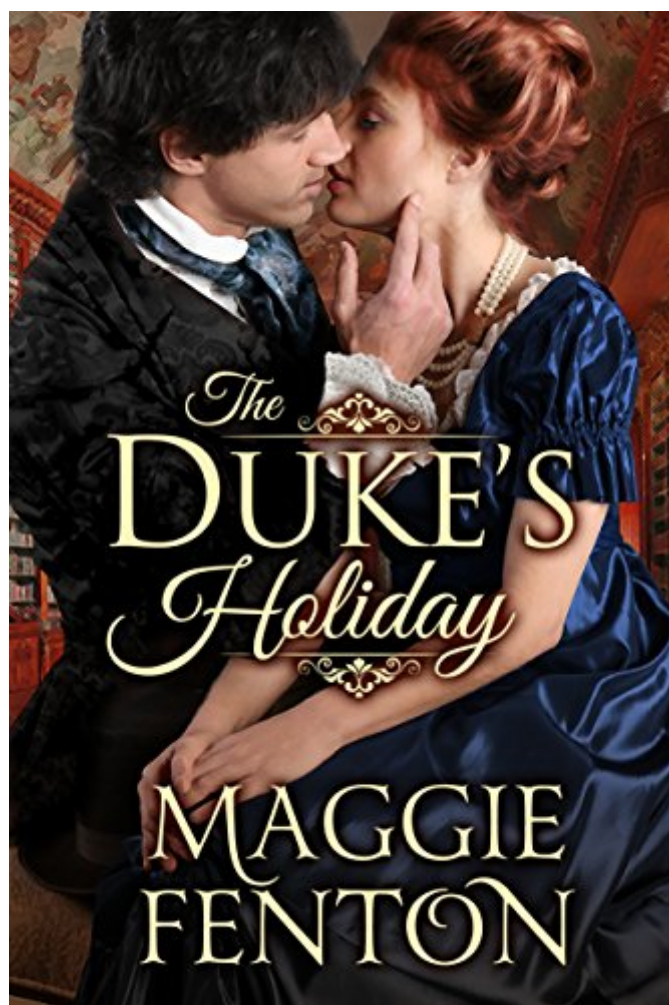


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The Duke's Holiday (The Regency Romp Trilogy Book 1)



Synopsis

The cold, precise Duke of Montford demands things his way: neatly ordered, in place, and adhering closely to the rules. So he is furious when he learns that the tenant of his ducal estate has been dead for a year, and a stranger has been running the Honeywell business—which, by contract, is now Montford's. When he arrives in Yorkshire to investigate, he discovers that the estate is being run by an unruly, tomboyish woman—and a bluestocking at that! Fiery redhead Astrid Honeywell is independent and educated. She's been handling the Honeywell family business for years. And she's not about to relinquish it to anyone—not even Montford—because of some archaic contract. Montford and Astrid have an instant hatred for one another—and an undeniable, unspeakable attraction. They must resist this improper desire—after all, Montford has a fiancée in London. But when Astrid's life is placed in terrible danger, Montford finds he may be willing to risk everything to save her. Revised edition: This edition of *The Duke's Holiday* includes editorial revisions.

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Customer Reviews

What a perfectly wonderful book! The last time I was this excited about a unique plot and witty dialogue was *The Duke's Tattoo* by Miranda Davis (which I heartily recommend). We have the requisite powerful, slightly bored, extremely handsome and wealthy Duke newly engaged to the perfect woman for his station in life. Of course, he wouldn't stoop to such a lowering emotion as love this was purely a business arrangement. She was beautiful and cold exactly what he wanted and planned for his life. Now, here's the twist. Closer examination of the Duke reveals some quirks. He is severely OCD fastidious to a fault with his dress, his cravats, his boots, his hair, his food, his books in short everything around him. Additionally, he faints at the sight of blood and gets deathly sick riding in a closed carriage. These issues are introduced so vividly that as a reader you can actually feel his discomfort when things are out of order. Naturally, the people he employs cater to his every whim. After all he's *THE DUKE*, Montford. It's only to be expected and all his life he's met with no obstructions to his prestige or wishes. Until the day he meets Astrid Honeywell. And, then the story begins. In a perfect pairing, the author introduces him to a heroine who is everything he's never encountered before. She has shockingly red hair, disordering his senses from day one. Worse yet, her eyes are different colors and if that weren't bad enough she has freckles! She lives in a crooked castle (that he owns), has a wildly rambunctious family and runs a brewery. She is fiercely independent and outspoken without apology. She is not at all in awe of his title or position - and he's never quite encountered anyone remotely like her in his life.. All these things drive him crazy, but his life is just beginning to be turned upside down. And what a tale it is...I don't think it's giving anything away to tell you he falls for her hard. And, she for him. Despite the attraction, they both valiantly fight against it, as they are total polar opposites. He never quite has time to mention his fiancée but you'll have to read it for yourself to see how that plays out. One complication after another ensues, but each is more delightful and fun than the one before. I absolutely loved it. I loved the humor, it was so very well done. I loved the author's voice it was genuinely witty and utterly charming. The banter was totally entertaining and this was another book that I hated to see end.

It was really enjoyable to experience Montford's "undoing" - his transformation from the most uptight person Yorkshire (or maybe even London) has ever encountered to someone who embraces life with all its uneven edges and burning wigs. On a much smaller scale we see Astrid transform, or at least come to a realization, that her family can and will survive without her overseeing every aspect

of their lives. To that end we have an H&H who are kindred spirits in the responsibility arena. And that's where the similarities stop. To say that they get along like oil and water (for 95% of the story) is putting it too mildly. Astrid's characterization was ridiculous in the extreme, a 26 year old who acts like a spoiled teenager. She runs a business, stomps, rants, flails, yells, wears trousers, has bluestocking tendencies, curses, has flaming red hair, freckles and curves -- you get the picture. Basically every independent Regency-era heroine cliché was rolled into one woman. (Oh, and these outstanding qualities garnered her two offers of marriage by upstanding community members, the vicar included.) Hmmm.... Montford was the more sympathetic of the two leading characters, especially given his traumatic childhood history, although his OCD and unbending will became tiresome rather quickly. The chemistry he and Astrid shared was exciting and suspenseful at times but the constant (and I do mean constant) bickering and immature behavior ruined the anticipation in many parts of the story. (Astrid kicks a ladder down when Montford is at the top of it because she's mad he followed her? Montford ties her hands up for their carriage ride after Lightfoot threw her in a carriage, tied her up and beat her? How is that romantic, Montford?) There are some amusing segments to the story which kept it moving at a good pace. I just wish there had been less teenage dramatics and clichéd characters (the dotty aunt, the bad guy - speaking of which, whatever happened to him? - the snooty London relatives, etc.) and more afterthought.

Well written, entertaining, amusing, witty & I adored both protagonists. The synopsis is accurate, and I won't elaborate on the story or plot. This is definitely not one of those angst filled romances where the hero/heroine suffer throughout until they end where HEA miraculously happens. This is light, funny and ridiculous (in a humorous way). I didn't even notice the length - well over 400 pages. The author keeps the storyline going very well. The hero Montford starts off sounding like a dry stick - OCD, pretty much friendless, a stickler for duty etc etc but it's quickly apparent that he has vast hidden depths. He & Astrid have a total dislike for not so much each other but what each represents. Neither can fathom what on earth the odd feelings are that the other makes them feel & brush it off as intense dislike (of course it's their chemistry and attraction!) The situations that the author puts them through before they get to their HEA or even before they realize it's really An Attraction they are feeling is so entertaining; interlaced with little touches of poignancy, this new to me author is definitely on my watch for list now. I waited with bated breath for their 1st kiss. Naughty Ms Fenton for teasing us poor readers (not to mention Montford & Astrid) for more than half the book. Definitely a keeper.

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