



## The Girl in the Mask

*Marie-Louise Jensen*

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## **The Girl in the Mask** Marie-Louise Jensen

Set in Georgian England, fifteen-year-old Sophia is trapped by the limitations of living in a man's world. Forced by her father to give up everything she loves, Sophia is ordered to make a new life in Bath. By day, she is trapped in the social whirl of balls and masquerades. By night, she secretly swaps her ball gowns for breeches, and turns to highway robbery to get her revenge ...When one man begins to take a keen interest in her, Sophia must keep her distance, or risk unmasking her secret life.

## **The Girl in the Mask Details**

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Author : Marie-Louise Jensen

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## From Reader Review The Girl in the Mask for online ebook

### **hawwa says**

"Stand and Deliver! Hand over your valuables if you value your life!"

Set in Georgian England, fifteen-year-old Sophia is trapped by the limitations of living in a man's world. Forced by her father to give up everything she loves, Sophia is ordered to make a new life in Bath. By day, she is trapped in the social whirl of balls and masquerades. By night, she secretly swaps her ball gowns for breeches, and turns to highway robbery to get her revenge . . . When one man begins to take a keen interest in her, Sophia must keep her distance, or risk unmasking her secret life..~From Goodreads.

I was ecstatic when this book came and landed on my doorstep..well, inside my porch..I had recently read and reviewed a Marie Louise Jensen book before after I had bought it and had loved it, (You can find my review in the "Review Archive") so I was curious to see if her most recent book lived up to my expectations. I warmed to Sophia immediately. She was so likeable and...just like me! She loved to read and we see her passion for reading from the first page. Her care-free life was enviable; read, mess around with her favourite cousin, horse-back rising and pistol shooting, but the unannounced arrival of her father from the West Indies, a stern, harsh man, shatters her perfect world around her.

To punish them, Sophia's father sends Jack to the army, and drags Sophia off to Bath, to teach her how to act 'like a proper, lady'. I despised Sophia's father from the moment he first arrived. He was mean and horrible and he whipped Sophia..just because of her 'un-ladylike conduct' while he was away. My fury threatened to boil over when he burnt her books,poetry and plays, he burnt her precious books!! To me, that is the highest form of evil (lol) and I can just imagine what I would do if someone burnt all my books!..\*cough\*.. ermm you don't want to know! He was so stuck up and sure of himself, determined to believe that by burning her books and taking away her freedom she would eventually bow down to his ideas of a young woman's life. He wasn't proud of his daughter, or happy at all that she showed great potential as a student and was a promising learner. He put her down instead, telling her that her time studying mathematics, Latin and Greek was a time that had been wasted, targeting her as to why she hadn't done any embroidery, or watercolours; and reminding her that her job in life was to be a wife, nothing more and nothing less. All in all..he made me furious!

Aunt Amelia was another character I disliked immensely. She was a strict, joyless woman who's true intentions were hidden whenever Sophia's father was around. Her main hope in life was to have as much of everything as she could, and she used Sophia's father to get what she wanted. Under the pretence that she was 'kindly" chaperoning Sophia in Bath she neglected her as much as she could to gamble and play cards. She used Sophia to get what she wanted by hiring an amazing dressmaker and buying her lots of new items to wear..but then buying herself boxes and boxes of dresses too. Under the constant scrutiny of her gaze and held captive by her unwavering father and greedy, scheming aunt she starts to become restless and longs for freedom so she goes out, by herself, for a walk. On returning she is punished and sent to bed with no dinner so she escapes through the window and makes an ally with a servant lad by the name of Bill. He tells her about his younger sister Jenny, in Bath, describing her appearance to her and telling her how worried he is of her, and also gives her some food. I liked Bill a lot as did Sophia. He did not seem scandalised that she had jumped out of a window and befriended her. I loved the way Marie Louise Jensen evoked her characters and I also thought the setting was written very powerfully, I could almost smell the rotten water of the Bath springs and the whiff of eggs in the stale air and the scene set before Sophia seemed to come alive before my eyes. Houses of all shapes and sizes jumbled around in a maze of bustle and activity. Little shops and well dressed, refined ladies sampling syllabub's and jellies and men and women frolicking in dirty baths. Bath

blossomed before me and stayed like that, vivid and graphic until the last page was turned...

The Girl In The Mask was a poignant, exciting read that kept me hooked from page one. Filled with drama and mystery and packed with secrets, lies, uprisings and highway robberies this book is a definite page turner!!

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### **Tazzie Dee says**

Sophia's life was all mapped out for her. She was to move to Bath with her father & aunt and expected to look pretty and attend balls in order to find a husband. But Sophia didn't like her father's plans. She hated getting dressed up and going to the balls. In fact, she loved swapping her dresses for her breeches and climbing out of her bedroom window at night to roam the town. She soon meets her future partner in crime in Jenny and together they turn to highway robbery. A certain Mr. Charleton is intrigued by this new arrival but Sophia has to try and keep her distance or she risks unmasking her secret life...

This story is set against the backdrop of the failed 1715 rebellion and I liked that Ms. Jensen used real people from back then in this book like Beau Nash and Ralph Allen (you can even google them). I also liked that she didn't overdo the romance between Sophia and Mr. Charleton. Their relationship felt natural at the pace it went, especially for someone like Sophia who was against marriage. It just felt like a natural & normal teenage relationship, which is something I don't usually come across in the YA books I've read so far. So it was very refreshing to read.

So, if you like a bit of history and romance entwined with a bit of danger and adventure, you might enjoy this...

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### **Vee ?Under Mountain Books? says**

This book hooked me from the start. I was going to read 'just a couple' of chapters before bed, ended up reading more and then read as much as possible the next day! I started off thinking that Sophia had a pretty comfortable life with her cousin Jack, then her father returns home and everything goes to shit. He burns all of her books, poetry and plays, sends Jack away to the Army and packs Sophia up and takes her to Bath, so he can get her married and out of his hair as fast as possible.

Of course, going to fancy balls, learning to walk 'properly', learning to dance and wearing the fashions is the last thing Sophia. Especially as dancing is something she is particularly bad and wearing a hoop makes it particularly difficult to get down a roof. In her normal clothes, Sophia is pretty skilled at getting around through windows, a feat that caused her to meet Bill, who tells her of his sister Jenny and asks Sophia to look out for her.

The story is a lot more political than it seems, until I got to the end I never realised. But I was far too busy looking out for Mr Charleton, a particularly handsome character that is solidly on my list of book boyfriends! I was hoping for a little more romance than there was in the book, there wasn't much.

The ending was okay but not great. I felt like it was missing something and there was definitely room for a sequel, as certain characters could do with further developing and others could do with just turning up.

Sophia and Mr Charleton's romance definitely needed a fair few more chapters too!

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### **Sue Hyams says**

Really enjoyed this. Fabulous protagonist who sticks to her guns (ha!) and doesn't go all wishy-washy at the end as is so often the case. The book is well researched too, plonking you right into the middle of The Bath society. Exciting, pacey, and fun. Well worth a read.

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### **Katharine says**

This was a cracklingly exciting book that was quite difficult to tear myself away from at times. The plot centres on a young girl in the early 18th century who is determined to escape her restrictive life and cruel father. Sophia is headstrong, fearless and at times very reckless, qualities that get her into a lot of trouble but also help to get her out of it. Add in an intriguing male friend, some enjoyable overtones of Georgette Heyer, and the firmly historical setting of 18th century Bath and the Rising of 1715, which all mixed together make for a very enjoyable and pacy read. My one slight criticism was that I wondered if Sophia's attitudes might have been a tiny bit too modern at times, but then I remembered that her heroine was Aphra Behn and thought maybe not. I've seen some readers criticise the ending but I thought it worked perfectly for the characters though if there was a sequel I certainly wouldn't complain.

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### **Nikki says**

I had this on my Kindle somewhere, because I did like the concept, but I've read one of her other books already, so I was sort of wary about reading this. I'm afraid I got through a couple of chapters, but just couldn't stick with it. The writing is pretty bad. One minute the narrator is telling someone something because she knows he'll understand, and then immediately after he's responding with obviously no interest in it at all. And there are people exclaiming loudly and tall gangly young men with laughing blue eyes in the first page and I just -- not for me, thank you.

With a bit of editing, it might have held my attention, but. All the drama and so on might have turned me off anyway -- stereotyped nasty father and all. I can see how it would appeal to younger readers, though.

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### **Em says**

**Review from my blog, Em's Book Corner.**

[emsbookcorner.blogspot.com](http://emsbookcorner.blogspot.com)

I recently finished reading what I think is probably my first historical fiction novel of the year! How crazy is

that? Don't worry though, this book reintroduced my love for historical fiction so I'll be reading a lot more during the last couple months of the year!

The book that I read was The Girl in the Mask by Marie-Louise Jensen (one of my favourite authors!)

Just to let you know, this is a spoiler free review!

The Girl in the Mask is set during the year of 1715, when the main character Sophia receives a surprise visit from her father, who has been out of the country for the past few years. This isn't a joyful reunion, they despise of each other and it's when Sophia is forced to give up her hobbies and only friend to live in Bath and become a 'lady' that she decides enough is enough. Sophia starts to make a life for herself, even though there's a huge risk that she will end up being punished or worse yet, left in the hands of her awful aunt.

I couldn't help but love the main character in this story, Sophia. She is so brave and did a wonderful job of sticking up for herself, not letting men take control. This book shows just how awful it used to be for women, they were forced into wearing uncomfortable clothing, doing boring tasks and they weren't even allowed to walk a long distance without being stared at. Sophia, however, bent these rules and decided to do what she wants to do, which involves walking across fields, sneaking out at night and wearing boy's clothes.

Another character that I loved was Sophia's good friend Jenny, she was also so brave and feisty. But she earned her money by stealing, which is something that I didn't enjoy reading about but I guess that's just what happened in those days!

### **“The punishment itself could never be as bad as the anticipation”**

This book is told in Sophia's perspective and you really do end up feeling sorry for her, she doesn't deserve to be cooped up all day in a stuffy room forced to sit with her aunt. I absolutely hated Sophia's father and aunt, no wonder Sophia was so unhappy. All they cared about was marrying Sophia off to a rich man to make the family name more popular.

At times, this book was a little bit slow but that doesn't last for long as it often quickly picks up the pace. I loved the last few chapters where Sophia and Mr Charleton have to race against time to do something very important. I didn't always like Mr Charleton, I found him a bit annoying to begin with but by the end of the book I ended up loving the character.

During this era, there was a big uproar about the King George I, not many people believed he had the right to become King. So, I also learnt a lot about that which I found interesting. Without it taking over the story, there's also another secret plot going on in this book involving the rebellions going across the country. This plot all comes together really well at the end, it was so exciting and fun to read.

I really enjoyed learning more about this time period, Marie-Louise Jensen is excellent at writing historical fiction and I'm really looking forward to reading more of her books soon!

One of the best things about this genre of books is that not only are they enjoyable, but you're also learning a lot as well. And what's better than that?!

I have to say it again, I loved the ending of this book. I feel like everything finished perfectly and I'd even really enjoy reading a sequel (So yeah, if you're reading this Marie-Louise Jensen, pretty please can we have a sequel? It would make me very happy.)

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**I have given this book a strong four out of five stars.**

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### **Tracey says**

At first I got the feeling I had read this book before, and I'm still not sure, the story is familiar but interesting. I thought it a bit lacking at first, but it soon picked up into an interesting and fast paced adventure that kept me up past bed time. Its best fit is probably the bridge between middle grade and teen: a fascinating mini adventure.

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### **Rebecca says**

I'm SO EXCITED! I didn't know she had another book out! I can already tell this is going to be amazing!

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I've just ordered it! Can't wait :D

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I'd give this book a 3.5/3.75.

The book is about a girl called Sophia who is forced to move to Bath when her father comes back from his 4 year trip abroad. It becomes clear that Sophia and her father have a bad background. I did like the references back, but there didn't seem to be much depth to it. Sophia yearns to experience excitement and to escape from her father's plans for her to be married. While travelling alone, she meets Jenny and the two form an unlikely friendship. But as they strive for adventure, they are unwillingly thrown into a scheme of treason, and Sophia destroys any trust she had with a man she has growing feelings for. With danger at every turn, Sophia has to try and survive.

It was original from anything I've read, with some great parts, however, it seemed to be lacking a certain something throughout. It just didn't have that sparkle that you associate with a brilliant book. One big thing that I always think is important in a book, is to know the general age of the characters. There was no reference anywhere to how old Sophia and Mr Charleton were [except people saying that Sophia was "only a child"].

The ending made me take a star off this book. In some ways it worked, but in others, it wasn't satisfying.  
(view spoiler) Maybe it would make more sense if we knew their ages.

The book started off brilliantly but started to go downhill about halfway through and the ending spoiled it for me. Overall I did like it, but there was something missing.

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### **Keira says**

Mr. Charleton is amazing. I love him. I will admit that the ending was a tad disappointing because I wanted something else to happen, but it was unpredictable and fun.

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### **Deborah says**

Liked this book loved the story line and the ending leaves an option of another book to follow though i don't

think there will be. Amazing story loves this author.

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### **Liberty says**

I loved the setting and the characters. The ending was a bit of a come down. But it was different to anything else I've read and it sure did surprise me.

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### **Raychel says**

This is a light, fun story. While I enjoyed it, it was a little too light at times. It seemed like Sophia couldn't or wouldn't show any other emotion than that of defiance, even when the very nice and charming Mr. Charlston was trying to help her. At moments when I felt like swooning, she wasn't, and that kind of ruined the effect. If you're looking for a high action, sweeping-romance, you won't find it in this book, but a light, if somewhat lackluster, quick read.

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### **Faye Oliver says**

I was super excited when I found out that Marie-Louise Jensen had another book coming out. I reserved it from my local library and read it in two days. It was immediately gripping and I loved the brave character of Sophie, she wasn't going down without a fight! I also loved the character of Jenny who I really felt for despite her trying to be tough attitude! I knew I wouldn't be disappointed as I had loved Jensen's other books such as The Lady in the Tower. I thought the setting was written very powerfully, I could almost smell the rotten water of the Bath springs. I was a tiny bit disappointed with the romance in the book, I thought it would have been more powerful but maybe that is just my cheesy side showing through! The book has a very clear and concise structure and even though Sophie found the social gatherings tedious, Jensen didn't bore us with the details. The book had some comedy in it and I found myself chuckling over some cleverly delivered wit. I can tell from the ending that the book will have a sequel and I very much look forward to it. All in all I would definitely recommend the book as it a breath taking gripping ride!

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### **Nur says**

I felt there are still many questions unanswered like what happened to Jack ? will sophia and charleton continue to be close friends? what will their future be like? there should be a sequel to this book.

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