



# The Silvered Heart

*Katherine Clements*

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**The Silvered Heart** Katherine Clements

**The legendary figure of Kate Ferrars, the infamous highwaywoman, is brought gloriously to life in this gripping tale of infatuation, betrayal and survival.**

*'The distant thrum of galloping hooves conjures nothing but doubt and fear these days.'*

1648: Civil war is devastating England. The privileged world Katherine Ferrars knows is crumbling under Cromwell's army, and as an orphaned heiress, she has no choice but to do her duty and marry for the sake of family.

But as her marriage turns into a prison, and her fortune is decimated by the war, Kate becomes increasingly desperate. So when she meets the enigmatic Ralph Chaplin, she seizes the chance he offers. Their plan is daring and brutal, but it's an escape from poverty and the shackles of convention. They both know if they're caught, there's only one way it can end...

## The Silvered Heart Details

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Author : Katherine Clements

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# From Reader Review The Silvered Heart for online ebook

## Sophie Narey (Bookreview- aholic) says

Author: Katherine Clements

Published: 7/05/2015

I received this book for free through GoodReads FirstReads competitions.

I thought that this book was incredibly well written, and kept hold of the readers attention right from the very first sentence! This book is loosely based on the historical figure of Lady Katherine Ferrers. Katherine is an orphan who is married off, not for love but for convenience. The marriage is full of neglect and doesn't contain an ounce of love. When Katherine fails to give her husband an heir, her fortune begins to slip away and she decides to turn to a life of crime with a highway robber called Rafe Chaplin. Thing begins to turn for Katherine as the war is over and treason is rife.

If you love historical fiction novels then this is definitely the book for you! The characters are brilliantly well written and you end up feeling like you really know the characters. The book flows with a nice pace that never drops. I hope to read more books by this fantastic author!

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## Nigel says

I found the opening of this book, set at the time of the English Civil War, caught my interest. A young Kate, from a very respectable background, has an unpleasant experience with a highwayman. The book follows Kate from here and is really quite wide ranging. It has dimensions of politics, morality and feminism for example as well as others. There is passion and there is anger and I found Kate a well written and credible character. Given the era this is set in it is unsurprising that conspiracy is part of the story line with Cromwell having disposed of the king.

Kate marries, matures and changes. I found the writing highly evocative and of a very high standard. I also found it rather a roller coaster of a read. It is dark in places, melodramatic in others and very powerful at times. There were times I found my attention wandering a little however mostly the pace was good and I did want to find out what happened in the end. I thought that the attention to detail such as clothing, food, occupations and the like seemed well researched and effective. This is one of those relatively rare books where I can honestly say that the end was for me extremely good and sent shivers down my spine. There will be those who disagree however I'm happy with endings that do not tie up every loose end - books are about imagination.

Note - I received an advance copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for a fair review  
<http://viewson.org.uk/historical-fict...>

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## Vicki says

I've always been fascinated by outlaws and highwaymen and the legends that accompany them, so I knew from the off that the plot of The Silvered Heart was right up my street. But I didn't expect to love it as much

as I did. I literally couldn't put it down - and as I often say when a book keeps you up reading until 3am you know it's a good'un.

Katherine's writing style hooked me from the start; she's a very talented writer and has clearly researched her subject well. I'd actually not heard of 'The Wicked Lady' before, but after this I think I'll be embarking on some research of my own! Katherine Ferrers was wonderfully written - even though many of her actions were morally questionable I completely understood why she did what she did. Cast aside and downtrodden by her husband she yearns for a life of excitement, a way of bettering her circumstances without relying on men. Although Rafe does look out for her she likes the idea of their relationship in both a professional and personal sense being a partnership, a match of equals. I loved Rafe from the start - it's impossible not to be drawn into those amber eyes. I longed for Katherine and Rafe to find a way to be together, but of course this is not your standard historical romance fluff, and so things aren't quite so straightforward. Without giving too much away there's a twist that I was desperately hoping wouldn't happen, and I genuinely ended up reading a few pages through my fingers. I was absorbed completely in Katherine's story, and was sad to see it come to an end. That said, the way the book ended worked really well, especially the epilogue from Martha's point of view.

As Clements writes in her Author's Notes, Katherine Ferrers is a real historical figure, which only serves to make the story even more fascinating to me - although most of her 'The Wicked Lady' associations are but myth and legend. The historical context of this novel - the time of political unrest during and after Cromwell's regime - creates a tense backdrop, and with aristocrats and their peers displaced in society it is no wonder that some of them turned to extreme measures to ensure a future for themselves and their families.

5/5 stars: Katherine Farrers is a fascinating subject and character. Her story is the stuff of legend - prepare to be gripped. Easily one of the best books that I've read this year!

Full review here: <http://lilmissvixreads.blogspot.com/2...>

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## **Liz says**

What can you expect from this book? Plenty! I find I have this newly found love for historical fiction and The Silvered Heart delivered beautifully. A story set around a legend of the Wicked Lady, a highway woman who due to circumstances (a civil war, the high and mighty falling into poverty, power struggles) takes to the life of thieving to get by.

Overall reading experience was very good. The story was nice and flowy, it did not stall and moved across the times and years with a good pace. There was no plothes, and all the political turmoil of England was covered well and without overwhelming the reader.

Also, not to sound morbid, but every good historical fiction comes with a good measure of betrayal, heartbreak and drama- all those aspects are covered in The Silvered Heart. So, if you're perhaps looking for a read full of fluffy silken skirts being tainted by charming Princes, then move along! This is a book about a tough, if somewhat lost, woman and even tougher, feckless and selfish men. There are thoughts of a woman's duty to her husband and whether God or the Devil himself really have any say at all in a person's life.

The writing style was good in a sense that it helped me live into the 17th century setting well enough, even if

at times I was rolling my eyes, thinking- what a bunch of ignorant snobs! Also, the theme around religion, as is the norm for these times is something I always tend to squeeze past in a manner of “I read, but I switch off!”, but that’s just me- I just don’t do this Church/JC/God thing.

Anyway, to give you a short overview- Katherine is an orphan who marries her “cousin” Thomas Fanshawe and it is a loveless union where Thomas gains by Katherine’s heritage. One thing leads to another- she said, he said, she doesn’t deliver, he doesn’t deliver and you have a recipe for a quarrelsome home. Rachel is Katherine’s maid and friend and becomes a chesspiece at a certain point which I cannot reveal due to it being a spoiler. Rachel’s brother Rafe seems to fill in the empty spaces in Kate’s life in the role of a lover and a highway partner. And, during all this- we have Sir Richard Willis. What is he like?! I still wonder...

Even after finishing the book I still have so many questions about Willis- his relationship with Kate is something of a mystery to me. He came across as a selfish man yet reasonable man, but maybe that was the author’s intention- to let the reader fill in the blanks as per their own wishes. I have a quite a romantic view of the motives Willis was acting by towards the end of the book. But who knows...

Kate... a well written character. She frustrated me to my wit’s end at times. In my mind I called her a cruel, stupid and a greedy woman. Then I changed my mind and found her simply ambitious. She then surprised me by being hard working and levelheaded. Then I just thought her to be inexperienced and immature. I even labelled her with words such as disillusioned and crazy. But such is the way with women, eh? We want it, we get it, we don’t want it anymore and then we are confused. On that account her character is well developed keeping in mind that there isn’t many records of her true life’s events or that of her personality. The fictional story around her character paints a picture to me of a woman who simply does what she finds to be the best thing to do, yet I am not able to make up my mind whether I find her character to be mentally weak or strong. She seems to be dangling somewhere in between.

The silvered heart is a physical symbol Kate carries with her- given to her by the Queen when Kate was still a young child in the Queen’s care. A heartshaped pendant. I wonder, if this pendant would not have been in Kate’s possession would her choices, her whole life, have been different? I found the symbol to be of little importance to the story in the overall sense and yet it seemed to have power over the decisions Kate made.

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## **Zoe Hall says**

I absolutely love historical fiction with female leads and this book didn't disappoint. The Wicked Lady, the folklore story of Katherine Ferrers, is the central character of this story.

Katherine is orphaned and married off for convenience instead of love. The civil war underpinning England destroys Katherine's inheritance under Cromwell's reign. Her husband is neglectful and her marriage is loveless. Katherine also fails to produce an heir for her husband, Thomas, although this is not her fault. As Katherine's fortune slowly slips away, she begins a life of crime with highway robber, Rafe Chaplin.

Things take a turn for the worst, the war is over and treason is rife.

After finally falling pregnant, Katherine ends up injured during a hold up at Nomansland Common and subsequently goes into labour, faking her death and moving away with her newborn child.

For other interpretations of the Wicked Lady, read the author's notes at the end. Did The Wicked Lady exist

or is she the work of seventeenth century folklore?

A wonderful book with interesting characters, and a period of history I absolutely adore, under the somewhat turbulent reign of Charles II.

Would definitely recommend this book. Brilliant writing and excellent characters.

'Women cannot take up arms and ride into battle, but we must play our part all the same. Our role is more subtle, but no less important. We must use what talents we have to ensure the continuance of a family line. Family is what matters...We make our victories, and our legacies, in blood'.

'Thomas as host, raises his glass once more. "To King Charles". We all echo him and drain our cups. "And to our sworn enemy, Oliver Cromwell".

'The devil has a tight grasp on my heart. He is slowly turning it to stone, while he sets other parts of me alight'.

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### **Kate says**

One of my most enjoyable reading experiences of 2015 so far! This is a substantial book but I read it in its entirety in just one day, despite work and everything else that stole hours away from it. I loved the heroine from the very first chapter and from that moment on I was hooked - by the characters, the story, the historical and geographical setting and by KL Clements' gorgeous writing. An emotional read that makes time stand still.

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### **Imogen says**

Happy Publication Day!

I'm going to start by saying that my history knowledge is murky at best. School didn't teach me history in order so it took me way too long to realise this started just two years after *The Crimson Ribbon* did, although continues on much longer- from 1648 to 1660. The contrast between the two books and the experiences of the two protagonists is incredible and I'd recommend both books for a interesting juxtaposition of the time.

This book definitely didn't grip me immediately the way *The Crimson Ribbon* did, it took longer to get it's claws in but once they were in- they were in. Katherine Clements writing is the kind of writing that gets under your skin, the first person narrative meant the feelings of the character became my own to the point of being furious, hurt, jealous and devastated to a really unnerving degree.

If you've read my blog for a while, you know I love a good female character. And Katherine Clements has created just that in Katherine Ferrars. She's an aristocrat, she wants to stay that way and the Civil war is preventing that. She wants her home, an understandable urge, but she is married to a man who is a bit of a loser. She has to step up beyond what she thought possible to keep the family and his house afloat- becoming

the highwaywoman, a criminal, and finding allies in the most unusual places. This book shows a side of the Civil War that I've never really thought about before and makes a character that isn't hugely relatable- an heiress who believes her family name gives her a right to wealth- relatable.

440 pages of fantastic twists and turns, emotional writing, and an ending that'll stick with you for long after you close the book. The twelve year span gives such a length to this story, that you can see how this was not a quick problem/solution but a struggle that lasted over a decade.

"In a war where both sides claim to fight for God, it is no longer a matter of right or wrong- it's a question of which side is most determined."

Review originally posted on Imogen's Typewriter.

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## Joey Woolfardis says

*The Silvered Heart* fictionalises the story of the real-life English aristocrat Lady Katherine Ferrers, who became a highway woman due to her dwindling wealth and terrorised the Hertfordshire roads during the Seventeenth Century.

This book really started out strongly. I was initially drawn by the cover and by the storyline: women from history who took up more Male jobs or tasks tend to not be spoken about these days, so hearing of one who was acting out of the social view of women will always intrigue me. We are taken in seventeenth century with heavy emphasis on the Civil War that is raging the country and there is an extremely strong opening where the protagonist, Katherine Ferrers herself, is sexually abused by a highwayman.

But then the beginning turned in to a slow and progressively dull description of Ferrers selfish woes and I felt no sympathy for her whatsoever. She is a "poor" rich girl whose family die, leaving her as ward to the Fanshawe family, marrying at a tender age to Thomas, a Royalist whose absence makes her heart grow colder and more desperate. Her early marriage and life in her new home is written so slowly and with little action that it takes around 200 pages for the highway misdemeanours to begin.

There was also very little world-building and, apart from casual references to things that are happening during the war-stricken country, the only places we get to know, albeit very vaguely, are the places in which Katherine lives and spends most of her time. Even when she moves outward in to the world, either to the secret place with her lover Rafe, or on to the highways that they rob, there is vague world-building that only suggests what these places are.

It is also, though I cannot say whether it is purposefully so, heavily sexist against men. Every man depicted in this book is either a rapist, a liar or a cheat and there is no decency in any of them, except a blind loyalty toward the King and Country, or some other "noble" cause. I view this as coming from a very modern and Feminist approach to looking at history and I cannot really view this as historical fiction but a very romantic look at the past. Even the romantic figure of Rafe, who becomes the main reason Katherine falls in to highway robbing, is not portrayed as anything but a scoundrel and a liar, despite his best intentions. As it is not impossible to think of women in our past history as being other things than weak, numb and mild, it is also not impossible to think that there did exist decent men in those times, too, and that is where this book, and many others, seems to fall way short.

It started out very promising, though it quickly became a droll read that ignited neither my imagination nor my sympathy for the protagonist, who was throughout a selfish, stubborn woman who, although obviously and horribly forced to marry for her money, had a first-person narrative that took everything from me but gave nothing back. Having said that, I was not aware of this real-life woman and I think it's extremely important to have their stories told, it just was not perhaps told all that well here.

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## Girl with her Head in a Book says

Review originally published here: <http://girlwithherheadinabook.co.uk/2...>

When I was studying 1940s fiction, I watched *The Wicked Lady*, one of Gainsborough Studios most glittering productions. With Patricia Roc and Margaret Lockwood facing off over who would marry the rich guy (as much as Patricia Roc ever does face off – she tended to play saintly, presumably as a nice contrast to her off-screen private life), over-blown costumes and constant melodrama, this was one of my favourite films from the course. Along with *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*, *Millions Like Us* and *Passport to Pimlico*. Basically, I love 1940s films. I was immediately intrigued therefore when I received my review copy of *The Silvered Heart* which takes the myth of the Wicked Lady – the female highwayman – into the twenty-first century. Rather than a war-time morality tale about the evils of transgressing gender boundaries, this is more of a tale of girl power and it was terrific fun.

Katherine Ferrers loved Markyate Cell, her childhood home, and was promised by her mother and stepfather that one day she would be its mistress. However, fate in the form of the English Civil War intervened. The novel begins with her journey to marry Thomas Fanshawe, a wealthy heir but on the way they are accosted by highwaymen. In many ways, *The Silvered Heart* is dystopian fiction as Katherine and company are living in a world that has cast off all accepted rules. As a part of the Royalist faction, Katherine waits and waits for something to happen – Clements captures vividly the notion of a life lived ‘in the mean time’ – but Katherine is not the type of girl to sit back.

There are plentiful clichés at work here – Katherine is terribly rebellious, she likes to ride, does not pursue the feminine arts etc and of course her husband fails to satisfy her. She is basically Katniss Everdeen in a crinoline. I heaved a sigh when one character implies that Thomas was gay but was pleased to see that fictional trope inverted here. It's interesting how widely-used that notion has been in historical fiction over recent years – it's as if homosexuality is a recent invention which authors feel compelled to stick in wherever possible but it isn't the most imaginative notion.

I think that *The Silvered Heart* would have worked better had Clements fleshed out Katherine's relationships further. Her supposed ‘best friend’ and maid Rachel is never more than one-dimensional, which means that the apparent ‘mirroring’ between the two of them never quite takes off. They are supposed to look alike, act similar and be extremely close but Rachel never gets enough screen time for this to be convincing and it all felt like an act of author intervention, crow-barring this in. More convincing was Katherine's attraction to Ralf and her dilemma between her status as an aristocrat and her own quest for personal happiness.

I felt that this novel lacked the central focus which marked Clements' previous novel *The Crimson Ribbon* but it was still entertaining. I liked the constant grace that Martha offered to Katherine, knowing her crimes



but forgiving her even the very worst of them. Perhaps *The Silvered Heart* was no deeper a tale than Gainsborough Studios' *The Wicked Lady* but it was still enjoyable, with the same light prose and vibrancy that made its predecessor such an easy read. It was nice too to read a version of *The Wicked Lady* where the heroine gets to have her fun and not die horribly of a mysteriously bloodless wound (watch the film) – in short, an interesting update to the myth.

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## Mieneke says

After her wonderful debut novel *The Crimson Ribbon*, which focused on the Parliamentary side of the English Civil War, Katherine Clements presents us with an account of those on the losing side with her second novel *The Silvered Heart*. Using the story of the legendary Wicked Lady as a frame, Clements tells the story of Lady Katherine Ferrers, a noblewoman who lost everything due to the Civil War and as a consequence was reputed to have turned to highway robbery. It makes for an exciting story, but one that delivers a surprisingly strong emotional punch as well.

When we first meet Katherine Ferrers, or Kate, she's just thirteen and travelling to her wedding. She's to be married off for convenience, not love, but she is hopeful anyway. Travelling the roads in Civil War Britain is a dangerous proposition and so Kate doesn't arrive at her destination unscathed. I felt deeply for this young girl who arrives at her wedding traumatised and who without being given time to actually breathe is forced into a union neither partner seems to desire. And it is good that she caught my sympathy so early on, because Kate isn't always an easy character to like. She can be wilful, selfish and blind to the consequences of her actions to others.

We meet numerous secondary characters, but there are a handful among that stand out as major ones: Rachel Chaplin, her brother Rafe, Kate's husband Thomas, Martha Coppin, and Richard Willis. These five play seminal roles in Kate's life and they are quite complex characters. The way Clements develops them through Kate's eyes and yet allowing the reader to perceive that they might not be exactly who Kate thinks they are, is masterfully done. This is especially true for Rachel, who is Kate's best friend and maidservant, and for Thomas, Kate's husband, whose actions and treatment of Kate can often easily be interpreted in different ways. Clements skilfully wields the inherent subjectivity of a first person narrator, without making Kate an unreliable narrator.

*The Silvered Heart* is a fascinating exploration of privilege and the effects of its loss. When Parliament wins the war and executes the king, the old nobility that took his side loses much in the way of standing and fortune, leaving many destitute and struggling to survive. It is sobering to see how dismayed they are at their changed circumstances and how convinced many of them are that this goes against the natural order. Kate's automatic assumption that she deserves the station and luxury she was born to, her expectation for her inheritance to be restored and her refusal to accept the changed status quo, seems to have been the rule rather than the exception. Rafe challenges this and tries to make her see sense, but it is a hard lesson for Kate to assimilate. Yet we also see that those who have gained wealth and power through the Civil War are loathe to give it up and lose their new-found privilege. Clements may not have been thinking of this, but I found it quite relevant to today's world.

The exploration of privilege also made me question why Kate rebelled. Was Kate's defiance of custom and law due to her straitened circumstances, her desire for a less-restricted life than that of a lady, or her anger at the loss of privilege? How much of her resentment towards Thomas was due to his not being able to provide what she expected as her due? Kate is an independent spirit and as such she might not have been suited to the

regimented life of a wife of noble birth, yet some of the reasons for her anger seem to go beyond her having to conform to society's expectations of a wife. Clements manages to make the reader sympathetic to Kate's plight and her actions understandable, without blinding us to the more unpleasant realities of Kate's character, which is an admirable accomplishment.

Reading *The Crimson Ribbon* and *The Silvered Heart* back to back allowed me to see some interesting similarities and contrasts. The contrasts are easily spotted. Where the former dealt with those on the side of Parliament, the latter deals with Royalists, and while the former is limited to roughly the three years leading up to and around the king's beheading, the latter runs far longer, until after the Restoration. The similarities are perhaps less obvious, but striking nonetheless. In both cases our protagonists are young girls on the cusp of womanhood and in both cases they are orphaned. Both Ruth and Kate feel the loss of their mothers keenly and try to replace their close bond with them with another; in Ruth's case she finds its replacement in Lizzie, in Kate's case it is Rachel. Though the sort of friendship and relationship between them is quite different, in both cases it is a relationship that allows them to change and grow into the women they come to be. It'll be interesting to see whether Clements explores a similar bond in her next novel or whether it was just a happy coincidence in these narratives.

I loved *The Silvered Heart*. Katherine Ferrers makes for a captivating heroine and when I had to put down the book because it was time for bed, I dreamt about the characters, woke up and finished the book. I just had to know. With her second novel Katherine Clements establishes her credentials as a fabulous writer and a master storyteller. I can't wait to see where she goes next.

This book was provided for review by the publisher.

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## **Dawn says**

I received a copy of this book for free through Goodreads First Reads.

It's been a long time since I've read (and enjoyed) a book like this. One that is so gentle and calm, that you're not really sure if you've read anything at all. I guess the word I'm really looking for is "ephemeral".

The writing is faultless - absolutely spotless and polished to perfection.

The story is, yes "ephemeral"... until a few gasps near the end.

I didn't want to care about any of the characters, but that didn't stop a few tears escaping in the last gasps of the book's life.

A haunting historical novel, that may or may not be true - I would bet it is as close as anything has ever come to the tale of the "Wicked Lady".

Pretty gobsmacked.

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## **Alisha Tarran says**

Okay, so I was really excited when this showed up in the post, it was the best surprise ever considering I loved *The Crimson Ribbon*, it was totally perfect and so was this, I can't even begin to tell you guys!

This book is totally engrossing, it sucks you right in to the time period and keeps you there while you read, I read this in one sitting because I couldn't put it down or tear myself away from the world. The time period is brought to vivid life by the authors writing and world building, and her historical knowledge gives you a perfect understanding of the politics of the time, and you leave the book with a feel for what it was like to live in that time.

I didn't really know much about the time period, but after reading the book that's very different. The book is filled with historical fact without being laid out in pages of background information that you have to slog through, the history is woven in with the plot and there's a lot to learn from the book. I feel like I've learned more than I ever would have in a history lesson and in a much better way, a way that means that my brain has absorbed the knowledge like a sponge. I don't know if I've mentioned before, but I can learn my lines and remember them perfectly, but ask me to remember anything else and I fail unless it's something that interests me and my brain decides to hang on to the knowledge! Which is why I was good at history and sucked at everything else!

Anyways, I'd never heard about The Wicked Lady before, but once I'm done typing this I'm off to see what else I can dig up about her, there was never any confirmation about who she was, but the author has taken a theory, and come up with a plausible plot and story as to who the highwaywoman was and what her motivation was. The authors note at the end tells you everything the author knows about Katherine, which isn't much, no-one even knows how she actually died unfortunately, whatever Katherine's real story, I'd wager this one had a marginally happier ending.

The plot was intriguing, the writing compelling. The plot is full of betrayal and drama and intrigue and plots and was engaging until the last page. You're sucked in to Katherine's world and trying to decide who can be trusted, right along with her. There where plenty of plot twists and turns and it would appear Game of Thrones hasn't hardened me to character deaths or killed off my sense of hope because when Rafe's execution happened, I was like "someone's going to save him.....any time now....okay maybe he's not actually dead and they switched him with someone or something...". I think my heart broke when Rafe was hanged. It genuinely did, and then when Willis appeared and I lost all hope that it had been a trick, my heart broke again. I so wanted her to get her happy ending.

In case you couldn't tell, I connected with Katherine, I felt everything she felt right along with her. The betrayal from Rachel, the frustration the sense of being trapped, the heart break at Rafe, everything. It's an emotional read, or at least it was for me. Katherine is brought to colourful and believable life, I don't know what really happened to the real Katherine, but this version of her life is written so well it's totally believable if you didn't read the author's note and learn this isn't true.

The Silvered Heart was an emotional read, with a character you come to love, and feel for. The Silvered Heart blends historical fact and fiction seamlessly so you're left eager to learn more about the events and the people, and learn what was and was not true. You come away from the story having been totally engrossed and sucked in to England at this particular time period, having learned more about the history of the time and the events and the politics and the people, while still having read an engaging and gripping story. I really do love this author's work, and I hope she continues to write many books, because I'm looking forward to her next offering.

Now, if you'll excuse me, the heart break of Rafe's death so soon after McDreamy's this week on Grey's has left me requiring copious amounts of ice cream! \*ugly sobbing\*

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## Emma says

I'm a great fan of historical fiction but I've never come across a historical novel surrounding the time of Charles Stuart, a king I'm embarrassingly not that familiar with. I know the basics of his reign but I was immediately eager to pick up this book to get more of an outline of how life was under his reign and exile.

This isn't a book surrounding King Charles but those of his loyal and unloyal subjects, to decipher who belongs on which is rather a complex one. Here in this novel we enter the life of Katherine Ferrars a fairly well off lady who marries Thomas, a not so loveable husband who is away and with little to provide for Katherine. From here on Katherine is faced with a number of choices on how to provide for her household as well as herself and faithful friend Rachel, but things become desperate and more hopeful for Katherine as she encounters Rafe Chaplin- a highwayman.

Learning the ways of being a thief on the road, takes its toll on Katherine filling her with a sense of freedom and adventure, with a hint of adrenaline she becomes infatuated with Rafe's way of life and soon she falls for him and vice versa. Through struggles, deceit and heartbreak their lives intertwine with others and soon a spiral of lies and corruption evoke amongst their happiness.

Never mind King Charles knowing who to trust, who can Katherine trust? Not many that's for sure.

I was totally captivated by Katherine's life, she's a powerful, strong willed woman who is prepared to stand up for what is her's by right and unafraid of being who she is. She presents the woman who can look after herself, not needing a man to provide for her. I loved how gutsy she was, but admittedly she was brave in going against her husband and lying to her closest friends.

At times it did seem that she only cared for herself but I believe deep down and from how the book concluded she only ever wanted a simple and happily life for herself and loved one's where she felt she could provide rather than relying on those who were unreliable and untrustworthy.

The plot was gripping and the characters were so well developed, a nasty character called Willis although a bit of a horrible man was quite charming at times and devious which added to his great appearance. I think anyone who has read this will agree he is the bad guy that you kind of life- oops!

I think anyone who loves historical fiction should give this book a go, I really loved it and it's made me want more historical fiction books set in the 17th century! Katherine Clements for me is a brilliant writer, this book is so exciting and a complete page turner and I'm excited to read more of her novels!

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## Christy says

This book is fairly loosely based around the historical figure of Lady Katherine Ferrers, who has a sad tale to tell of a lonely heiress whose unwanted husband squanders her family home and inheritance and then some. A loveless union, for despite the unpleasant effort of trying, she can't seem to produce an heir with him and he leaves her mostly alone, bordering on penniless, forced to labour herself with just a few servants, such as her trusted maid Rachel. The legend has it - and this book follows that idea - that she turned to highway robbery in order to make ends meet. This book is part drama, part romance, part action. The historical details of Lady Katherine aren't really known, as it wasn't exactly a period of time when great records were kept, but

Katherine Clements has turned the legend into an engaging story of love, betrayal, crime and desperation, woven around the political details of the death of the king, the implementation of parliament, the rise of Cromwell, and the ensuing battle between the Protectorate and the Royalists. A very tough time to live in, especially for those who like the Ferrers family, were close to the monarchy. The politics takes place very much in the background, but fleshes out the drama with interesting detail.

I thought it was quite slow to get started, with a lot of build up - but this helps to immerse ourselves into the character of Kate, and her journey from being a young heiress, filled with hope for a family and future with her husband, to desperation and near-starvation. It is an introspective journey for her, as she discovers the joy of actual love, but struggles with wondering if the devil is inside her, causing her to do the things she does.

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### **Allie Riley says**

Set in the tumultuous years following the English Civil War leading up to the Restoration and beyond, this novel makes the case for Lady Katherine Ferrers as the legendary "Wicked Lady", a seventeenth century highwaywoman. Together with her lover and accomplice, Rafe Chaplin, they plague the roads of Hertfordshire amidst a backdrop of treachery, love and intrigue. Beautifully written, I was totally absorbed by this and read it in just two sittings. I will be seeking out more by this author. Recommended.

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