "kens", and excessive brogue & kilts can easily descend into the realm of farcical. Luckily, this novella did not work out that way. I knew from the moment William, our brawny Highlander hero, took center stage mortified about wearing a kilt - much to the playful jeering of his fellow townspeople ("Lovely legs, MacKenzie!" "Now show us your arse!") - that this novella was going to be just plain fun.

As the mere sight of fiercely independent female reporter Penelope (the sister from "Summer Is for Lovers") is enough to make him lose all ability to speak coherently, Penelope spends the first half of the novella convinced that our Cambridge-educated "summa-something" is an bonafide idiot. As a matter of fact, several

of William's POV began off with him muttering "she thinks I'm an idiot." The icing on the cake? Once Penelope realizes her error, she decides to aggressively pursue him for a liaison, completely bewildering the still stunned-speechless William.

I loved William. In a genre chock full of domineering alpha jerks, William was a genuinely nice guy who wants to save his beloved village and thinks the lady reporter from London is incredibly beautiful. Penelope's character didn't stand out as much compared to William's but I really enjoyed that she wasn't the delicate flower type and her pursuit of the hero was hysterical.

Unfortunately the ending was a bit lackluster with my excitement for the novella waning around three-quarters in.

To Buy?: Yes - just for how funny & light-hearted the beginning of the novella was
