



The Duke of Danger

Darcy Burke

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After killing his opponent in a duel, Lionel Maitland, Marquess of Axbridge, is known as the Duke of Danger. Tortured by guilt, he shields himself with a devil-may-care attitude. However, when he kills another man in another duel, he's beyond redemption, even though it wasn't his fault. He refuses to smear a dead man's name, especially when he's left behind a blameless widow who doesn't deserve an even bigger scandal.

Widowed and destitute, Lady Emmaline Townsend must marry the man of her parents' choosing or beg unsympathetic relatives for support. The only way out is to ask for help from the one man she's sworn to hate, the man who owes her anything she asks, the man who killed her husband. They strike a devil's bargain in which passion simmers just beneath the surface. But her dead husband's transgressions come back to haunt them and threaten their chance at love.

The Duke of Danger Details

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From Reader Review The Duke of Danger for online ebook

Dee Deacon Foster says

Lionel Maitland, Marquess of Axbridge, earned his nickname – Duke of Danger – on the dueling field, a fact that eats at Lionel’s soul. The latest casualty leaves behind a destitute widow which only compounds Lionel’s guilt. An offer of help is met with uncontained hatred and Lionel vows to leave the widow alone; though she’s never far from his thoughts.

After her husband is killed, Lady Emmaline Townsend is left at the mercy of her parents and must abide by their wishes or fend for herself. Despite her loathing for the man who killed her husband Emmaline makes the decision to accept his offer of help by requesting marriage in name only. Lionel accepts this as his punishment for killing yet another man and agrees.

What follows is an intricate dance as these two wounded souls discover there is more to the other than they expected. When outside forces conspire against them will their new-found appreciation and trust withstand the onslaught, or will the slender threads break beyond repair?

Ms. Burke demonstrates once again why she is one of my favorite authors. Emmaline’s hatred is palatable, and Lionel’s guilt can be felt to your very soul. Anxiously awaiting to see which Duke Ms. Burke has in her sights next!

Barbara Rogers says

Series: The Untouchables #6

Publication Date: 9/26/17

Oh, my. I think I am in love – with Lionel Maitland, Marquess of Axbridge (Duke of Danger). Yes, he has fought in three duels ending in two deaths, but the duels were fought for honorable reasons. They were fought to avenge the death of his father, to protect a child and to protect a friend and her child. What else was he to do when the miscreants wouldn’t stop, back down or apologize? He always tried everything he could to avoid the duels, but in the end, they couldn’t be stopped. Lionel is really a very sweet, very loving, very loyal, but extraordinarily honorable man. Another thing I liked about him – he came from a very loving family and had a very strong, loving bond with his father. What is not to love?

Lionel is guilt-ridden over the deaths and they haunt him – especially the last one. He’s filled with self-loathing and feels he doesn’t deserve anything good or loving in his life. He is sure anything bad that happens to him is deserved. He is so guilt-ridden that he banishes himself to Ireland after the duel – to pay penance.

The book opens with the scene of the third duel. The opponents are on the field, the path is laid out by the seconds, the count has begun – and – a shot is fired . . . then another . . . both are wounded . . . one will die . . . one will suffer. One leaves behind a destitute widow and the other will do all in his power to help her if she will let him.

Eight months later, Emmaline, Lady Townsend is still angry, very, very angry at Lionel. Everything bad in her life over the last few months is because of him. She has planned her revenge very carefully and is ready to execute her plan. However, fate intervenes in the form of her parents. They have arranged a marriage for

her to a lecherous older man that she cannot even imagine spending her life with. What will she do? She hurriedly develops a plan because her father is to sign the betrothal contract the next morning and he just told her today. She will force Lionel to marry her – a marriage totally in name only. She will have total autonomy, he will pay the bills and there will be no intimacy of any kind and no children.

I certainly didn't warm up to Emmaline as quickly as I did to Lionel. She didn't seem to have a lot of self-awareness and blamed others for her problems – mostly Lionel. She had been feeling pressured, by her parents, to marry. So, she elopes with the handsome man who pays attention to her at a house party. She doesn't know him at all – she romanticized him – but she married him. Then she was surprised when he wasn't the man she thought he would be. Well – duh! Then, when her parents are arranging her second marriage she has a knee-jerk reaction. Granted, she had little to no time to plan a real escape from her situation, but, what was her first reaction? She'd make Lionel marry her – because he owed her everything.

Lionel is standing in the way of a very dangerous man and that man is determined to remove Lionel from his path – by any means necessary. Will Lionel survive?

Emmaline and Lionel certainly don't have a very auspicious beginning to their marriage but, if they work together, they can make it a success. Lionel wants that from the beginning but Emmaline wants nothing to do with Lionel and it takes her much longer to figure out that Lionel isn't the man she thought he was either – but in a much better way than with her first husband. As she discovers who he is – and it starts with a tiny black kitten with jade green eyes – she comes to respect, admire and, yes, love him. However, love may not be enough for them. Being near Emmaline is a constant reminder to Lionel that he killed her husband. He can't forget it and sometimes he can't be near her because of it.

This is a great read – and I certainly recommend it. However, there were a couple of things that niggled at me as I read.

** The author used the word shagged several times. I know the term came into use in this context in the late 1700's, but it just sounded too modern to me. The author did nothing wrong there – it was all me. I just didn't care for it.

**When Lionel was challenged to a duel by Sir Duncan, it was Sir Duncan who chose the weapons, time and place. I believe it was the right of the person challenged to choose the weapon, not the challenger.

**When Emmaline has a need to use Lionel's dueling pistols, she manages to do it in the dark, in the room with a murderer and very quietly. I don't believe that dueling pistols would have been stored loaded. That would mean that she had to pack, prime and load the pistol in the dark without making a sound. Just doesn't sound plausible to me.

None of those things kept me from enjoying the story – they just sort of picked at me.

"I requested and received this e-book at no cost to me and volunteered to read it; my review is my honest opinion and given without any influence by the author or publisher."

Sissy's Romance Book Review says

'The Duke of Danger' by Darcy Burke is Book Six in "The Untouchables" series. This is the story of Lionel Maitland, Marquess of Axbridge and Lady Emmaline Townsend. I have read the other books in this series (and loved them!) but feel you can easily make this a standalone book.

Lionel is dubbed with the nickname "Duke of Danger" by the Town. Lionel doesn't fare well have each duel. Although he is left a left with his life, it has effected his feelings. This has sent him into a tails spend with his life. Emmaline is left a widow after her husband attempted to duel with Lionel. Emmaline was furious with Lionel and hasn't been shy about him knowing it. Now that her year of mourning is getting near to being over, her parents are going to force her hand to marry. Emmaline feels that since it is Lionel's fault that she is left a widow with a husband debt and a wish to have her freedom..she confronts Lionel. Emmaline insist that Lionel marry her and then allows her to live her own life.

Emmaline does come off with a strong one side point of view but she is slowly shown that Lionel isn't as guilty as she though.

Another great story by Ms. Burke!

"My honest review is for a special copy I voluntarily read."

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Caz says

I've been enjoying Darcy Burke's *The Untouchables* series, although I'll admit I was rather disappointed in the last instalment, The Duke of Defiance and wasn't sure I was going to read further. But I decided to put that one down as an aberration and I'm glad I picked up **The Duke of Danger**, which is a much more strongly-written and well-conceived story than the previous one. The eponymous duke isn't actually a duke, but the ducal nicknames were invented – tongue-in-cheek – to show that the gentlemen in question were of the highest echelons of society and far above the touch of the young ladies who coined them – as well as to be alliterative ;). **The Duke of Danger** shows a different side to the dashing hero who has fought many duels and escaped with nary a scratch; Lionel Maitland, Marquess of Axbridge, is a man of great integrity and honour who has acquired his moniker because of his involvement in a couple of duels in which he either killed or badly wounded his opponent, but who in no way sees these events as badges of honour. Instead, he is haunted by the fact he has taken life in cold blood and hates himself for it.

It's with a heavy heart, and as a last resort, that Lionel calls out Viscount Townsend for threatening to besmirch the honour of a lady who is one of Lionel's oldest and dearest friends. He gave Townsend every chance to recant, but the man refused, leaving Lionel with one alternative – he will shoot wide in order to merely graze his opponent and take whatever comes his way. But when Townsend turns and fires before the end of the count, Lionel reacts instinctively and out of self-preservation – and shoots the man in the leg instead. It's believed the wound is not a fatal one – but days later Townsend dies and impulsively, Lionel pays a visit to his widow, telling her she can call on him if there is ever anything she needs. After that, as he has done before, Lionel leaves England to escape the gossip and in an attempt to dull the agony of regret.

Townsend's death has left his young widow, Lady Emmaline, with nothing but debts. She is furious with Axbridge, furious with Townsend for leaving her in this position, and furious with her parents who are set on forcing her to remarry a man who is distasteful to her. She fell madly in love with Townsend and consented to elope with him in spite of her parents' misgivings; misgivings which were borne out when her husband started to spend more and more time away from home, stopped coming to her bed and began to incur large gambling debts. She can't help feeling a sense of relief that she has been released from a marriage which was clearly heading for disaster, but then feels guilty for it, and angry at herself. Emmaline has quickly transitioned from the happy, optimistic debutante who ran away with the man she loved and has become

jaded, cynical and hardened. When she hears Axbridge has returned to England she hatches a plan to humiliate him in front of a large gathering of the ton, but has to change tack when her father tells her he has bestowed her hand in marriage to the lecherous Sir Duncan Thayer. She reminds Axbridge of his offer to do anything he can to help her and tells him that he can do something – he can marry her. She makes it clear that the marriage will be in name only and that he must accept that she will never forgive him. She will live in his house until he can purchase a house for her and while she is there she expects to have as little to do with him as possible. She will not take meals with him, she will not accompany him into society, she will certainly not provide him with an heir. In exchange he will settle her remaining debts and will provide for her for the rest of her life.

It's a terrible deal, but Lionel feels it's his just desserts given the pain he has caused her, and they are married by special license the very next day.

I do love the marriage-of-convenience trope, and I don't think I've read a romance before in which the heroine marries the man who killed her husband, so kudos to Ms. Burke for coming up with an unusual premise, and for creating a couple of interesting and engaging characters. Emmaline is certainly not easy to like at first, determined as she is to make Lionel's life a misery. Eventually, however, she begins to admit that her first marriage had been failing and that she had not been happy for some time. Lionel is by far the easier of the two to sympathise with, even though he occupies some rather shaky moral ground because he has killed two men and believes himself ultimately responsible for the death of a third. He duelled for sound, honourable reasons; once to avenge his father's death, once to protect a child and once to protect a friend – but even so, he is filled with self-hatred and believes he no longer deserves the sort of happiness he has always longed for and had experienced as the child of two loving parents who cared for him and each other very deeply.

Emmaline eventually realises that in attempting to punish Lionel by dooming him to loneliness, she is punishing herself as well, so she starts to relent just a little. She takes a few meals with him, engages him in conversation... and begins to realise that she has badly misjudged him. But even then, things are not at all easy and it seems that for every step forward the two make in their relationship, they take two back. The sparks fly between them right from the start, and the author creates and builds the sexual tension between them extremely well; but even once they have broken Emmaline's no-sex rule, the road ahead of them is still strewn with potential pitfalls.

One thing they have strongly in their favour is that they actually communicate with each other honestly, which is very refreshing in a genre prone to secrets and misunderstandings. There are a couple of times in the story when I suspect a less experienced author may have chosen to have one or other character keep a secret in order to create unnecessary drama; Ms. Burke wisely doesn't take that option, and I very much appreciated it.

The Duke of Danger is angsty, but not overwhelmingly so, and the HEA is certainly very hard-won, and well-deserved. The secondary plotline involving the search for a blackmailer is deftly dovetailed into the romance, and serves to flesh out the backstory involving Townsend and the reasons for the duel as well as to provide some drama towards the end. There are a couple of details that had me scratching my head (I thought that when challenged to a duel, the challengee got to choose the weapons, time and place, not the challenger), but overall, this is an enjoyable, emotionally satisfying read with an unusual premise, and most definitely earns a recommendation.

Monique says

Lionel Maitland, the Marquess of Axbridge, had truly earned his nickname of THE DUKE OF DANGER: three duels, and two men dead. The latest had occurred eight months prior. Geoffrey Townsend had cheated, and Lionel acting on a reflex had shot Townsend, who subsequently expired. Lionel had never gotten over his guilt over the two previous duels, and this one almost undid him. Lionel had gone to see Lady Emmaline, Townsend's widow, to offer his condolences and tell her that were she ever to need anything at all, he would be there for her. Emmaline could hardly contain her fury at the man who made her a widow, and now burdened with her late husband's debts. Yet, to her everlasting shame, Emmaline is secretly relieved: her marriage had been a love match until it quickly deteriorated. After a suitable period of mourning, her parents decide it's time she remarried, and chose a husband to their liking, again. Rather than marry the horrid man they have in mind, Emmaline remembers Lionel's promise: he will help her.

I will say not one more word about what ensues because Darcy Burke stunned me with several plot twists I would never have imagined! THE DUKE OF DANGER is one of those books where you must look at the situation from every angle, and Ms. Burke had me on the edge of my seat until the epilogue. THE DUKE OF DANGER has one of the most intricate plots I have ever seen in a historical romance that does not involve spying or a real mystery as such. Still, as one revelation follows another, the situation becomes more and more complex. The almost untenable tension between Emmaline and Lionel ever so gradually begins to ease, when both realise they must try to make the best of an impossible situation.

THE DUKE OF DANGER is daring, smart, intense, dramatic and thought-provoking. Each and every character is meticulously drawn and as complex as non-fictional individuals can be. Readers who might have read my reviews know that sex scenes are often a sore point for me in historical romances, but in THE DUKE OF DANGER, they are essential to advance the story and contribute vastly to character development; they are also very sensuous and beautifully done. THE DUKE OF DANGER is a riveting story with unusually strong and unique characters that kept me enthralled. Darcy Burke is a remarkable storyteller and I am already awaiting with bated breath her next story.

I voluntarily reviewed an advanced reader copy of this book.

Kim Vanravenswaay says

If only people knew what it does to Lionel every time he duels. He is a man of honor, and he tries to do the honorable thing. So when the Widow of the last man he dueled asked him to marry her for convenience only, he felt honor bound to grant her wish. It's the little things that he does and the things that people tell her about him that make her doubt the things she believed about him. The story pretty much is just Lionel and Emmaline, with just glances of their friends. The Duke of Danger is a very enjoyable book to read.

Becca says

The Duke of Danger is the sixth installment in Darcy Burke's addictive Untouchables series. I have read every one and I see no sign of Burke slowing down! She has a lot of material to work with and I enjoy the world she is building a little bit more within each new book. Honestly, I think Burke is super woman in her

ability to consistently publish books that are this good every few months!

This story features a jaded Miss Forth-Hodges (friend of Ivy and first featured in Duke of Deception and Duke of Desire) who is now Emmaline Townsend after a scandalous elopement. The book opens with the hero, the Marquess of Axbridge (friend of West from Duke of Desire), accidentally killing Lord Townsend in a duel. The marquess, Lionel, is eaten alive by his grief, especially because this is his third duel and the second time his opponent has died from wounds sustained. As a result, he impulsively approaches Emmaline and tells her that she can always call upon him for anything she needs.

Emmaline has been transformed from a light-hearted debutante into a disillusioned, bitter woman as a result of her marriage and the tragic results of the duel. Needing someone to blame, it is easy for her to direct her anger at Lionel. Debt-ridden after her husband's death, she is forced once again beneath her parents' thumbs, she soon finds herself in the awful position of a forced marriage with a lecherous man. In desperation, she tells Lionel he must marry her on her terms. Lionel, who is burdened with his own demons and believes he deserves no happiness, agrees. And this is where the book really starts.

As you can probably tell by the set-up, both characters have some serious baggage. While Burke usually creates layered characters with hidden pain, I believe that this may be her darkest book and hardest won HEA yet. Lionel is a gorgeous hero whose only real flaw is his honor, which, because of it, leads him into violent situations time and again on behalf of others. He doesn't believe in happiness for himself and has become convinced that he deserves to be miserable the rest of his life as penance for the lives he took. Emmaline is harder to like, but I kept turning pages because I could tell that she was a damaged woman in want of redemption. First her parents, then her husband, and then her fate is torn yet again by a duel. She is in a whirlwind and a very dark place. Despite all her venom and coldness, Lionel still makes an effort with her and slowly, his kindness and endless patience begin to thaw and make an impact. For her part, Emmaline sees that Lionel is defined by more than just the duels and she starts to see the man beneath the reputation and piece together what really led to all the duels throughout the years.

This story was easy to read (I love Burke's breezy writing) but angst. The characters are at odds with each other and Lionel's history puts him firmly in the gray area of morality. I inhaled the book and couldn't stop reading as I saw the subtle shift in the relationship start to take place. The chemistry was off the charts and the sex scenes were great. If anyone read and enjoyed Caroline Linden's Love in the Time of Scandal, I felt that some of the antagonism and sparks in this one was similar to this and equally compelling.

My only quibble was the ending. I don't want to reveal any spoilers here so I will stay a bit vague. I really didn't like the choices the characters made at the end. I've been thinking about it for a day to try and determine how I feel. And I believe that Lionel should not have acted as he did. It didn't align with all the vows he'd made to himself and Emmaline throughout the story. The actions of the heroine also were a bit unbelievable because first, she almost got him killed and then her skills to "save" him were unbelievable as a result. It was over the top and wrapped up neatly and just not quite as satisfying as I'd hoped after the tough journey the two had faced together. I think I'd have preferred less action and a quieter ending than what it was. For those who also read this story, I'd be interested to know your take and would love to discuss!

Overall though, I thought this was a fascinating romance. It was hard won and there were times I thought that it would never work. But it does. Emmaline is vicious and Lionel is depressed, but slowly, each moves towards meeting the other half-way...Emmaline in a little slower fashion than Lionel, but she does get there. I'd recommend this story for those who love darker romances and a tough HEA. While I would've liked the ending to be different, I still enjoyed this romance very much and cannot wait to read the next one.

Thank you to the publisher and author for a chance to read and review a complimentary copy. All opinions in this review are my own.

Janett says

4.5 Dangerous stars!

I have to say, this is the BEST of this series! Lionel and Emmaline gave me relentless fits but their romance, oh my... what an incredible, heartfelt story! So much angst but exactly the type of romance I would expect from Darcy!

“*The Duke of Danger*” is book #6 in Darcy Burke's, “*The Untouchables*” historical romance series

I thoroughly enjoyed this book finding it incredibly difficult to put down! I literally finished this in less than 24-hours.

Once again Burke gives us a lovely romance story between two lost souls but this story goes beyond the usual ruined heroine and arrogant, brooding hero.

Burke steps up her game with this much darker story with pages full of pulling my hair at the roots angst and twisted, gut wrenching emotions. Both H and h were psychological and emotional wrecks, troubled by decisions that had brought real havoc into their lives.

Marquess Lionel Axbridge is a man of deep honor and integrity and his skill with a gun has given him the notorious name “*The Duke of Danger*”. In defense of his honor and that of his father's and a dear friend, Lionel's had the unfortunate circumstance of participating in several duels which in the end had claimed the lives of three men by his hand.

I absolutely adored Lionel from the very beginning. You felt his inner torment – how he damned himself as unworthy of forgiveness or happiness. He has taken lives and feels he doesn't deserve anything but what he has coming to him which is all the misery in the world. He couldn't see beyond what he felt were his “crimes” and you wished he'd lift the shroud of darkness to be able to see the good man he was beneath. He didn't kill these men for sport. Unfortunately, Lionel's Achille's heel was his overwhelming sense of honor which wouldn't allow him to turn a blind eye if he were called out.

Because you have more honor than sense.

Riddled with guilt over his last duel which takes the life of hot headed scoundrel, Geoffrey Townsend whom we met in “*The Duke of Defiance*”, Lionel hitches his wagon to Townsend's widow, Emmaline, having promised to make things right now that Emmaline is a destitute widow. He is surprised when Emmaline, in order to escape an arranged marriage to a man twenty years her senior cashes in on Lionel's promise and proposes they be married at once. Adding salt to this wound is the fact that Emmaline despises Lionel for having killed her husband.

“You want me to accept an agreement of marriage in which I have no children, not even an heir?”

Her icy gaze didn't waver. "Yes."

Bloodiest of hells. How could he possibly agree to that? He had a responsibility to his title, his family.

And yet...he owed her. He'd promised her. And if he was nothing else, he was, above all, a man of honor.

Yeah, you got it... no love match here! Out of duty and honor Lionel agrees to surrender to a life without hopes of any fulfillment, any joy.

There could be nothing worse other than death in this situation and at times I thought death would be more welcomed than suffering through a life like this which was made even more trying by the woman he wished to make amends to, Emmaline.

We get to know **Emmaline** also in book #5 as the vivacious, love sick girl who eloped with the hot tempered, Townsend. But, what we get in this story is a totally jaded, disillusioned, bitter version of Emmaline who is at first seriously hard to like but you get her. She's been stuck with a man she was madly in love with but who, within months of their marriage had quickly fallen out of love with her.

She would've described her heart as a blackened shell, abused and destroyed by unrequited love and affection. First with her family and then Geoffrey. She hadn't realized until that moment that he really hadn't loved her. He'd said on more than one occasion that he ought to have married for wealth instead of beauty.

Emmaline has closed herself off completely not wishing to open herself up to hurt again even as she struggles with her growing attachment and affections for Lionel.

Her insides twisted. Loving someone meant giving them power. It also meant accepting the likelihood of pain. She didn't know if she could do that again.

This romance was the most difficult to weave through because there are so many broken pieces between these two needing to gel and you're often times besides yourself wondering if things will ever work out and casting a million wishes that they do!

The scenes between Lionel and Emmaline are gritty and stab your heart and as Burke takes you along this ride it was worth every page turning second I had my nose buried in this book. This couple is by far my favorite of the series!

I thoroughly enjoyed every bit of this! And as far as the sexy times, Burke definitely turns up the thermostat on this one! I was not left wanting!

Perfect addition to this series!

Recommended!

Candy Briggs says

Lady Emmaline Townsend is now a widow. Her husband died after a duel with the Duke of Danger. Lionel Maitland, Marquess of Axbridge, Duke of Danger, has had three duels and two men died as a result. He hates himself and did not want to kill anyone.

An excellent story of duels, intrigue, lies and great guilt. Lionel is actually a good man, but he has an extraordinary sense of honor. The descriptions give you the background to picture yourself in the tale. The characters are life like and full of energy. This plot has several twists and the author has wound them into a coherent, easy to read and even paced book. I loved the way her feelings turned from hate to something else and wasn't sure what they meant. It is a superior and elegant story of regret and eventually love. Darcy Burke's work, as usual is a marvelous experience.

I received this ARC for free and voluntarily reviewed it.

Isha Coleman says

His reputation precedes him, but it's his heart that tortures him. Will it lead to his undoing or become his saving grace? One moment changed a man's life. One choice set in motion a chain of events that connected the lives of three people forever. Out of greed, guilt and violence comes a romance as passionate as it is heartbreaking. Lionel and Emmaline are unwitting pawns in an ugly conspiracy set in motion by a dangerous man. When the tide turns in their favor, will they survive the revelations it brings with it? Duke of Danger is an exciting twist of fate romance. It appeals to the romantic while feeding a need for adventure and seducing with passion. A big story in a tiny package.

eyes.2c says

'Damn you to hell, Axbridge.'

Not a sentiment to encourage love and romance. But when Lionel Maitland, Marquess of Axbridge, kills Lady Emmaline Townsend's husband in a duel she finds that her husband has left her nothing but debts. The 'Duke of Danger', an unfair label given Lionel by the 'wallflower' young women before they became more intimate with some of that group. To be fair they do wince when those nicknames are now mentioned in their presence,

Lionel has an unfortunate reputation for duelling. His opponents end up dead. Hence his sobriquet. Those deaths haunts him. He is a man of honor and each death eats into his soul.

His latest victim, Viscount Geoffrey Townsand, is the husband of Lady Emmaline Townsend. Unfortunately Townsend's wound turned septic, hence Emmaline's situation. Lionel is more scarred than his friends imagine by the result but he cannot reveal the reason for the duel or Townsend's dishonourable behaviour. The scandal around the event would besmirch Emmaline.

Emmaline is unforgiving of Lionel and will have her revenge, even if it as a last resort is to save herself from her parents antics.

Her parents are forcing her into an unwanted marriage with Sir Duncan Thayer, who 'was horribly unattractive, with a hooked nose, protruding front teeth, and rather fetid breath if the rumors were accurate. Worst of all, he possessed a lecherous nature. Every time she'd met him, he'd looked at her as if she wasn't wearing any clothes.'

Lionel had given Emmaline his card and told her he would give her any assistance she needed. He was hers to command. Not that marriage had been on his mind, but for Emmaline desperate times call for desperate measures.

I must admit a soft spot for the marriage of convenience trope where angst and coldness turns to a smouldering relationship albeit assailed with doubts. How the author solves the entanglements to give us an HEA result is always fascinating.

As the plot unfolds we find that Viscount Geoffrey Townsand was up to some nefarious doings. The mystery deepens and the facts surrounding Geoffrey's actions are unexpected.
A satisfying read.

A NetGalley ARC

Anita says

Advanced Reader Copy (ARC) provided by the Author and Publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an fair and honest review.

Honor and the lengths some men go to to claim it and defend it. A man's word is his bond and when Lionel said he would do anything for Emmaline, he backs that up with actions. When he finds himself in the untenable position of a marriage of convenience, one his bride says will absolutely not ever be consummated, he has only one way out of this situation: make his bride fall in love with him. This is an historical-romance with a touch of mystery. Very enjoyable.

Carol Bisig says

Loved This Book!

I read this book several months ago, and wish I had time to reread it! It is in my top 19 out of 20 books for 2017! Not in that order! Lionel Maitland is a Marquess, he has had to fight two duels of Honor, and now people consider him, mad, and dangerous. He goes to visit Lady Emmaline, the wife of the last man that was killed in the duel. He feels horrendous over what has happened, and wants to offer whatever assistance that he can.

However, he never expected Lady Emmaline, to demand a marriage in name only! He is not sure which one is worse, her, for asking something so outrageous, or him, for giving into her demands! How is he supposed to stay faithful to a woman he wants, but he hates him? I felt so badly for this very honorable man to be put in this position, that it was difficult to like Lady Emmaline for a while. A truly wonderful story! I highly recommend! Thanks! Enjoy!
carolintallahassee ?

Edwina " I LoveBooks" "Deb" says

Another great story by Darcy Burke!! WOW this series is Amazing and I Highly Recommend you read the books and read them in order as the H/H is always characters from previous stories.

Lionel Maitland Marquess of Axbridge is known as The Duke of Danger because he has fought 3 Duels, which resulted in 2 dead's of the men he dueled. This has caused Ax/Lionel to be very self loathing and he believes he should suffer any unkind or mean spirited thing people do to him as punishment for killing these men. The 2nd man he killed is Lord Townsand a hot head ill temper man who we met in bk4 The Duke of Desire. Emmaline Fourth-Hodges is the Miss he eloped with in The Duke of Desire.

After Townsand dies from his gunshot wound Lionel goes to Emmaline and promises her that he will do anything she request of him if she needs him. Emmaline at the time didn't know all the debts her husband had incurred and the debtors are coming after her and her parents for settlement. Emmaline's parents find a new husband for her and old man Sir Duncan who is quite smelly and she doesn't want to marry him. He has promised her parent he will pay off all of Townsends debts. Emmaline isn't having it so she tells Lionel he must marry her and he does to help her out.

Lionel is an amazing, kind, generous and loyal friend and husband to Emmaline. He is also a very compassionate and honorable men. I didn't like Emmaline at first. It took awhile for me to like her. She was punishing Lionel for killing her husband until she finds out what a reprobate cur he really was. Her and Townsend had been married less then a year and he had only shared a bed with her for the first few months of there marriage before he starts having affairs. Emmaline began to realize she made a mistake in marrying Lord Townsend before he died and she felt guilty because he is dead and now she is falling in love with her wonderful and kind new husband Lionel. Lionel feels guilty because he has take what he thinks is Emmaline's loving husband away from her. He doesn't realize that Emmaline is happy in her life without Townsend. So there hard fought road to love was romantic, sensual and very real. I loved the way Emmaline was ready to duel for her husband Lionel at the end of the story and made the old Sir Duncan look like a fool.

Angela says

It all started with a kitten named Jade. The progression of the emotions from anger and despair to acceptance and love is written in a very believable way that really makes this story so wonderful. Okay, so I did not like Emmaline through about half of the book but as the story progresses her demeanor changes and you see her in a different light. Lionel on the other hand was so easy to like from the beginning. He is so distraught, you ache for him. It was lovely watching their changes and seeing how they really needed each other.

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