



Highland Soldiers 1: The Enemy

J.L. Jarvis

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Only an enemy soldier could save her life—and her heart.

Highlander Callum MacDonell battled lowland Covenanters at the service of the King. Now charged with hunting an assassin, his journey will lead not to justice, but to a murderer's passionate Covenanter sister, Mari McEwan.

Betrayed and abandoned by the man she loved, Mari faces judgment by a tribunal of her people demanding she name the father of her unborn child, or be exiled from her beloved home and family. Sick and trembling, she knows that she must refuse. And yet, if she does so, a cruel fate awaits her.

Book 1 in the Highland Soldiers series, Scottish historical romances set during the turbulent Covenanter times of seventeenth century Scotland.

Highland Soldiers 1: The Enemy Details

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From Reader Review Highland Soldiers 1: The Enemy for online ebook

Kelsey says

Lovely and enjoyable easy read

With most romance novels you think you can guess the end. But I kept expecting something to happen and it just didn't. That's not very sensible. But all of this to say that this was an enjoyable, quick read that kept me guessing (if maybe a little disappointed ?) until the end!

Jeanie's Kindle says

Enemies

Always a battle with Highlanders. If it's not a border war, it's fighting for the king, fighting a rival clan. Always a battle! Easy for a person to be confused about who the enemy is. It seems there are even enemies within the confines of your own church.

Tracey says

I enjoyed this a lot more than I thought I would. This isn't to say I went into it with the intention of dissecting it like I seem to do so often to romances; I went into it like I always do, hoping for a light, fun read that I could simply ... enjoy. I mostly got it.

It wasn't perfect. I made snarky notes on a few things:

"In battle, if someone sank a dirk into your heart, could you choose how it would feel?" 'No, but I'd let the wound heal.'

- I doubt a wound to the heart would be healing too fast.

"The rebels were unwilling or unable amongst themselves to agree, so the royalists began firing their field artillery."

- Dullest battle ever.

"He then used the guard's body as a sort of human stile to climb over the wall."

- It wasn't much of a prison wall, then...

"The two hundred and fifty-seven prisoners marched in two lines, chained together in pairs."

- How could an odd number be chained in pairs?

But I also highlighted things that I really enjoyed:

"Bloody hell, MacDonell. You've made a pish of it now."

"High ideals? The only thing high in this lout was in the front of his trews—that is, when he managed to keep it inside them."

"The whole human condition seemed housed in this camp, and Mari felt smaller with each step she took."

"Whisky willnae cure your leg, but it fails more agreeably than most."

The story follows Mari from her origin among Covenanters illegally clinging to their religion, through the terrible things that happen to separate her from her family, and into protection by Callum, the big Highland soldier who saved her life and who fell in love with her at sight.

There is some repetitiveness (yes, now I know women did not go to funerals), and some frustration as a character is given a lot more slack than he ever deserved. But what had the potential for a really galling love triangle was handled really nicely; dialect was used discriminately; there was nothing in the book that hit me in the face as an anachronism (my pet peeve). It was sweet and competently written and nicely told. Well done.

Jessica says

Cute story but...

It was a bit too choppy. When I read the first thing I notice is the writing style and the how smoothly the story transitions. Characters and events jumped around and thoughts and motions didn't transition well in this book. One minute characters are nowhere near each other then the next sentence their touching. I kept finding myself re-reading paragraphs and sentences to try and figure out how we got to where we were. I kept thinking I had missed something so I would go back and reread. Once I realized it was the authors writing structure, I just decided to plowed on so I could get through the story. That being said, I still enjoyed most of this book. It was a cute story and I genuinely enjoyed the dialogue as well as the setting.

Amy Bartz says

Heartbreaking love story

It's amazing what people do for love. Sad, sweet, sexy. Loss and heartbreak with good times and bad, Callum sticks by his word to love and cherish Mari, his wife, even when it's the hardest thing to do. I had a hard time put his book down.

Daniel says

An unlikely love was born between a King's Highlander and Covenanter

I really loved this story. A bit of the Scarlet Letter and religious oppression. I loved that it was based on

history bringing the period alive. Both sides were adequately presented passionately.

Barbara "Cookie" Serfaty Williams says

The Ememy: Highland Soldiers 1

The love story of Callum MacDonell and Mari McEwan. Mari was pregnant by Thomas. When Thomas' father arranged a marriage for him, he wanted Mari to take a drug to end the pregnancy. When she refuses, he forces her to take it. While she is miscarrying, she is put on trial and is told to tell them the name of father. Will she or will she be shunned?

Callum is sent to find Jamie McEwan, but he finds Mari and falls in love with her. Can he save Mari and still do his duty? Great story.

Marie Staton says

Excellent historical read

Enjoyed the historical aspects of this book. Calling exceptionally good hero, and Mari the heroine with a large heart. This book takes you through all their ups and downs. Had me in tears a few times. The secondary characters Alex, Charlie, Duncan and Hugh amazing. How they all came together as one big protective family.

Letha says

Sacrifice

This story goes deeply into the ugliness of the times portrayed. The church certainly was not a loving place but one of judgment and often death for the sinner. However love finds a way in a complicated maze of clans, politics and war. This story was like looking at the back of a crazy quilt and on the last page turning it over and seeing the beauty complete.

Jenny Thompson says

The writing was pretty sloppy, but it was an enjoyable enough read.

Leta McCurry says

Set in seventeenth century Scotland during The Killing Times, a time when, by royal decree, anyone worshipping in any church except the Church of Scotland could be and usually was executed on the spot. Highlands soldiers were brought down to the lowlands to enforce this law. This is the story of Mari, a

member of the unlawful religion, and Callum, a Highland soldier, who has been sent to enforce the law. Set against the tumult of the times, the story explores the complications of the attraction and love between enemies. The setting is vivid and the characters are well defined. Well written. I enjoyed it.

Roni says

I really wanted to like this book, but there were too many problems for me. For one thing there was way too much time jumping . Which also ties in to the next thing that bothered me there was way too many ideas for the book. Each idea that was presented was enough plot for its own separate book. For example it starts off with the two meeting as enemies due to religion. Later then it has a whole arc focused on him and his clan. And those were not the only two plots. Each plot could have been enough to be a book by itself.

Unfortunately I felt like the author didn't spend enough time on any idea. Thus the whole book felt disjointed for me. Even when months were not going by in a couple of paragraphs there was still a disconnect for me. I felt like i was reading more of a biography then a story. Overall i was left with the feeling of a little bit of everything but not much of anything. There was a lot of potential in the characters but i feel like they were never developed. Also there was something about the heroine that I can't put my finger on that caused me to dislike her

Delta says

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Kathryn says

No. Just no. I was feeling generous with the 2 stars. More like 1 1/2.

I was all in until just after Mari was rescued from judgement in her village(which was pretty early on). The writing was good, the story wasn't bad.. but then it just became to much.

Many of the plot points were historically accurate according to the notes at the back of the book. Historical accuracy can really enrich a story, but you lost me at the 'body for a body' tangent(and that was exactly how I saw it). Maybe I'm more peeved at the fact that that was actually a thing back then, but I checked out at that point. Historical accuracy be damned. I would prefer some embellishment over reading a story that makes me knotted up about how ignorant people can be, even if it was factually accurate. This book left me feeling uncomfortable and disappointed, not only in the plot lines, but the characters as well.

There was just to much going on in this book. Many of the side plots could have been left out without damaging the story line at all. Let's see... families divided by war/rebellion, premarital sex and pregnancy(a much bigger deal back then), suicide, rape, faked death, forced abortion, body for a body/transportation to the colonies, shipwreck/escape, being a fugitive, infidelity/bastard child, arranged marriage, to be an heir or not.. see what I mean? And it doesn't end there.

It seemed so easy for him to walk away and condemn Mari to the same fate as his mother for a family he had only officially been a part of for like 5 minutes. He didn't owe them anything. It made him appear to be weak in character from where I was sitting.

And I almost forgot about his best friend falling in love with his girl... it really had nothing to do with anything(unless it was a set up for book 2 in the series, I doubt I will get that far) and it was never resolved... for him or for us. I kinda remember Duncan ruminating about maybe it wasn't Mari he was in love with or he was just missing being in love because the love of his life left him or died or something... whatever. That is the feeling I came away with anyway. Like Mari was just a symbol of what he had lost?? I don't feel like I got to know him well enough to really care what happens though.

Started good. I was looking for some escapist adventure and romance. That is not so much what I found. Should have walked away earlier, but it's hard for me to leave a story half read.

Taria Reed says

6hrs into the book with 5hrs40mins to go and I'm BEGGING for something to happen.I'm BORED SILLY and I have no clue what could happen to spice this shit up but dammit i hope it happens soon.

back to the book.....

*****WARNING THIS REVIEW WILL CONTAIN SPOILERS. I SIMPLY DON'T CARE ENOUGH TO HIDE THEM BUT HERE'S YOUR WARNING*****

Usually I sit on a review for a day or two to wrap my mind around what I read. This story is the exception. This story had me annoyed from the first few chapters and it just got worse from there. A friend told me to just DNF the book but since I've only DNF 9 books since I got back into reading in 2006 I don't DNF lightly. SO I soldiered on and finished this book.

Where should I begin? Oh I know how about the book starting at chapter 11 then pulling a Tarantino and going back to the beginning and catching us up only to give us chapter 11 the cliffs notes version (because we already know what happens then). Seriously?

This book was just full of so much damn randomness my head spun. One moment Mari is chastising her brother (who is a total douche bag but I'll get to that later) and Ellen to her giving up her cookies to Thomas back to Thomas and Ellen's murder then to her cookies be so full of magic pussy dust that Thomas begs her to be his whore while he marries respectably. To Mari getting knocked up (don't gasp i told you this shit would be full of spoilers) to her trying to jump off a fucking cliff to love at first sight (such a fickle chick huh) to being forced towell this part made me very angry because after THIS action took place I mentally threw my hands in the air in surrender to all the fuckery that was to come. I'll not spoil this bullshit but you get the drift. The fact that mari was back on her feet and taking a new lover only a few days after this event happened SHOCKED ME TO NO END. I'm sure I wasn't the only listener asking WHAT THE FUCK LADY!?!?

Mari's life was a series of unfortunate events and the fact that SHE was the cause of all but one made me wanna throat punch her. Along the line Thomas shows his face again and here is where his true colors show. Thomas is the reason she is separated from her husband for so long, and when he shows up at her house KNOWING he is the reason she helps him and shows him in feeds him and never once considers telling the

others to avenge her husband's honor. She had the nerve to beg for his life even after he a) fucked over her husband, b) disregards her feelings, c) basically calls her a whore, d) stabs and kills a likable character (who's death was totally useless and gratuitous). If that were my brother? fucker you brought that shit on your self....Not my circus; Not my monkeys.

On to the NEXT issue. Duncan are you serious? Was there really a need for this poor excuse of a love triangle when poor Mari has been put through the ringer? Well I guess it can't be a love triangle when neither Callum or Mari knew about it. WHY EVEN PUT THIS IN? Chapter upon chapter of Duncan pining over Mari was totally unnecessary. I can understand the author wanting to set up a book 2 but really Boo you don't have to try so hard. Duncan, Alex, and Charlie were likeable enough that I wanted them (despite the all the fuckalicious plotlines you butchered) to find their loves and a happily ever after.

The Chief... This section of the book was ridiculous and i'm still confused about some things. I remember Callum telling Mari about his brother and how they were born on the "wrong side of the blanket" so imagine my shock when Callum took Mari home and it was mentioned that he was a bastard and she got upset because she didn't know. Um...weren't you there a chapter or so ago when he told you how his brother died? Being that i have an audiobook it's hard to go back and see if something has quotations around it or if it was suppose to be inner dialogue. If it was internal dialogue that was a huge fail because it came across the audiobook as him telling her the tea about him and his brother. also if it was internal dialogue it was a fail on the author's part for TELLING us the story multiple times instead of letting the shit play out so we find out when the character does. I'm not a writer but I totally get the show not tell concept. this book was FULL of tell. Why even introduce Lady MacDonald if she was just gonna be offed in the next chapter? I understand the need to use her pain to shape Callums station and upbringing but c'mon son!!

The marriage..... I saw this shit coming from chapters away. The moment the Glenn Gary started poo pooing Mari's attempts to learn how to run a house I knew. It was confirmed shortly after. Now Callum spent an afternoon with these people and not once did he say "My wife Mari". FO"REALZ!! YOu gonna play that game? And his utter cluelessness in the chapters that follow were totally out of character and frustrating. The beginning of the book had Callum portrayed as a strong leader, a man of intelligence and wit. Now he was being portrayed as a naive lad who didn't know what to do or how to behave. As if the man he was was no gone.

I've wasted more than enough time reading this book and even more time writing this longer than usual review. and I vow not to spend anymore of my time on this book or this series. I would like to say that this author has potential to be a good historical romance author but she's not there yet. I may keep an eye on her and see if future books (not in this series) get better but for now I'll put her on my not for me shelf. The sex in the books was glossed over as if she were uncomfortable writing about it. It would go from Callum thrusting up in to Mari to "moments later" or "Some time later". Honey if you can't write a sex scene to go with your book then just don't put them in. or at least put this book is PG-13 on the cover blurb or something to warn us. Ultimately the editor of this book did the author a disservice. I think a better editor could have helped the author to stay focused on the main story and led the author to the story this book could have been.

Story 1

Narrator 3

Best part of the story was a good narrator. I really think he was the only reason I stuck with this book until the end. THat and I really do hate not finishing a book.
