



The Lost Duchess

Jenny Barden

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

The Lost Duchess

Jenny Barden

The Lost Duchess Jenny Barden

An epic Elizabethan adventure with a thriller pace and a high tension love story that moves from the palaces of England to the savage wilderness of the New World.

Emme Fifield has fallen about as far as a gentlewoman can.

Once a lady-in-waiting to Queen Elizabeth, her only hope of surviving the scandal that threatens to engulf her is to escape England for a fresh start in the new America where nobody has ever heard of the Duchess of Somerset.

Emme joins Kit Doonan's rag-tag band of idealists, desperados and misfits bound for Virginia. But such a voyage will be far from easy and Emme finds her attraction to the mysterious Doonan inconvenient to say the least.

As for Kit, the handsome mariner has spent years imprisoned by the Spanish, and living as an outlaw with a band of escaped slaves; he has his own inner demons to confront, and his own dark secrets to keep...

Ever since Sir Walter Raleigh's settlement in Virginia was abandoned in 1587 its fate has remained a mystery; 'The Lost Duchess' explores what might have happened to the ill-starred 'Lost Colony' of Roanoke.

The Lost Duchess Details

Date : Published November 7th 2013 by Ebury Press (Fiction)

ISBN : 9780091949235

Author : Jenny Barden

Format : Hardcover 448 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Literature, 16th Century, Fiction, Adult, European Literature, British Literature

 [Download The Lost Duchess ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Lost Duchess ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Lost Duchess Jenny Barden

From Reader Review *The Lost Duchess* for online ebook

Sharon Cook says

Once a lady-in-waiting to Queen Elizabeth, Emme Fifield's only hope of surviving the scandal that threatens to engulf her is to escape England for a fresh start in the new America.

Emme joins Kit Doonan's rag-tag band of idealists, desperados and misfits bound for Virginia, but such a voyage will be far from easy and Emme finds her attraction to the mysterious Doonan inconvenient to say the least.

As for Kit, the handsome mariner has spent years imprisoned by the Spanish, and living as an outlaw with a band of escaped slaves; he has his own inner demons to confront, and his own dark secrets to keep...

Ever since Sir Walter Raleigh's settlement at Roanoke was abandoned in 1587 its fate has remained a mystery; *The Lost Duchess* explores what might have happened to the ill-starred 'Lost Colony'

The group felt like they knew the characters well and could each picture them clearly in our minds highlighting how well drawn each of the characters were. The book gave a real flavour for what we can imagine that time, the Elizabethan period, could be like. I had to tell Jenny how I had to put the book down at one point where she tells how a journey by ship over rough seas is made and I could feel myself rising and pitching with the ship and could get a real idea of how that must feel. It came to light in our discussion that Jenny had been on the reconstruction of the Golden Hind in London as well as sailing so could give a real description of her own experience with a little writers magic.

Sticking with the characters the group found them believable and cared about the journey of each of them throughout the book, and we had a good discussion of one of the baddies, Ferdinando, and Jenny explained why he could be so bad but the possible reason behind it. I won't type that here and leave it to your imagination dear reader :)

What becomes clear is that this is a thoroughly well researched book that blends fact, fiction and writers magic to create a tale of wondrous excitement, adventure and emotion. Jennys dedication to getting as much historical information accurate and blending of her experiences leaves you with an enjoyable story that as a reader paints a glorious picture enabling you step back in time. You feel part of the action and carried on the journey of the main characters in the book.

Speaking of action the book begins with a particularly shocking scene which personally I found helped me to move away from the airy fairy fluff of the Queens court and straight into the action of the nitty gritty of that period.

All in all a thoroughly enjoyable book we would happily recommend to readers of historical fiction but also those with a sense of adventure!

Helen says

With a title like *The Lost Duchess* and an opening chapter set at the court of Elizabeth I, describing an encounter between one of the Queen's ladies and Lord Hertford, you may think this sounds like just another

Elizabethan court romance – but you would be mistaken. With the arrival of Sir Francis Drake bringing stories of his adventures in the New World comes the first hint of what this book is actually about. And when Emme Fifield, the lady who had that confrontation with Hertford, decides to join Governor John White's expedition to establish a new colony at Chesapeake, it becomes clear that *The Lost Duchess* is going to be something fresh and different.

Emme is desperate to leave England and sail to the New World so that she can avoid the disgrace she knows she will face when her involvement with Lord Hertford is made public. In order to convince the Queen to let her go, she promises to return with reports on the colonies for Elizabeth and her spymaster, Sir Francis Walsingham, but Emme's real intention is to stay in Chesapeake and build a new life there...especially when she begins to fall in love with one of her fellow travellers, the mariner Kit Doonan. But while Emme is trying to keep the truth about her past hidden from Kit, we learn that Kit also has some secrets of his own.

Emme and Kit are great characters and I enjoyed getting to know both of them, but the aspect of this book that I found the most interesting was the fate of the lost colony of Roanoke – the English settlement established by Sir Walter Raleigh in the 1580s before being abandoned with no trace of the colonists. The explanation for the colony's disappearance is still a mystery today, but Jenny Barden suggests one possible theory which I thought was very convincing. And if you're wondering why all of this is significant to the story told in *The Lost Duchess*, although the ship on which Kit and Emme set out from England is originally heading for Chesapeake, Roanoke is where they end up.

The voyage itself provides lots of exciting action as Emme and the other colonists face dangerous seas and the loss of their supplies, while finding themselves at the mercy of their Portuguese navigator, Simon Ferdinando, who may or may not be trying to betray them. Life becomes no easier when they land at Roanoke – poisonous fruit being one hazard and conflicts with the native people another. Having befriended Chief Manteo of the Croatoans, the settlers are hopeful that they can negotiate with the Native Americans but it seems that things have happened in the past which will make it difficult for them to live peacefully alongside each other.

Roanoke and its mysteries is a fascinating, unusual setting and I'm sure you'll agree that it makes a change from the majority of Tudor/Elizabethan novels which tend to focus on royalty and life at court. Jenny Barden's previous novel, *Mistress of the Sea*, sounds wonderful too and is linked with this one through the character of Kit Doonan's brother, Will. I'm looking forward to reading it.

Hazel Gaynor says

The Lost Duchess is a cracking read! Jenny Barden's eye for historical detail is fantastic. From the Tudor court of Queen Elizabeth to the swell of the ocean and the life of settlers in Virginia in the New World, the author skilfully creates a sense of place and high drama. I almost felt nauseous as I swayed around on the gunwale with the heroine, Emme! There is much to love about this book which is both an epic adventure and a tender love story. A pacy, authentic account of a remarkable period in history, populated by some extraordinary individuals.

The Lit Bitch says

We all know there is a ton of historical fiction out there that takes place in Elizabethan England....typically in the court.

The market is simply flooded...so how do you create a new and different take on a saturated topic?

Well you take your Elizabethan heroine out of the court!

This was a new and exciting twist for me in the 'Tudor lit' genre. I loved getting out of the traditional court setting and exploring the vast unknown in the new world.

I especially loved the Roanoke island theories in this novel. It's such a great mystery in history and I loved that the author brought this strange event into the story line.

It's always fun to speculate and explore theories for some of history's greatest what ifs. So I loved this novel for that! The authors attention to the historic details was second to none! This was not just a novel with a new twist on history or just a great setting, it also had great central characters.

Emme is a mixture of strength and vulnerability that is endearing in this adventure novel. She is brave and bold but she isn't so strong that it becomes a tragic flaw in her character. The reader gets to see her develop into a strong leading heroine while maintaining approachability. Readers will easily identify with her and enjoy her throughout the novel.

Love, adventure, and history culminate and make this novel a truly refreshing read bringing new life and story into a genre that's dominated with courtly tales in Elizabethan England....this is something new you will want to add to your TBR list!

See my full review [here](#)

Jo Barton says

Emme Fifiield is lady-in-waiting to Queen Elizabeth and as such holds a privileged position at the English court, but this protection does not extend to the capricious nature of a courtier who is hell bent on claiming Emme as his own. When personal scandal threatens to overwhelm Emme, she persuades Sir Frances Walsingham to intervene with the Queen, and gain her approval to allow Emme to sail for the New World, ostensibly to report back to the Queen on activity in one of the new world colonies, but in reality to escape public disgrace.

What then follows is a well written and beautifully researched novel, which takes the reader from the dangerous beauty of the high seas, in the company of a shabby assortment of passengers and crew, to the wild and untamed splendour of the New World, where the indigenous people are not as welcoming as was first believed. Throughout the story, and in fact what gives the book its heart and soul, is the developing relationship between Kit Doonan, a charismatic, and it must be said, handsome mariner, and Emme, whom fate seems to throw together in the most challenging of circumstances.

The story zings along at a cracking pace, there is danger, excitement, romance and deep emotion and by the clever weaving together of fact with fiction, the danger of this untamed period in history comes gloriously

alive. By the end of the novel, and with the wild backdrop of the New World firmly ensconced in my imagination, I felt like I had spent time in the company of a wonderful array of adventurers. When the last page was turned, I breathed a heartfelt sigh of relief, not because the story was finished, far from it, but because the book's ending was really well done.

I have no hesitation in recommending this book to lovers of well written and decisive historical fiction.

An interview with Jenny Barden can be found here:

<http://jaffareadstoo.blogspot.co.uk/2...>

Geoffrey Gudgion says

I had previously read and enjoyed Jenny Barden's 'Mistress of the Sea' so I opened 'The Lost Duchess' with keen anticipation, and was not disappointed. The themes are similar in having a young, single, Elizabethan woman set sail for the New World, and in being both an adventure and a love story. Some characters appear in both books, but they can be read as stand-alones.

Barden has researched her subject extremely well, and has the ability to bring both people and places to life. The characters and intrigue of the Elizabethan court are well drawn, and even the secondary characters such as the inept but artistic leader of the expedition are well rounded and credible. The heroine is intelligent, resourceful, and takes charge of her own destiny, managing to engage in the action to a degree that stretches credibility a little (she is, after all, an Elizabethan gentlewoman) but this makes for a rattling good yarn.

It's a great read for lovers of period adventures with feisty heroines. Recommended.

Julie says

I was lucky enough to receive a free copy of this book via Goodreads and am so pleased as this is an author whose work I haven't come across before. I am a great fan of historical fiction and especially the Tudor period. Set during the Court of Elizabeth 1, this is historical fiction with a difference. Incredibly well researched, the novel embraces Walter Raleigh's discovery of The New World. The settings are so well portrayed that the reader feels they are embarking on a voyage too. I was particularly drawn in by the detail and historical accuracy and found myself staying up later and later each evening to finish it- always a good sign!

I would personally have enjoyed more about life at the Elizabethan Court as this was so well evoked both at the beginning and end of the novel but this book takes on a totally new aspect of Elizabethan times as you follow the lives of the settlers in Virginia. It is astounding that a lady-in-waiting to the Queen would have been allowed to undertake such a dangerous journey yet this is based on a true story. This is a first-rate novel

and certainly different to any other Tudor history I have read. I will be looking out for more from this talented writer.

Debra says

In my almost five years of reviewing and recommending to friends, family and readers, there have been a few times, and only a few, when I have been completely and totally blown away by a book that I've read. This usually happens when there is a happy confluence of subject matter, writing prowess, research skill and character development, wrapped up in a believable, action filled story. If you haven't already guessed, *The Lost Duchess*, by Jenny Barden, is one of those books.

This second effort by Ms. Barden begins with the story of Emme Fifield, a lady-in-waiting to Queen Elizabeth I, who yearns to throw off the mantle of Court and live a normal life; one where marriage and children are a possibility without the Queen's interference. When her trust and naivety is brutally savaged by the erstwhile heir to the Duke of Somerset, she sees her only opportunity to forge a new life lies in joining an expedition to the Chesapeake, in the New World. She convinces the Palace to allow her to go, with the understanding that she will return with a full report on the new Colony's progress.

Christopher Doonan is an experienced mariner with a colorful and painful past. Taken by the Spanish and held in Mexico as a young man, he is sold into slavery. Rescued by Cimaroons, he becomes the leader of a pack of outlaws in Panama. When word comes to him of an English ship, he is reunited with his brother, a member of the crew, and makes his way back to England, a changed man. Drawn to the sea, he returns to the New World with Sir Francis Drake, where he acquires a page named Rob, who becomes his constant companion. "Kit" is once again set to return to the New World, as boatswain on a ship scheduled to leave England, but this time he will choose to remain as a permanent settler, for reasons he cannot yet divulge.

Kit and Emme meet at one of the Queen's audiences to fete the accomplishments of Sir Francis, and to discuss the recent and future expedition. Kit is entranced by Emme, but while Emme certainly notices him, she is intent on the seed of the plan that has already taken root in her mind.

Those familiar with American history and the nascent English settlement of the Colonies in the late 1500's know the story of the Lost Colony at Roanoke, whose original destination was actually the Chesapeake Bay area. There is no record of what happened to the 116 men, women and children who established that colony in 1587. However, Ms. Barden has an incredible knack for weaving fiction with fact. The story of the settlement is told through her characters, and the ending is one plausible explanation for what happened. She's done her research and it most definitely shows.

Descriptive passages are everywhere. Ms. Barden makes it very easy to imagine Emme's life at Court, the ocean voyage, the sights and sounds of the New World and the settlement itself.

The love story between Kit and Emme serves a dual purpose. The connection between them is sweet and beautifully written, and serves as a way to possibly define this novel as a historical romance. However, most historical romances highlight the characters' relationship, with the setting and time period secondary and as a means to an end. In fact, the setting of these novels are virtually interchangeable as long as the protagonists are together on the last page. Ms. Barden, conversely, uses her characters to highlight the setting and makes that the focal point of the story. What happens to them and where it happens is as important as who they are

to each other. This is what makes this novel so very good.

The last few chapters are suspenseful, dramatic, and satisfying in their resolution. It's at this point that the pages practically turned by themselves. Revelations come fast and furious; love and life are affirmed between father and son, friends, and lovers. I did not want it to end.

The Lost Duchess, by Jenny Barden is highly recommended, and one of the best books I've read this year.

Mirella says

From its shocking and gripping opening chapter of this novel by author Jenny Barden, the reader is hooked. I could not help but feel empathy for the heroine's plight and her need to start a new life away from the scandal that threatens to destroy her life through no fault of her own. So she finds a way to escape to the New World via a ship of settlers. It is to the infamous Roanoke that they are to venture to, where the mystery of what happened to its inhabitants has yet to be understood. What follows is a wonderfully complex story of intrigue, mystery, hardship, and betrayal.

There is not one, but two horrible villains, and a wonderfully smart, savvy hero named Kit Doonan, that one cannot help but like. I was impressed with the author's historical research that really brought to life the struggles early settlers faced in America. The heroine, Emme, is also portrayed with credibility and empathy. This book is definitely an adventure story with strong elements of danger and a definite love story weaved therein. With its roots in Colonial America as well as Elizabethan England, there is much to enjoy if one loves history. A nicely written novel with a compelling story!

Jenny Q says

International Giveaway @Let Them Read Books!

3.5 Stars. I absolutely love reading about early America (having grown up a hop, skip, and a jump from Jamestown, England's first permanent settlement in the New World), and Jenny Barden is an author I've been wanting to read, so I jumped at the chance to read her second novel, *The Lost Duchess*, which is a stand-alone follow-up to her first novel, *Mistress of the Sea*. *The Lost Duchess* tells the story of Emme Fifield, daughter of a baron, dutiful lady-in-waiting to a demanding Queen Elizabeth. Her world is turned upside down when she is compromised by a treasonous lord, but her future brightens when Sir Francis Drake returns to court with tales of the New World and a handsome mariner in tow, Kit Doonan, both of which ignite Emme's curiosity and desire for adventure. As the queen's favorite, Sir Walter Raleigh, pleads his case for a return to the new land of Virginia, named in the queen's honor, Emme finds herself swept up in the plans, a pawn for spymaster Sir Francis Walsingham, who is keen to help England outwit Spain's plans for the New World. Traveling under an assumed identity with strict instructions of what to look for and what to report back to Walsingham, Emme sets out with Kit and a group of hearty souls prepared to make a new life in the New World, with no intention of ever actually going back to England.

But the journey is a perilous one, fraught with mishaps and misfortune, and though Emme's courage never wavers, her plans for a new future free of court obligations does. But with Kit's assured guidance, and a few new friends, she determines to prove her worth to the new colony, and to Kit himself, as the bond between

them grows stronger and sweeter. But they are both hiding secrets, secrets that could have devastating consequences for their fledgling relationship, just as the hidden dangers and outright hostility from the original inhabitants of the New World could have devastating consequences for the success of the colony. As the struggle to subsist becomes a struggle to survive, Emme and Kit will have to decide what is worth fighting for . . . and what is worth letting go.

I'm torn in my rating of *The Lost Duchess*. I really wanted to love it more. At the halfway mark of the book, I was loving it, and I felt sure we were headed for four or five-star territory. But then, just as our heroine and her hero arrived in the New World, where things really should have started to get exciting, the story seemed to get bogged down in details and slow-moving narrative. I had been willing to overlook the fact that the "scandal" that caused Emme to flee had not been set up and expanded enough to make it totally plausible for such a drastic course of action because I was intrigued by Kit and the spark between he and Emme, and I wanted her to follow her courageous heart, but I found their love story to be rather superficial and even sappy at times, and I grew tired of Emme pining for the day Kit would ask her to marry him, especially when she was surrounded by so many more pressing problems.

The climactic scenes, which depict a very believable account of what could have happened to the lost colonists of Roanoke, were very well done, but ultimately, the ending did not sit well with me. It was probably pretty realistic, but since these were fictional characters in a fictional scenario, it could have been a little more upbeat and satisfying. And on a final note, which I'm not holding against the book but which did make me stop and wonder, I found the title and back cover copy to be misleading and rather confusing after having read the book and not making much of a connection.

But while I have mixed feelings on the story itself, there's no question Ms. Barden can write. Her meticulous historical research shines, as does her descriptive capability. Her depiction of life aboard a sixteenth-century ship and of a New World filled with beauty and wonder, yet full of peril and uncertainty, is masterful. I think *The Lost Duchess* is well worth a read just to get a sense of what it must have been like for those first tough, brave souls who ventured into the complete unknown, attempting to carve out a new life and a new England with no idea of what awaited them. As Ms. Barden continues to write and hone her craft, she could become an author to watch in the world of historical fiction.

Erin says

Find this and other reviews at: <http://flashlightcommentary.blogspot...>

The Roanoke venture and the fate of the Lost Colony is an endlessly fascinating tale of courage, intrigue, and mystery in its own right, but Jenny Barden takes it one step farther, utilizing the 1587 attempt to settle the island as the backdrop of a sweeping sixteenth century romance.

The Lost Duchess is a provocative and imaginative historical, but I was pleased to discover it is also exceedingly well-researched. Embellishing where possible, Barden is ever conscious of the history behind her work. From Raleigh's politically motivated interest in the New World to John White's desperate bid to bring relief to the ill-fated settlement, Barden took obvious care to ensure her narrative compliment the known timeline of events and as someone with a keen interest in the facts, I found her dedication to accuracy both admirable and appealing.

The originality of Barden's cast affected similar appreciation. Emme Fifield's adventurous spirit is countered

by an intense vulnerability, the product of a shame she would do anything to hide. Emme, however, is not the only passenger packing secrets to the wilds of North America. Fiercely protective of his own colored history, Kit Doonan struggles to shoulder his responsibilities in the face of adversity and deny the pride that would jeopardize those closest to his heart.

A wonderfully imagined story of adventure, conquest and rebellion, *The Lost Duchess* is a brilliantly evocative reimagining of one of Colonial America's most enigmatic and enduring mysteries.

***Thea 'Wookiee'sMama' Wilson* says**

If you only gave the book a cursory look you could be forgiven for thinking this one another in a long line of books set with the Tudor Court of Queen Elizabeth I but you'd only be partially right in this assumption and might be in for a surprise while reading it. Yes, it does begin in the Elizabethan court but there is much more to it than that and it's a unique tale for me, nothing that I've read before and that's something I am very thankful for.

The central character is Emme Fifield, one of the Queen's ladies in waiting and after a rather unpleasant encounter with Lord Hertford her life is turned upside down. After a chance encounter with the mysterious mariner, Kit Doonan, Emme finds herself wanting to change her life completely and to do that she needs to remove herself from the rules and restrictions placed on her by the Queen. So in an effort to do so she finds herself on a ship heading for the New World and the infamous Roanoke. Anyone who knows the history of the New World and the English colonists will know the story of the Roanoke settlement and how the colonists vanished but how do you feel about exploring one possibility to explain it?

Well you should read this then as THAT is what this book is really about, throw in a handful of romance between beautiful Emme and dashing Kit and you have a truly wonderful historical novel.... I hate to name anything I read as a romance book as I don't do romance but love historical based novels (yes, they boil down to the same thing but my brain doesn't think so, so shhhhhhh don't tell!).

Emme is a strong character but also a very soft one, she knows what she wants and needs to do to make her life the one she wants but often struggles with her own emotions and for good reason considering what has happened to her (no spoilers here!). You watch her grow into a very strong and independent women and fall deeply for the handsome Kit. Kits is a very interesting man indeed, he has the usual troubled past but it is an interesting one that I really would have liked to hear a bit more detail about but you get enough to make his back story a good one, he opens himself up to Emme but keeps getting the door slammed in his face, eventually he breaks through and the romance between them is a touching tale and one they both deserve! Other characters in the book are based on the real colonists including the first English person born in the new world, Virginia Dare (who Emme helps to bring into the world!)

This is the first novel I've read by Jenny Barden but I do find myself curious to read more as she is a wonderful talent. Saying that I might not have found her by myself so thanks to Dizzy C's Book Blog's blog review of the book back last year that bought this book and author to my attention as without you I wouldn't have requested this book from Netgalley and might have never read it! And that would have been very sad as it's a wonderful read, full of intrigue, hardship, fear, love, wonder and adventure, a truly exceptional mix of so many emotions that make for an exceptional book and one that I would recommend for anyone who likes their 'period drama' book as much as I do.

In conclusion, it may not be quite the book you expect at first glance but by the time you reach the end you really won't care as you'll have read something really classy that had put you right through the emotional wringer, wonderful, wonderful, WONDERFUL!

Sarah says

Jenny Barden's second book, a stand-alone sequel to her *Mistress of the Sea*, moves smoothly from Old World court etiquette to New World exploits. There are comparatively few novels that imagine the Elizabethan Golden Age from the perspective of its explorers, and even fewer about the lost Roanoke colonists, so *The Lost Duchess* gets a warm welcome for those reasons alone.

Its heroine is an appealingly spirited young woman with a strong heart for adventure, and other highlights include the many beautiful descriptions of Virginia, a land of glorious, unspoiled wilderness and life-threatening perils.

For lady-in-waiting Emme Fifield, a baron's daughter, joining the expedition to form the first permanent English colony in America solves many problems. She'll avoid the damaging repercussions of a scandal not of her making while escaping her rigid life in London and satisfying her yearning for freedom.

Emme promises to come home on the *Lion's* return voyage and provide intelligence on the expedition to Queen Elizabeth and Francis Walsingham. To keep her plans secret, she's advised to take a new name and travel as the maidservant of Eleanor Dare, daughter of colony governor John White. However, she has every intention of remaining in Virginia. Meanwhile, complicating her life is her growing attraction to master boatswain Kit Doonan, who has a complicated past of his own – and personal reasons for wanting to sail to Roanoke.

Readers get to experience every aspect of Emme and Kit's journey alongside them: the dangerous lurches of the ship during storms at sea, the pride of the "planters" in their newly constructed City of Raleigh, and the pair's tender romance, a selfless love that serves to make them both stronger. The colonists' relations with the Indians are presented with complexity, from the Secotans' hostility to English incursion – which, it has to be said, isn't unjustified – to the heroic efforts of Manteo, the settlers' Croatan ally, to preserve the peace. Emme comes to play a greater role in the colony's planning than one would expect of an unmarried female servant, but many of its leaders either know or suspect that she's more than she seems.

Mysteries surrounding the colony's past, present, and future create an underlying sense of unease that heightens as the answers come to light. What tragedies befell the previous Roanoke settlement, and why? What reasons lie behind pilot Simon Ferdinando's navigational choices? And since readers will know the new colony is doomed, how will Emme and Kit's story end?

The language has an authentic period flavor without feeling fusty, and *The Lost Duchess* movingly expresses the sense of exhilaration and amazement felt by Emme at the natural beauty of Roanoke Island: "How to marvel at wonders without name? She could only relish through her senses like a child before mastering language: enjoying the sight of a bird like a flame in the trees, a vivid flash of vermillion; see gourds like luscious melons, and flowers taller than she was with heads of radiant suns..."

Moreover, it also captures the distress she and Kit feel at the wrenching decisions they and the others are forced to make, and at the realization that there's an unavoidable price to be paid for their daring venture. It's

a well-rounded portrait in that respect, and Emme and Kit, both of whom are fictional characters, fit comfortably into known events. They both make for good companions on this exciting journey to the New World.

First reviewed at Reading the Past.

BestChickLit.com says

Upon finishing *The Lost Duchess*, I felt I had surfaced from an epic adventure. The book starts out with a fairly shocking scene that ensures the reader is invested in finding out what becomes of poor Emme, Queen Elizabeth I's lady-in-waiting. Volunteering herself for a dangerous expedition as a way of escaping her shame, Emme sets sail for Chesapeake in the hope of forging a colony in the New World and thus begins an action-packed tale.

I'm not particularly 'up' on my history and was slightly worried about the story being set in the Elizabethan period, but I needn't have been concerned as Jenny Barden expertly guides you through the story with her beautiful and concise descriptions and explanations. I was there with the colony; I felt their fears as they struggled to make a success of their venture, and rooted for them as the natives began to turn against them with increasing violence. The romance that blossoms from the pages was, for me, the heart of the book. I enjoyed the to and fro between Emme and Kit as they each dealt with their own baggage from the past, along with their newly found troubles in this new wild world they inhabit.

The Lost Duchess is a truly fascinating read, even more so thanks to the incredibly informative author's note at the close. If you looking for an adventurous read that will enthrall and immerse you into the story, then this is the book for you.

Reviewed by Charlotte Foreman, on behalf of BestChickLit.com

Tjb says

Wow! What a fabulous read. *The Lost Duchess* redefines the Tudor historical novel. Not only is the court of Queen Elizabeth I beautifully evoked, with a powerful love story at the heart of the book, but *The Lost Duchess* will plunge you into an incredible sea voyage to the New World, more real and vividly imagined than any film depiction.

The book is brilliantly paced, with edge of the seat action keeping the story pressing ever onwards, and with a tangible sense of threat and danger. But most important is the story of Emme and Kit, their determination, their spirit and their extraordinary journey.

The writing is exquisite, with Barden's multisensory world beautifully painted in words, while her scholarship imbues the novel with a truly authentic sense of place and period. This is a read you will find hard to put down and one that will linger in your memory long after you have closed the cover.
