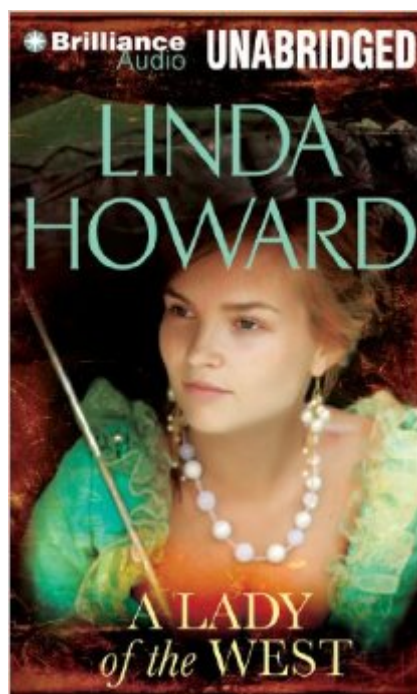


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A Lady Of The West



Synopsis

Only true love could redeem.... Victoria Waverly, noble daughter of the war-ruined South, is sold in marriage to a ruthless rancher. Honor and pride help her endure life as a wife in name only but nothing can quench her forbidden desire for hired gunman Jake Roper. His gaze is hard, but tenderness he can't hide promises to unveil to Victoria the mysteries of love. Only true love can destroy.... Jake curses his burning need for Victoria, for he wants nothing to stand in the way of his drive to reclaim Sarratt's Kingdom - the ranch that is his legacy and obsession. But ancient wrongs and blazing passions will bind together the aristocratic beauty and the powerful cowboy. In a bloody land war, they will fight for Jake's birthright...and seize at all costs the love that is their destiny.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Linda Howard is one of my favorite authors. I have read nearly all of her books and have had A Lady of the West in my "to be read" stack for over a year now. I had not chosen to read it because of its three and one-half star overall rating. I wisely use the tools offered on this site and seldom read a book rated less than four stars. But I wanted to read another Howard book and picked up A Lady of the West. I was able to determine three things rather quickly: First: This was unlike any of Howard's other books I had read. Second: The hero's behavior is politically incorrect - to say the least. He is the first hero I have ever read who hit the heroine and he also plays the "forced seduction" game which many of us would consider rape. Third: I quickly realized the overall rating on this book must be due to the hero's mean-spirited behavior rather than the quality of the writing. Sure enough, when I checked the reviews, most of the negative reviews are because of the second

item detailed previously. Make no mistake - this is a dark book. Victoria Waverly is the daughter of a formerly wealthy, Southern family who has been impoverished by the Civil War. Victoria is basically sold into marriage to a wealthy rancher, Frank McClain, and is bravely attempting to do the right thing for her family. Once she meets her future husband, she is repelled and frightened. He is one bad villain and Victoria has no idea that he killed and literally stole the large ranch he now calls his own. But Victoria is ever vigilant - intent on protecting her family from literal starvation - especially the two family members who have come with her to live at the ranch. She must consider her cousin and her younger sister's situations as well.

A long time ago (like four years back), in a far away land (California), I was introduced to Linda Howard's books by my best friend ... and I hated them. I found them drab and terribly long and would've had more fun poking myself in the eye with a fork and swirling it around. Then, a few days ago, I was walking through my local grocery store, restless and in need of some greater fulfillment than what I had gotten from another book I had just finished. I stood in front of the book section for at least a half hour perusing their small selection. A bit reluctantly (but desperate now), I picked up the Linda Howard book, remembering how my best friend had oozed out praise for this author. So I thought, "Ah, what the hell," and man, was I ever shocked! A Lady of the West has been one of the best, if not the best, book I have read in years! It had everything a western should have: shoot outs, legends, bloody revenges, ranches, cowboys, the whole nine. The book starts with a short history of Sarrat's Kingdom, and how things came to be the way they were, taking the reader back more than a hundred years. Then Howard goes to tell of how the Sarrat's became over thrown and how the evil Major came to get a hold of the land. The time frame is post-civil war, and out of sheer desperation to save her family from starvation and death in the war ravaged South, Miss Victoria Waverly allows herself to be sold in marriage to the Major. She takes West with her her little sister, Celia, and her cousin, Emma (who was left with no other relative but the Waverlys by the war). There, for the first time, she meets her husband and Jake Sarrat (kept incognito to his nemesis by the name Jake Roper).

I have not picked up a Linda Howard book and not liked it. This book was no exception. I had looked at the reviews and was not sure how this book would be. Hearing how he hit her and all he did was "want" her and all that. I thought the story would have Jake as the biggest butt and Victoria as weak willed, under Jakes thumb. Not so, was the case. It took just a little while to get started, but once I got through the first 30-50 pages, it all came together and took off on a wild ride. I loved the

lead heroine. Victoria was great. She did not take Jake's crap and gave as good as she got. Yes, Jake does hit her but first of all, it did flow with the story line, he did not get away with it what so ever. He never thought it was OK. No, none of it makes it right, but you can see how it fits in there and the outcome the action is surprising. Yes, Jake did talk an awful lot of "wanting" Victoria, but it was to the point of obsession, something the reader should be able to figure out is not just lust. That he does want not just her, but all of her, and that he equates feelings with sex. So, while you know how Victoria feels, you have to look at Jake's actions to see how he feels. Very intricate. I love how it all got blended in together. Jake was very dominate, but such a sweetheart, I couldn't help but love him. It took me not even a day to read this book. Near the end of the book I cried. When it was over wanted it to go on for just a few more chapters. This book is not like her newer releases, not a romantic suspense. The story does have its own darker plot, but nothing too serious. This book was great! I loved it and it will go on my keeper shelf. I don't know when I will get to read it again, it made such an impression, I don't think I am likely to forget this story any time soon.

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