



All the Queen's Men

Linda Howard

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Linda Howard seamlessly melds thrilling sensuality with heart-pounding dramatic tension -- and brings back the elusive hero of her smash hit novel Kill and Tell -- in this powerful New York Times bestseller.

John Medina, the CIA's legendary Black Ops specialist, works in the shadows of the government's deadliest missions. And no one knows the dangers of getting close to him better than does communications expert Niema Burdock. Five years ago, Niema and her husband, Dallas, worked with Medina on an explosive mission that trapped Dallas in the crossfire -- fatally. Although she has slowly healed from her terrible loss, Niema never planned to see Medina again. But now John Medina needs her....

A French arms dealer is supplying international terrorist units, and only Niema can plant the undetectable bugs needed to crack the deadly ring. Against her better instincts, Niema infiltrates the dealer's glamorous world by going undercover. But when their careful strategy begins to crack, Niema and John take flight in a strange land -- and find their partnership sparking with an erotically charged electricity. In a world of deception, John Medina has once again set Niema on a free fall into danger and desire.

All the Queen's Men Details

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From Reader Review All the Queen's Men for online ebook

◆ Anna's 'a?????g\$ ◆ says

[death of a spouse (hide spoiler)]

♥Rachel♥ says

Wow, Linda Howard continues to impress. So hot and so so good! Review maybe...

Samantha says

Howard is one of those authors I keep going back to even though I *always* end up annoyed at the end of her books. This time was no different.

After losing her husband during a military mission gone wrong, Niema Burdock has sworn off her adventurous life style. Throwing away her thrill seeking days, Niema has molded herself into a military gadget inventor. A nice safe job, that keeps her indoors most of the time. But when the spy, John Medina, reappears in her life claiming to need her for an undercover black ops mission she can't resist the temptation. One thing that I always love about Howard's writing, and the reason why I keep picking up her books, is the heroines. She always writes some pretty great female characters and Niema was no exception. Niema is charmingly blunt and extremely competitive. And once she puts her mind towards something, she goes for it. I had no problem believing that she was competent enough for an undercover mission.

What killed the book for me this time around was that I didn't really like John. I could've cared less if he ended up jumping off a bridge at the end of the book. I just wasn't feeling his and Niema's relationship. Especially, when a large chunk in the middle is Niema interacting with the target of the mission. The target, Ronsard, had a lot more depth to him than John. I actually cared what happened to him and dreaded when he'd find out that Niema was an undercover agent.

So, I don't think I'll be picking up the last book in this trilogy of Howard's as I really didn't care for this or the first one. But in the future I probably will end up reading another book by Howard.

Yolanda says

3,5

Linda says

~~I love a book with a strong beginning....something that keeps me intrigued. This was my second Linda~~

Howard book and what a wonderful read! There was plenty of sexual tension between Niema and John, our hero and heroine, throughout the story and what happened between the two of them in Ronsard's office was unique. Also, how often do you read a book where you actually have empathy for the villain? I finished ALL THE QUEEN'S MEN in less than a day. FYI, it is a follow up to "Kill and Tell" but can be read alone.

Closer to 4.5 Stars

When I first read ALL THE QUEEN'S MEN it was in 2008. I now believe it helped that I read KILL AND TELL first. Because of this, I had the necessary background on what made John Medina tick.

Both deadly and a man of mystery, John had a past with Niema Burdock. Five years went by and he was still secretly watching out for her. Then she had reentered his life but for John, this time was for keeps.

Once again, Ms. Howard writes using her successful formula: an alpha male affected by a 'good' woman, action, suspense and some good chemistry. The tension builds slowly because of trust issues. When something finally happens between Niema and John, it borders on the steamy if somewhat kinky side. Not every reader will like it.

That said, the story actually had a villain *with feelings* that I empathized with. So far, the first two books have entertained me. I am now going to finish with the last book in this series: KISS ME WHILE I SLEEP.

Lady Heather says

1994 Iran

An American covert 5 person team is in place to blow up a manufacturing facility that was developing and supplying Anthrax. The team was made up of Sayyed (a native Iranian who was now an American citizen, a tough, wiry man in his late forties), Hadi Santana who was of Arabic and Mexican heritage, but an American. Husband and wife - Dallas & Niema Burcock (Dallas as former SEAL and contractor for the CIA, and Niema an electronics specialist), and their leader Darren Tucker.

Sayyed, Hadi, and Dallas are set to go in, set explosives, destroy the facility and get out. Tucker and Niema are to stay behind, monitor the mission, destroy all the electronic devices, and later rendez-vous with the rest of the team.

The team runs into trouble and all hell breaks loose. The team is ambushed, and while Niema is listening, Tucker orders Dallas to activate the detonators while he's still inside the facility.

Niema then shuts down, her last memory is of her husband making Tucker promise to look after Niema for him.

Tucker then proceeds to get Niema out of Iran. Niema is only eating when Tucker gives her food, she isn't talking or sleeping.

There comes a point where Tucker decides she has to sleep because she's gone days without, so he lies

down behind her tells her stories both true in fictional in order for her to relax enough to sleep.

This description of a solar eclipse was so well written, I had to include it in my review.

"I saw a solar eclipse once. I was in South America." He didn't get any more specific than that. "The weather was so hot the air felt sticky. Cold showers didn't do any good; I was sweaty again as soon as I got towed off. Everyone wore as little clothing as possible." He didn't know if she was listening; he didn't much care. He kept that soothing, gently monotonous tone, his voice just barely above a whisper. If he could bore her to sleep, so much the better. "It had been on the radio that there would be a solar eclipse that day, but the heat was so miserable no one much cared. It was just a little village, not the type to attract any eclipse chasers. I had forgotten about it myself. It was a sunny day, so bright the light hurt my eyes, and I was wearing sunglasses. The eclipse slipped up on me. The sun was still shining, the sky was blue, but all of a sudden it was as if a cloud had passed over the sun. The birds all stopped singing, and the village pets hid. "One of the villagers looked up and said, 'Look at the sun,' and I remembered about the eclipse. I told them not to stare, that it would blind them if they looked too long. The light was eerie, if you can imagine dark sunshine. The sky turned a really deep shade of blue, and the temperature dropped at least twenty degrees. It kept getting darker and darker, but the sky was still blue. Finally the sun was completely covered, and the solar halo around the moon was . . . spectacular. On the ground we were in a strange, deep twilight, and everything was quiet, but overhead the sky glowed. The twilight lasted for a couple of minutes, and during that time the entire village stood still. Men, women, and children; none of them moved, or spoke. "Then the light began to come back, and the birds started singing again. The chickens came off roost, and the dogs barked. The moon moved on, and it was as hot as it had been before, but no one bitched about the weather anymore."

Niema breathing finally starts to slow, and her body isn't as stiff as it was. Tucker then starts telling her more stories until Niema finally drifts off to sleep. Niema wakes up spooning Tucker thinking it is her husband, it is then it finally hits her that Dallas is dead, and the flood-gates are opened, the wall she has put up has cracked, and she now begins to mourn the death of her husband while being held and comforted by Tucker.

...5 years later

After the death of her husband Niema has decided the wild-adventurous side of her is what inevitability got her husband killed because she is the one that wanted to take the mission, not him. She never re-married. She dates, though not often. She has a comfortable-safe desk job with the CIA. "She's busy. She likes her work, she's very well paid, she has a nice home, drives a new car". But, unknown to her is that Tucker (who is really CIA field operative John Medina) has kept his eye on her from a distance, making sure she's okay because he wants her for himself.

When a new explosive is used to take down a plane, Tucker/John is given the mission of tracking down this new explosive, and He asks Niema to go in on the operation with him. When Niema sees Tucker for the first time in 5 years, Tucker introduces himself with his 'real' name, his identity that only a select few have knowledge of which now includes her...and for 5 years John has thought that Niema blamed him for her husband's death, because he was the one that gave the order to kill himself to get the mission done. Niema never did blame him, because she knew her husband would do anything for the mission to be successful.

Niema is hesitant to be back in the field, but apart of her (the part that she's buried for 5 years) wants to take this job. She finally agrees to take this 'one' mission (to get it out of her system) and begins training with John so that she will be prepared for their job.

While training with John, Niema becomes attracted to him, but John is so good at 'acting' she can't read whether he feels the same way as her because with John he shows nothing.

They're mission is to go to France, make contact with an arms dealer by the name of Louis Ronsard. Niema is to get herself invited to his Villa, where she will meet up with John and she will plant a bugging device, and he will access and steal all information concerning the explosive.

This where the story really gets good!

The chemistry between Niema and John is explosive!

Part of their cover is that John is to be introduced to Niema at Ronsard's party, at his Villa, and become immediately enamored with her. When they first kiss (as apart of their cover) the kiss soon becomes out of control because they both have been keeping their true feelings for each other under such control that now they've reached their breaking point.

Niema steps back shocked by her response to him, but also very wary, because even though physically John's response to her is passionate, in his eyes, He looks as though he's just doing his job (little does she know that he's losing his control with her as well, he's just better at hiding it).

My favorite part of the book however, is when Niema and John are in Ronsard's office completing their mission, and they see Ronsard heading towards the office on the security monitor, and they have to act fast... and I'll leave it at that, because I don't want to spoil it for anybody.

lets just say,

Reading this story is like reading a book from Robert Ludlum's "Bourne" series.

The storytelling is fantastic! The writing, and characters are wonderful!... and getting to finally see John and Niema lose control and let their passion take over was so worth the fun & excitement!

It's was so easy to get lost in this wonderful world of spies, espionage, intrigue, and of course a kick-ass romance!

Can't wait to read the next, and final book in this series!!

Mara says

It rubbed me all wrong. Secret services are not in my book the good guys, and I found offensive their way/view of the world. So all the supposed justification of their actions was irritating to me.

This book saving grace was that the villain wasn't Bondified too. And even if the justification was ridiculous, at least he was nuanced.

The romance was meh at best. He met her 5 years ago, ordered her dying husband to commit suicide and promised him to take care of her. From this week interaction I was supposed to believe he loved her. I suspected she wasn't able to separate adrenaline from love, otherwise there's not much reason to love. Unless non con because he lost control of a situation is love. The result of that not so happy scene is that he has her almost killed, because he wants time to talk. So after almost botching an action, rather than running away as quick as possible, he takes her shopping.

I wasn't particularly fond of either characters. They seem just adrenaline junkies. Superficial. Feelings are not that clear cut. She guilts her self for her husband's death, but conveniently absolve him for his part.

Diana says

Audiobook narrated by Kate Forbes (unabridged), Megan Gallagher (abridged)

I've often said that I came to romance through the door marked romantic suspense and All the Queen's Men is that door. Back in 1998, I picked up the paperback on a mass-market table at a mall bookstore. I'd been reading a lot of man thrillers and my joy knew no bounds as I sat in the food court falling in love with my new discovery. A thriller with romance, a hero who falls hard when he zeroes in on his mate...and sex!!! Do I love it as much in 2012 as I did way back then? Even more now that I own two different audio versions, a Kindle file, and several paperbacks (just in case).

John Medina is the ultra sexy, mysterious, rootless, and dark special ops guy, a James Bond character that we girls can love. After All the Queen's Men, I read countless romantic suspense series with covert ops alphas who are pale shadows of the original iron man John Medina. There's nothing he doesn't do better than anyone and he'll stay cool and composed as he stares down the baddest terrorists, all the while clad in his Armani tux. Oh yeah, baby.

I love this book so much that a few years ago I bought an abridged cassette version on eBay. As abridgements go, this one produced in 1999 is excellent. Narrator Megan Gallagher hits the bull's eye with my perception of characters that I feel I know very well. Her grasp of Niema's confused, turbulent feelings expressed in her inner monologues is spot on. Gallagher doesn't change her pitch between characters, but voices personality and attitude so distinctly that there's no question of who's speaking. And although this isn't a light-hearted book, Gallagher easily conveys Medina's impish sense of fun when he isn't being a total badass. Oh, and there's a bit of the kink in Medina's seduction of Niema, confirming that kink was not invented this year.

The unabridged version was produced in cassette tape format in 2001 and has been languishing in the

publisher's vaults until its surprise digital release this year. Narrator Kate Forbes is adequate, but I find her reading lacks the attributes that are so appealing to me in Gallagher's performance. It's a vaguely indefinable essence that is admittedly personal and subjective. I don't really have any specific criticism of Forbes – I just wish she'd punched it up a little.

A word of caution. Gallagher=abridged, Forbes=unabridged. Please don't buy from the eBay seller who's trying to sell the abridged-in-four-cassettes version falsely advertised as unabridged for, wait for it, \$305(!). What will we do when our Sony Walkmans die?

See my audiobook reviews at Blue Moon
<http://saschakeet.wordpress.com/>

Phire says

Not very happy with this one. John Medina was a terrible romantic interest. I would rather have seen a romance between Niema and the French arms dealer, that would've been way more interesting.

Dorsey aka ♥? Wrath Lover Reviews ♥? says

5 Yummy Secret Agent Stars!!

I'm rereading and (finally) reviewing a lot of my old favorites, and this book is absolutely a most memorable and favorite Linda Howard book.

John Madina was first introduced to us in Kill and Tell, he's a super spy for the CIA like his legendary father who we also met briefly and learned about in Kill and Tell. Well the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. After meeting John in K&T I couldn't wait to read his book and let me tell you, LH did **not** disappoint!!

John Madina is legend in his own right, he's an enigma, a ghost, a master at espionage, so legendary some don't even believe that he truly exist.

Niema Burdick is the widow of a Navy Seal who was killed a mission in Iraq, unfortunately she was with him on that mission and heard him die. She is a specialist within the agency for developing bugs and planting them.

Several years later she is contacted by the head of the CIA because she has just created a new superbug device. There is a new weapon of mass destruction that CIA must get their hands on. Much to her surprise a man she knows as "Tucker" is at the meet which brings back the horror of Iraq since Tucker was there with her and the SEAL team....she was there and *heard* Tucker gave the order to finish the mission and "push the button" making her a widow.

Now John Madina (aka Tucker) needs her help to stop the sale and distribution of this new weapon. Niema balks at first but after realizing the importance of the mission agrees to help. Soon, she is caught up in a world of espionage, all the while growing closer to John, which confuses her. John and Niema are in a race against time complete the mission and stay alive all the while exploring their mutual attraction.

Fantastic blend of romance and suspense....and I have to mention, to this day, this book has one of the memorable scenes that I've **EVER** read (the office scene)!!!

* *Originally read: July 2011*

Jane Stewart says

[
I did not like the part where the two main characters made a stupid decision. They had been fleeing from bad guys and finally got away. After a short while being safe, they decided to treat themselves to a tourist-style walk i

Lena Papanikolaou says

Το πρ?το βιβλ?ο που δι?βασα απ? την Howard αν και θ?λω να πιστε?ω ?τι ?χω μαζ?ψει ?τι κυκλοφορε? απ? τη συγγραφ?α Δικα?ως κ?ποιες μου ?φαγαν τα αυτι? για τα βιβλ?α της...Εξαιρετικ? με πολ? δρ?ση και ?ντονο ερωτισμ?.?νετα θα μπορο?σε να βγει στη μεγ?λη οθ?νη.Το ρο?φηξα στην κυριολεξ?α.Θα ?θελα σ?γουρα περισσ?τερες σελ?δες. Εν? κλε?νει ?μορφα και δεν αφ?νει κεν? θα μπορο?σε σ?γουρα να ?χει συν?χεια .Αν π?σει στο χ?ρι σας να του δ?σετε μια ευκαιρ?α το αξ?ζει.Ελληνικ?ς τ?τλος :?ρωτας και κατασκοπε?α .Εκδ?σεις PLAZA

Jacqueline says

[They shook hands and decided to be partners? WTF? Are they going to work together? Are

Sharon says

Spies. Espionage. Slow-burn love.

This was a **solid 3**. I was set on not liking it at first because I wasn't getting good vibes. However, after the time skip, things went along nicely. This book **wasn't particularly eventful or emotional** - but something about it was **addicting**. I felt **entertained and comfortable** by it. Were there ever any doubts that Niema and John weren't capable of accomplishing their mission? No. I just really liked seeing the characters doing their shit in the mission, and finally getting together. Also, the parts where Niema pretended to be the "antagonist's" friend so she could complete her tasks were fun. Niema was **strong and level-headed**. John

was **suave and capable**. No actual complaints here.

The ending was also nice, although I would have liked a bit more because I wanted to know what exactly happened with the main characters and everyone else.

Things that you might want to know (**WARNING: Spoilers below**)

Is there a happy/satisfying? (view spoiler)

Love triangle? Cheating? Angst level? No, no, low-ish angst.

Tears-worthy? (view spoiler)

Humor? (view spoiler)

Favorite scene? (view spoiler)

What age level would be appropriate? (view spoiler)

Arch says

I'm giving this book 3.5/5 stars.

The hero in this book is John Medina. He's a CIA agent (black ops). He wears many faces. He's a legend. What I like about him is that he's a good bad boy.

John is a man that goes after what he wants. He fell hard for Niema, a widow. Her husband Dallas was on a mission with her and John one day and he ends his life on a mission, to them, for a good cause.

After avoiding one another for five years, John and Niema meet again. At the time, she didn't know that his name was John or even who he truly was. She thought that he was Tucker. I have to admit, while John was being Tucker, I was like, something seems fishy about this man. He's setting up Dallas. Even Niema didn't feel comfortable around him. I had to check the backcover to see who was the hero going to be again. I was like, where is John Medina? All the while, I was reading about John, the man with many faces.

John is truly a protector in this book. He's even a claimer. He tells Niema that she belongs to him. Some men can be bold. He left her with no doubt that he wanted her. Not in a spooky way or anything like that. He was in love with her and she was in love with him too.

He saw red, when it came down to her and I have to say, she saw red, when it came down to him. There is a scene in the book, where a man has a gun to her head and she was thinking about John. John was thinking about her as well, he wasn't going to let the man harm her, even if it meant getting killed. Well, she saw two men coming up to them, from behind John. They had guns on them and was going to shoot John, but she wasn't going to have that. She already lost one man that she loved and she wasn't about to lose another one. She was the one that has gotten hurt in the midst.

Things that love will make you do, right?
