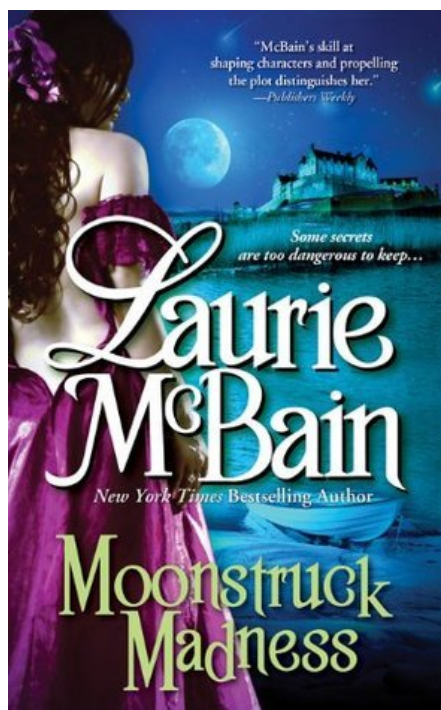




Moonstruck Madness

Laurie McBain

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Moonstruck Madness Laurie McBain

She's one thing by day, something else altogether by night...

After escaping the slaughter of her clan at a young age, Scottish noblewoman Sabrina Verrick provides for her siblings by living a double life, until the night she encounters the Duke, and her secret and all she holds dear is threatened...

He's so disillusioned, he's completely vulnerable...

With his inheritance at stake, Lucien, Duke of Camareigh, sets a trap for the Scottish beauty with the piercing violet eyes, never imagining what will happen when the trap is sprung...

As their lives become irreversibly entangled, Lucien and Sabrina become each other's biggest threat, as well as their only salvation...

Moonstruck Madness Details

Date : Published December 10th 2010 by Sourcebooks Casablanca (first published February 1977)

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Author : Laurie McBain

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Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Historical, Historical Fiction

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From Reader Review Moonstruck Madness for online ebook

KatieV says

See tags - my feelings were all over the place with this one. I decided to give it a 4 since I was convinced this would be a 5 the first 50% of the book and then it went down to a 3 the last 50%.

First, regarding the Audible part, that was awesome. The narrator was great and the whispersync between the audio and the kindle version was flawless. I LOVED it.

Now on to the story itself. I loved the first half. It was improbable, implausible, and completely OTT - but boy was it fun! There was never a dull moment from the Scottish battlefield in the beginning when the heroine (Sabrina) was 12-13yo and barely escaped to England with her life, to the first time we see her highwayman alter ego, Bonnie Charlie, at work when she is 17.

Sabrina was the daughter of an English Marquis and the Scottish daughter of a Highland Laird. Her mother died in childbirth having her younger brother, Richard, so they all went to live with the Laird in Scotland. Otherwise, they would have starved, since their father was a neglectful piece of work who abandoned his children completely, leaving them unchaperoned (unless you count batty Aunt Margaret).

Sabrina and her siblings live happily in Scotland for 5-6 years until the Laird is killed in a battle with the English. After that, they return to her father's home in the English countryside and almost starve until Sabrina takes the obvious route and decides to become a highwayman (at 14-15). So improbable! Yet still fun and entertaining.

Sabrina herself was cocky, overconfident and used to having her own way, as she had only her much more timid older sister, 10yo brother, and batty aunt around. She ruled the roost. However, to balance it out, she was charming, not at all snobbish, and generous. She was absurd yet endearing and I was able to forgive her flaws due to her age and circumstances. She had managed to feed, clothe, and keep her entire family in relative comfort for their station. Remarkably she was this extremely successful, flamboyant, masked highwayman who never harmed anyone and was never harmed.

Then she screws up.

She robs the dinner party of a local Lord, which was reckless to begin with, but then she compounds it by taunting the arrogant, handsome yet scar-faced guest - Lucien, Duke of Camareigh. She compounds her mistake by holding up his coach a few chapters later and daring to slap him across the face when he taunts her. Now Lucien is pissed and determined to kill Bonnie Charlie. Sabrina falls right into his VERY obvious trap and is nearly killed in a sword fight with the Duke. That is when he realizes he is a (very beautiful) she.

He nurses her back to health and she ends up giving up her virginity to him - partially to force him to let down his guard and partially because of her traitorous body. Lucien is besotted and vows to make her his mistress, buy her a house, etc, etc. At this point he does not realize that she is the daughter of a Marquis. Sabrina realizes she's in love with Lucien, but knows she can't accept such a position in his life and sneaks away the next morning. Lucien feels duped and is still horny for her, so he tracks her down and discovers her true identity. Then gets his revenge by ruining her reputation to prevent her marriage to a drunken slob of a Duke that her greedy father was forcing on her. (The crap, broke father turned up with his new wife after a 10yr absence and decided to sell his 2 beautiful daughters in marriage).

Sabrina's father is enraged by his thwarted plans and begins beating Sabrina with a riding crop until Lucien

rides to the rescue. He has realized - quite conveniently - that Sabrina is the perfect solution to all his problems. He has to wed before a certain date or lose his inheritance (yes, that old gem) and Sabrina is both desirable and a "Lady", making her acceptable to the grandmother enforcing the deadline. Plus, he's already compromised her, therefore marriage would be welcomed by her greedy father and not such a shock to society. Of course, Lucien also has deeper feelings for Sabrina that he doesn't fully realize.

And here's where it begins to fall apart.

Sabrina is angry with the Duke and claims to hate him at this point. Understandable. He had humiliated her and prompted the beating from her father. But the lengths she goes to in order to thwart him go FAR beyond OTT hokey, fun into TSTL land. Seriously, I'd be here all day if I chronicled her selfish stupidity and this review is already too long.

Then she gets very selective amnesia, the Duke marries her while she doesn't remember hating him, and they are complete lovebirds for a while. Lucien having realized he is head over heels in love with her. Oh, and she's pregnant.

Of course, eventually she remembers, hates Lucien again and proceeds to be a complete brat for the next year. He is a dumb ass himself and instead of wooing her and admitting he's fallen in love with her, he gives up and goes to London where he may or may not have a mistress. While he's gone, Sabrina runs off to Scotland to save her treasure seeking little brother BY HERSELF (she's a Duchess, she could have brought a small army with her!).

After she and her brother have a bunch of misadventures in Scotland, she and Lucien finally have their HEA when he comes after her and rescues her from a crazed Highlander.

So, yes, a lot of complaining for 4 stars, but it really was overall entertaining, the narration was engaging, and there was always something going on. I just wish the author hadn't turned Sabrina into such a childish idiot in the last half of the book :(I was so stoked by this book and it was quite the letdown. A heroine can be tough without being TSTL (see Elenora from Jennifer Blake's *Notorious Angel* for an excellent example).

As an aside, this book appears on many bodice ripper lists, which I don't get. There's no rape or forced seduction, which IMHO is the hallmark of a bodice ripper. The H does slap the heroine once, but it didn't bother me like it normally does. Sabrina had just slapped him and he just slapped her back out of instinct and instantly regretted it. Historically speaking, any other man would have probably beat the living crap out of her at some point. Since I read the re-issued edition, I do wonder if this wasn't a case of selective editing to be more PC and in line with today's romance novel standards. Hmmmm.... will have to ask my fellow BR fans. Shutting up now.

Regan Walker says

Scottish Heroine, masquerading as a Highwayman and a scarred English Duke make for an Absorbing Love Story!

Set in 1746 in Scotland (prologue) and 1751 in England, this is the story of Sabrina Verrick, the Scottish noblewoman, who along with her sister and brother survive after their grandfather, Laird of the MacElden clan is brutally slain by the English at Culloden Moor. They escape to England where they live in the country at the rundown estate of their father, an English marquis who abandoned them as children. There, to feed her family, Sabrina becomes the highwayman "Bonnie Charlie," robbing the rich to aid the poor.

One man she robs, Lucien, Duke of Camareigh, a gambler and a rogue, is no English fop as are most of Sabrina's victims. A self-made man, he decides to trap the wily bandit and have his revenge. Once he captures "Charlie" speaking "his" shoulder, the duke realizes "Charlie" is a beautiful young woman. When she won't reveal who she is, he decides to try seduction.

Superbly written, you'll find this one hard to put down. I love the logic of McBain's intricate plot...no improbable moments here. No contrived black moments. Only great storytelling and suspenseful action. The dialog is clever and the characters wonderfully developed. Sabrina is courageous, good hearted and rebellious to the end and Camareigh is a tough alpha male, just the kind we like to see fall to love's power.

McBain paints vivid pictures of Culloden (to start with) and then the English countryside thereafter, putting you right in the scene. It is so well done. Reading this just reminded me that a 5-star classic never goes out of style. Written in 1977, it sold a million copies. I see why.

I highly recommend it and the others in the trilogy:

Dominick Series:

Moonstruck Madness (1977) Sabrina and Lucien
Chance The Winds Of Fortune (1980) their daughter, Rhea and Dante
Dark Before The Rising Sun (1982) Rhea and Dante (cont'd.)

Janet says

I read this book when it first came out in the mid 1970's. It was one of the first explicitly erotic romance novels (along with Rosemary Rogers' "Sweet, Savage Love"), and it had a profound impact on my adolescent sensibilities.

Sabrina Verrick, a Scots-English noblewoman in exile in England with her sister and little brother after Culloden, has taken to the roads as the highwayman Bonnie Charlie to support her family. During a daring theft at a dinner party she meets Lucien, Duke of Camareigh, who swears to put a stop to Bonnie Charlie's crime spree. Their story unfolds with plenty of plots, captures and escapes, seduction, intrigue, and wildly passionate sex.

As with many of these older romances, hero and heroine don't always treat each other well, but I recall that McBain created a strong enough relationship between them to make me believe in their love.

It's been years since I last read this book, but I keep a copy on my shelf for old time's sake. I should probably re-read it one of these days.

Angelc says

This book was originally written in 1977, and wow, have times changed for historical romances! And boy am I glad!

Lucien is not the type of hero who should be put on a pedestal. Most of the bad things that happen to our heroine are his fault, but he wants to be praised when he fixes them again. The book timeline goes a little like this: fight (and we're talking Ronnie and Sammi on Jersey Shore style fighting, not playful banter) jump into bed, fight, jump into bed, repeat. This style of story just isn't for me. I understand that a lot of readers are into alpha males, even though I'm not, but Lucien is another breed altogether.

The part of the book where Sabrina has amnesia and actually believed she was in love with Lucien was my favorite part. This was a happy, loving romance! But of course, it was based on forgetting all the unforgivable, deal-breaking things that Lucien had done.

This book was definitely written in a stylized way, that I really don't see used any more. I'm sure there are readers who like to read about this rough sort of love, but it's not for me. This book made me appreciate the world of today's historical romances even more!

ARC sent by publisher in exchange for honest review

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

Misfit says

As a young girl, Sabrina Verrick witnessed her grandfather's death after the battle of Culloden, and those are scars she'll carry with her forever. Sabrina and her two siblings return to their family home in England, and without their father off galavanting in Europe, to make ends meet she becomes the infamous highway bandit Bonnie Charlie. One day she robs the wrong man - Lucien, Duke of Camareigh - and he's hot to catch that bandit and stop *him* once and for all. That is until he thinks he's trapped *Charlie* and gets the surprise of his life.

This being a romance novel and all I suspect you have a good idea where the story goes from there. This wasn't a bad read by any means, but there were just too many silly twists with Swiss cheese sized plot holes that keep me from rating this higher. One night of hot sex with a complete stranger and it's true love forever? She robs people to raise money to give her grasping father money so he won't marry them off? Amnesia?

Gah! Sabrina is just too stubborn for words and never uses the common sense she was born with (much stamping of feet). Lucien is just too dark and moody, and way OTT in the super-hero Duke department. I also got very tired of always hearing about his awful scar that terrified all the ladies. I got it the first time around and didn't need to be clubbed over the head over and over and over again. I might have rated it lower than three stars, but things did pick up with a mystery at the castle in the Highlands, and Sabrina finally grew up and stopped stamping her feet. This is one of those old school romances, and while reasonably entertaining for a brain candy mood, it does show its age and might not suit every reader - consider yourself warned.

Anita says

I got the other two books in the Dominick series as ARC's and I am going to reread this one first. I read it as a new release way back when and it is going to be fun to revisit this series. I don't read much Historical Romance these days and it will be fun. I was even going to dig it out of my physical library, but now have it as an e-book. I am so happy that these wonderful books have been re-issued as e-books and that they have been reissued so a whole new generation can read the very best Historical-Romance books ever written.

First published in 1977, Moonstruck Madness does not show its age. It's story of Sabrina, a young girl of 12 during the Battle of Culloden in 1746 where her grandfather was killed. Angus wisely knew the cause was hopeless and hid the family's treasure. After his death, Sabrina, her sister Mary, brother Richard and Aunt Margaret fled to England where they took up residence in their absentee father's home. With no money to support them Sabrina becomes the highwayman, Bonnie Charlie. Eventually she robs the wrong nobleman and Lucien, Duke of Camareigh, takes it as a personal affront and lays a trap for Bonnie Charlie, netting the lovely Sabrina. She escapes but leaves a part of her soul with the Duke.

This is a tale of strong wills and even stronger love as these two, Sabrina and Lucien, do everything possible to escape what is their destiny.

Jill Barnett says

This was the first historical romance novel I read. I bought it at a garage sale for 50 cents and it started a whole new life for me. By the early 80's I was back in college and knew I wanted to write. Eventually I sold my first book in 1988, a historical romance novel. When I wrote BEWITCHING, I made the hero Alec a duke because of Lucien in MM.

Linda Banche says

MOONSTRUCK MADNESS by Laurie McBain is a fast-paced, engrossing novel of the difficult choices people make to survive in a cruel world.

After losing everything in the aftermath of the 1746 Scottish Battle of Culloden, Sabrina must find a way to support her family. Her unorthodox method incurs the wrath of the arrogant and powerful Lucien, Duke of Camareigh. Again and again, these two strong personalities clash in a titanic battle of wills, even as an unwilling attraction seizes them both. But Lucien is promised to another and must marry to secure his estate.

Sabrina is bold almost to the point of recklessness as she does what she needs to in a harsh Georgian England which casts women as pawns. The utterly arrogant Lucien, although too abrasive for my taste, is appropriate to this period when an aristocrat's word was law. The villains, also, were too villainous for me, but again, are in keeping with this era of extremes.

As powerful now as at its first publication in 1977, MOONSTRUCK MADNESS transports you to a fascinating world of high drama and high stakes where power reigns until love finally wins.

ARC provided by Sourcebooks

Crystal ♥ RBtWBC says

Read this book over ten years ago and loved it. Happy to see it reprinted!

Susan (the other Susan) says

I MUST have read this; who could resist that cover back in the day?

Terra says

How often is it that you can say that a story has caught you by the seat of your pants from the first page of the prologue and not let you go until the very last sentence. This is one of those stories. It really took me by surprise and such a lovely surprise indeed it was.

Sabrina Verrick is a wee lassie that sees death and destruction up close and not very comfortable. A spirited child that has a bit of luck on her side that allows her to escape death's grip and flee to lead her family safely into exile penniless though they may be.

A Highland Hellcat exists in this little body of pure beauty but also one of determination and strength. She does what needs to be done for her remaining family to survive not only because of the primal need to provide and protect but also because of a hatred that is so encompassing that it's a wonder she doesn't self destruct with it's intensity.

Lucien, Duke of Camareigh is a bit of a frightening man with a scar that adorns one cheek and a temper that can singe the hair off one's head with just a quick glance. He's a man that doesn't take no for an answer and always gets what he wants but will his cost come so high as to cheat him out of a life of some happiness in a world where proprietary comes first and foremost?

Our hotheaded devilish Duke needs to marry to gain his inheritance and is on a strict time line in which to do this. Twin cousins are awaiting in the wings for Lucien to miss that deadline so that they may claim the riches and lands but to what lengths will these twins go to in order to claim a right not due to them by birth.

An interruption from a Highwayman named Bonnie Charlie and his two giant friends put a crimp in the Dukes bonnet so to speak as the thieves boldly take what they need when they want only to sneak away without a trace.

The story is a non stop action packed romance with sizzle, sparks and flames aplenty. If one doesn't ignite from a fit of temper then one will surely ignite from a blast of pure sexual intensity that you're damned if you do and damned if you don't.

Erin says

I skimmed alot. The plot was good but it became a little boring after awhile.Skimmed quite a bit actually. Going by Goodreads ratings-2 stars, 'it was ok.'

Naksed says

In another lifetime, I would have gobbled up this swashbuckling historical romance, complete with requisite scarred hero and cross dressing heroine who robs the rich to feed the poor. Part Robin Hood, part Zorro, this novel is definitely well written, with meticulous attention to minutiae of the period, however, the vast cast of characters, continuous contrived coincidences, and twisty plot developments became increasingly more implausible and juvenile.

Probably the best part of the novel was the terrifying and vivid description of the real life battle at Culloden Moor in 1746, one that rang the death knell for an entire culture and marks the beginning of the upheaval in our heroine's life. But what follows is rather tedious and dull.

My tastes in HR have definitely veered into dark and gothicky lately so this well-crafted novel that could have held me captive only a few years ago unfortunately could not pass muster presently. DNF at the halfway mark.

Regan Walker says

Scottish Heroine, masquerading as a Highwayman and a scarred English Duke make for an Absorbing Love Story!

Set in 1746 in Scotland (prologue) and 1751 in England, this is the story of Sabrina Verrick, the Scottish noblewoman, who along with her sister and brother survive after their grandfather, Laird of the MacElden clan is brutally slain by the English at Culloden Moor. They escape to England where they live in the country at the rundown estate of their father, an English marquis who abandoned them as children. There, to feed her family, Sabrina becomes the highwayman "Bonnie Charlie," robbing the rich to aid the poor.

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I highly recommend it.

This is the first in the Dominick trilogy. Here's the list:

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Chance The Winds Of Fortune (1980) their daughter, Rhea and Dante
Dark Before The Rising Sun (1982) Rhea and Dante (cont'd.)

Julie says

Moonstruck Madness by Laurie McBain is a 1977 Avon Publication.

When I noticed a couple of Laurie McBain's books were up for review on Netgalley, I didn't hesitate to request them. I am thrilled to see some of these books are being released in digital format. However, when I started on "Chance the Winds of Fortune", I realized the book was the second in the series. I didn't see the first book up for review, so I went into my vintage and collectable bookshelf to see, if by some minor miracle, I had a copy of this book. Being a big fan of Laurie's I did keep many of her books, so I was relieved to discover that I did still have a copy. YAY!

Written way back in the late 70's, this book might be tossed into the 'bodice ripper' category, but frankly, I didn't feel that way about it. Yes, there are some uncomfortable treatments of women, but despite what many would like to believe, these depictions were accurate and true to the time period. Other than that, this book is pretty much a standard historical romance for the time frame it was written in.

Sabrina has left her beloved Highlands of Scotland for England with her aunt, sister and young brother. They are not well off, and Sabrina takes part and even devises some dangerous stunts in order to keep her family afloat, until she crosses the Duke of Camareigh, who puts her little enterprise out of business. In order to survive, Sabrina will have to escape her father's plans for her, which leads her right back into the arms of Lucien Dominick.

I loved this story! It's a real classic and is tame enough that modern readers will find it just as enjoyable now as romance lovers did when the book was first published. Sabrina is bold, daring, and a woman who doesn't give up without a fight. I loved her determination, her cleverness, and her fiery passion.

Lucien was absolutely hilarious most of time, as the author depicted him so authentically. He is haughty, arrogant, and manipulative too, but his punishment is having to deal with Sabrina, the love of his life, who always keeps him begging for more.

The secondary characters were also key in this story and give it a very tiny paranormal element as well. There is lots of action, adventure, drama, and emotions in this one, and the writing is simply wonderful. When I read these older books, and find myself swept away, so immersed in another world, never wanting the story to end, I can start to feel a little wistful, wishing there were more books like these being written in present day. Thankfully, a publisher has seen the worthiness of these novels and are reissuing them, breathing new life into them, so that hopefully, a whole new generation will come to love these classics too. 5 stars!
