



A Woman Scorned

Liz Carlyle

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From its opening scene to its breath-catching climax, Liz Carlyle's newest novel is a vividly etched portrait of passion and intrigue. When a woman consumed by sinister secrets opens the door to a strikingly handsome stranger, a powerful desire rushes in -- and a love she could not have imagined.

Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned, and Jonet Rowland is surely that. But she is also lovely, rich, and -- it is rumored -- an unrepentant adulteress. When her philandering husband, the marquis of Mercer, is murdered in his own bed, it's whispered that Jonet is a femme fatale in more ways than one. Shunned by society, the daring widow steels herself to fight for what truly matters -- her children.

When his scheming uncle begs him to investigate the death of his brother, Lord Mercer, Captain Cole Amherst refuses. But it is soon apparent that treachery stalks two innocent boys, and Cole plunges into the viper's pit that is Jonet Rowland's life. Nothing could have prepared Cole for the lust Jonet inspires. But as danger swirls about them, he is tortured by doubt. Can an honorable soldier open his shuttered heart and let a wicked widow teach him how to truly love?

A Woman Scorned Details

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Alexandria Tale says

I guessed the villain right. I tend to think the unsuspected character to be the villain because I think there might be some twist in the end. So, I'm not really surprised of the outcome. I might not know of the true relationship between Jonet and Delacourt if only I didn't read the fifth book first. So, that kinda ruined the spoiler for me.

Lana says

Unlike the first book in the series, this one had a very promising start. The prologue was quite entertaining and I hoped the rest of the book would follow, but I was sorely disappointed. Apart from trying to figure out who did it, the book was a dreadful bore and hero got on my last nerve. Cole is suppose to be deep and complex, tormented by his past and his moralities. But he is simply self-righteous, sanctimonious ass who quickly jumps to all the wrong conclusions. Jonet is more likeable. At least she was honest with herself. She knew what she wanted and went after it.

Jan130 says

22 Dec 2017. Probably the third or fourth time I've read this book (over a period of a few years). It still stands up really well. A lovely and deeply felt romance, as well as two intriguing mysteries wrapped up in the story. As a repeat reader, it doesn't worry me that I already know the answer to the mysteries and I know whodunnit. It's still an enjoyable read.

Captain Cole Amherst, cavalry officer, scholar, cricketer and more..... a man of quiet integrity and intensity. Somewhat against his will, he falls in love with Jonet Rowland, a widow with a shocking (but undeserved) reputation. Jonet and her two sons are in danger from an unknown source, and she finds it difficult to trust anybody. But she and Cole form a bond. And the love and trust grow between them. As well as some very hot sex!

Cole is one of Carlyle's best H's. A really well-drawn and appealing character. The secondary characters are also excellent, including Jonet's arrogant friend Lord Delacourt (who later gets his own book), the servants (such as former soldier Charlie Donaldson), Cole's friends and acquaintances, and of course Jonet's two delightful sons, Stuart and Robert. The depiction of their rambunctious antics, the sibling rivalry, the night fears, all ring true to life.

This is a well-written book showing a good knowledge of the historical setting, an understanding of human nature, and a lovely layer of background detail that underlies the well-drawn plot.

Lisa Kay says

Originally reviewed January, 2011.

I am actually re-reading this book again (which I find myself doing more and more with my bookshelf due to the economy) and am enjoying it. *A Woman Scorned* is considered a **prequel** to the *Lorimer Family* series and it is a very good beginning.

Update: I finished this book, by one of my favorite authors, and found that Cole is one of my beloved heroes by Ms. Carlyle. I'm not really into blonds, but he is an exception. He is dashing and moral and has a sense of humor. The love scenes with him were sensual.

I disagree with some critiques of Jonet as a shrew. I tried to imagine myself in her situation and believe she was, with good reason, terribly frightened. Okay, yes, she has a temper. But I have to ask myself, "What would I have done, if my children were at risk?"

The suspense is just right in this historical romance book, and the villain is a nice surprise. Knowing the villain, having read the book, I actually felt the scenes, in which the antihero was dialoguing, were filled with a different tension of which I was not previously aware. Well done!

Some GR reviewers wrote that Jonet should have told Cole about her secret...but it was not hers to tell and I respect that. In the end, I could believe the H&H could have their HEA.

Update: 4/30/11

I don't usually like cliffhangers, and especially epilogues that are dedicated ~~solely~~ mostly to the characters that are to be the focus of the next book in the series. I don't mind if an author puts the first chapter, or even the second chapter, of their new book at the end of the book I'm enjoying. Believe me, I'll read it! However, please don't ruin a perfectly good epilogue ~~trying to get me to purchase~~ only setting up the next book. I want to know what's happening to the central characters I fell in love with.

That said, I do not really think the epilogue in this book qualifies as a cliffhanger, as some have complained. Not a **true** cliffhanger, anyway. I mean, Cole is a "man of the cloth" and it made me laugh that David was interrupting at such an "inconvenient" time, in the desperate need of a minister. Why on earth? To find out why, one would have to pick up the first in the *Lorimer Family* series, *A Woman of Virtue*.

Ana T. says

Different coverIt's been a while since I've read the other books in this series, somehow this book just escaped me at the time and it was recently that I realised I hadn't read. Since I'm a Carlyle fan I decided to pick it up asap!

Jonet Rowland, the Marchioness of Mercer is lovely, rich, and—it is rumored—an unrepentant adulteress. And when her philandering husband is murdered in his own bed, it's whispered that Jonet is a femme fatale in more ways than one. It will take a dashing and honorable soldier to get Jonet out of this one.

When his scheming uncle begs Captain Cole Amherst to investigate the death of his brother, Lord Mercer, Cole flatly refuses. But it is soon apparent that treachery stalks Lady Mercer's two innocent children. A man

of God and a scholar, Cole reluctantly plunges into the viper's pit that is Jonet Rowland's life, and finds that nothing could have prepared him for the lust she inspires...or the danger which surrounds them.

Jonet, the Marchioness of Mercer was once the toast of the ton but is now an outsider that most believe poisoned her husband. Cole Amherst is asked by his uncle, Jonet's brother in law, to go and work as a tutor to Jonet's sons so he can be aware of what is going on in that house. Wary at first he soon realises that someone is threatening them and that Jonet has been leaving with that fear for quite a while.

I really enjoyed reading Cole and Jonet's story. I think I liked Cole more in the beginning but it's also true that we know more about him and his thoughts than about Jonet. Jonet is more complex and tortured and guards some secrets. They are both very attracted from the start but there's a lot of distrust between them and the tension slowly builds up. Besides Cole not knowing if Jonet killed her husband and Jonet's conviction that Cole came to spy on her there are also the moral issues that Cole has to deal with since he is a Curate and the fact that Jonet has a more powerful position in society. The distrust between them goes on for most of the book even after they give in to temptation and make love. I really enjoyed reading how they solve that and decide to be together despite their different backgrounds and personalities. Cole is a wonderful hero in the sense that he is an intelligent, sensible and loving man who tries to be honest with his feelings.

There's a mystery subplot about who really killed Jonet's first husband and who is trying to kill her and her children. Although I had an immediately idea of the bad guy I wasn't really sure it was who I thought because I couldn't see the motive. Fortunately this works more to help with Jonet and Cole's relationship than to create a true mystery that might detract from the story.

Grade: A-

Denise says

Jonet and Cole were amazing together!! I am sure I will be rereading this in the near future.

Keri says

It has been whispered that Jonet killed her husband in order to be with her younger lover. Captain Cole Amherst has been ordered by his uncle to find out if it is indeed true that Jonet murdered her husband. Instead what Cole finds is a beautiful woman pushed to the brink of sanity trying to keep her sons safe from an unknown evil.

Cole, on the verge of taken his vows to God, finds himself pushed to the brink himself as he fights his overwhelming attraction to Jonet. For Jonet's part, no man or god is going to stop her from getting her hands on this tall, sexy, blond with the tiger's eyes.

This was an awesome read. It had an emotional depth that put it in a different class than her usual books. It was refreshing to come across a woman who knew what she wanted from her man and was fearless about going about it. Poor Cole never had a chance. :-)

Cyndi says

After rereading the book, my initial rating stands. This is a solid 4 star book for me. The relationship between Jonet and Cole was definitely what kept me interested while the mystery surrounding Jonet's husband's death was a bonus. The mystery was not poorly done and was a good foundation for throwing the two characters together.

Cole was interesting for hero. The fact that he took orders and was meant for the church was fascinating to me. When Carlyle describes him slipping on his gold-rimmed spectacles, I admit, I swooned a little. There's something about a strong man who is also intelligent!

Jonet's background seemed a little typical other romance novels I've read: innocent woman thrust into society, becomes jaded, not as bad as she seems, etc. There wasn't anything "new" about her character, but Carlyle's skillful writing kept her from being trite. Jonet's inner monologue also kept her character interesting. When she cried after making love with Cole, I almost wanted to cry with her.

There was a lot made of Jonet's "scandalous" behavior and past relationships, but nothing was ever explained. After the reader finds out about her true relationship with Lord Delacourt, nothing else of her past was mentioned. I had two reactions to this: 1) I was glad it wasn't revealed that Jonet was in fact practically virginal. So many times the "floozy" is revealed to be innocent and I liked that it wasn't the case this time. On the other hand ... 2) I wanted to know about her past. Did she have affairs? How does Cole feel about this? He seemed to really struggle with her behavior on a moral level, but at the same time he mentions his "vast experience" with women. The double-standard, while unfair, is not unexpected of the time period (or the romance genre). He seemed to accept her relationship with Delacourt and move on.

The epilogue was a good introduction into David's book, so I'm looking forward to rereading that one too :)

Fiordiligi says

Hmmm there's nothing wrong with this book but it's another favourite which lost its magic ... that would be the second Liz Carlyle in my re-reading spree. Still, I am glad I did reread so many of her books as she's such a marvelous author with a simply splendid writing style. C+

Julianna says

Reviewed for THC Reviews

A Woman Scorned is yet another worthy effort from Liz Carlyle, but in my opinion, not the strongest of her novels that I have read to date. As with her other books, *A Woman Scorned* also contained an intriguing mystery element, this one involving the murder of the heroine's husband. The mystery was a bit more prominent in this story though, and consequently, I felt that it overshadowed the actual romance, in some ways. Aside from a strong physical attraction and mutual loneliness, I found few reasons for Cole and Jonet to fall in love. The author simply did not build the lovely friendship element or include the more swoon-worthy scenes that are often found in her other works. While their love became more evident toward the end of the story, I just did not find their feelings for one another earlier in the book to be entirely convincing. I believe that the time devoted to the mystery simply left limited space for good relationship development

which was a bit disappointing, since these two characters had absolutely sparkled as secondary characters in other books. While I like a good mystery, this one did not hold my interest as much as it perhaps could have, due to the fact that I discerned the culprit very early on, though at least I was way off base on the character's motive and did not really figure that part out until the reveal. In all fairness though, I went into this book having read a later book that ties in with it, and therefore already knew that a couple of the characters who had been set up as suspects could be eliminated. Without that information, I doubt that I would have solved this part of the mystery so easily. All in all, for this only being Ms. Carlyle's second book, it was a still a good read.

I thought that the characterizations of the hero and heroine were well-done and full of interesting complexities. Cole had held a variety of positions including that of scholar, tutor and military captain, in addition to being an ordained minister. He is filled with guilt and regret over the death of his first wife with which he must come to terms. On the surface, he seems very controlled and reserved, but inside he is seething with unfulfilled passion that just the right woman can unlock. Cole is highly intelligent, regularly engaging in battles of wit with Jonet. Although she could be very willful, he never let her get the best of him and always gave back as good as he got. This made for some highly charged and amusing banter between these two characters. Jonet was not a woman who was afraid to let her passions be known, but also carried a certain reserve due to fear over her sons' safety in the wake of their father's murder. I thought her devotion to her two sons as well as other characters in the story was highly commendable, and I also liked that she lived her life according to what she thought was right instead of what society dictated. Once she began to trust Cole, she was very bold in her pursuit of him, even though he was below her in social status. I found her boldness and directness to be admirable, as well as fun and sensuous, leading to a delightful, burning hot love scene near the end of the book that one might playfully characterize as Cole's "taming of the shrew". Also, both characters were very intuitive of the other's needs and feelings which I found quite endearing. Even though the actual romance between these two could have had a stronger foundation and they were near polar opposites, it became obvious by the end of the story that Cole and Jonet were made for each other. It was not difficult to imagine them living a long and happy life together with nary a dull moment, which is probably why they were such stand-out characters in future novels.

While I do enjoy introspection, I felt that a bit too much of it became a partial contributor to some pacing issues in the narrative of *A Woman Scorned*. The other part I attributed to the lack of the spirited secondary characters that I so enjoyed in Ms. Carlyle's other books. There were no scene-stealers like Kem or Bentley, and the supporting characters who were present just didn't quite have the same lively quality as some that had appeared in other stories. Even if they were a bit more reserved, there were a few notables. David, Lord Delacourt was an enigma and I'm sure I would have enjoyed his presence in this story much more if I hadn't already known his secret from reading *A Woman of Virtue* in which he is the hero. He also put in an appearance in *No True Gentleman*. I found Stuart and Robert to be very charming children with opposite personalities, Stuart being rather shy and Robert being more outgoing. I thought that they were realistically rendered in that they often argued and misbehaved like young boys do, but yet they were never obnoxious. Stuart and Robert (though much more grown up) also appear in *A Woman of Virtue* and *The Devil You Know*. Edmund Rowland was a rather distasteful character who also pops up in *A Woman of Virtue*, as does Lady Delacourt, and Charlotte Branthwaite, David's mother and sister respectively. Just as she does in most of her books, Ms. Carlyle also uses a few animal characters to good effect, helping to set the tone for the human characters and overall story.

As one might guess from the overlapping characters, *A Woman of Virtue* is the book most closely related to *A Woman Scorned* actually picking up the story precisely where this one left off. I personally, however, still recommend reading the books in chronological order to receive the full effect of all characters on the canvass, as I have come to the conclusion that Ms. Carlyle used her first three books, *My False Heart*, *A*

Woman Scorned, and *Beauty Like the Night* to create three separate family groups who are then intermingled freely in subsequent books. Even though I didn't think it to be the author's best effort, I found *A Woman Scorned* to be a pleasant and enjoyable read. Ms. Carlyle remains one of my favorite authors and I look forward to continuing my exploration of her backlist.

Note: While none of Ms. Carlyle's earlier books seem to be officially considered a series and each seems to stand well on its own story-wise, I would caution that reading her later books first may give away spoilers to her earlier books. Such was the case when I skipped *A Woman Scorned* and was left wishing that I had read it first. My suggestion for readers like myself who don't like any spoilers would be to begin with Ms. Carlyle's first book, *My False Heart*, and continue reading them in the chronological order in which she wrote them. It is also my opinion that the reading experience would be greatly enhanced by doing this, because Ms. Carlyle's character web is so complex. The entire backlist, in order, can be found on her website.

Lucimar says

Jonet Rowland, é uma jovem rica, adorável e bela e também considerada infiel e desprezada por uma sociedade hipócrita. Mas, Jonet é uma mãe abnegada e quando o marido muito mais velho é envenenado é acusada de tê-lo matado. No entanto, ela não dá a mínima para os rumores e tudo que ela deseja é a segurança dos filhos.

Quando o irmão do falecido marido, implora para Capitão Cole Amherst para que ele investigue a morte do irmão, ele recusa. Porém, logo volta atrás e decide aceitar e se tornar tutor dos filhos dela. Cole logo percebe que Jonet esconde algo dele e que também os filhos, principalmente o mais velho, parece aterrorizado. Mas, ele não estava preparado para o impacto cujo o nome era "Jonet", cheia de vontades, resoluto e com uma campo de atração tão envolvente que o deixava impressionado.

Logo eles se verão atrapados nessa forte atração, que os lançará num mundo de medo e ciúmes.

Jonet é um furacão em constante ebulição, sua atração por Cole, faz com que ela não faça esforços para implorar em ser possuída por ele.

Nem Jonet está preparada para atração que ele provoca nele...

Liz Carlyle criou dois personagens impactantes: Cole, com sua formação cristã era um pouco puritano e se sentia culpado por não ter feito sua esposa feliz, no entanto, tinha uma personalidade bastante forte e não se deixava manipular por Jonet, que era admirável, mas impulsiva e apaixonada, se impunha com todo esplendor sobre ele.

Suas relações eram ardentes e apaixonadamente eróticas.

Haverá quem vá considerar a história bastante narrativa, e sem muitos diálogos (embora poucos são excelentes) pois ela descreve com detalhes os sentimentos dos personagens, a paisagem; e muitas vezes, me vi entre os personagens, caminhando, sentindo e observando. Gostei? Sem dúvida.

Abby says

A great sophomore novel from Liz Carlyle! Again, she flips the traditional emotions and roles of the romance novel hero and heroines. Jonet Rowland, Marchioness of Mercer, is a feisty, temperamental, passionate woman who finds her perfect foil in the most unexpected place: the cool, studious and serious Captain Cole Amherst. Great secondary characters rounded out this book. It was gratifying to have small

children in the book who weren't cloyingly cute or obnoxiously precocious. They read like real kids: the type you might babysit on a random Thursday evening.

The only flaw in this novel, as I read it, was the villain was a little too obvious. Carlyle threw a few red herrings, but not enough to throw me off the scent.

Mclaudia says

Enjoyable, but I have to confess I read it so I could enjoy some of LC's later books more (we meet at least two characters that will have their own books).

Janee says

A decent summer read. Frothy, a bit earthy. Easily forgotten.

Pat Edwards says

Started well, got a little trite, then ended ok.
