



The Warrior

Margaret Mallory

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Four fearless warriors return to the Highlands to claim their lands and legacies. But all their trials on the battlefield can't prepare them for their greatest challenge yet: winning the hearts of four willful Scottish beauties.

Star-Crossed

From the Isle of Skye to the battlefields of France, Duncan MacDonald has never escaped the memory of the true love he left behind. Deemed unworthy of a chieftain's daughter, Duncan abandoned the lovely Moira to prove his worth in battle. Now, when called upon to rescue her from a rival clan, one thing is certain: Moira's pull on his heart is stronger than ever.

Bartered away in marriage to a violent man, Moira will do anything to ensure she and her son survive. When a rugged warrior arrives to save her, the desperate beauty thinks her prayers have been answered—until she realizes it's Duncan. The man who once broke her heart is now her only hope. Moira vows never again to give herself—or reveal her secrets—to the fierce warrior, but as they race across the sea, danger and desire draw them ever closer.

The Warrior Details

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Author : Margaret Mallory

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From Reader Review The Warrior for online ebook

Mary (BookHounds) says

MY THOUGHTS

LOVED IT

Dog Alert!

Moira falls in love with Duncan as a teen and Duncan returns that love but realizes she is above him in class and there is no future for them. So when Duncan departs to fight in France, Moira is left at home and pregnant with his son. Her father marries her off to another clan ruler, Sean, who beats and abuses her since she is longer near her family and their protections. With only a wolfhound to protect her and her son against Sean, he forces Ragnall to choose between the dog or his mother. Right then, Moira plans to escape. Let's just say it doesn't end well for Sean. Duncan shows up right on schedule, although Moira would rather it be the devil to save her.

Even more devastating is that Moira must leave Ragnall with another clan leader for protection. Of course, there are a few battles and arguments between the pair before they realize that they are meant for each other as well as some family issues that must be cleared up before they can be together. The true hero of this book is Sar, the wolfhound. Big Sigh. I fell in love with this dog as it protected Moira from evil men and even a wolf attack. Although Moira had her moments of not thinking clearly, she always put her son first and over came the circumstances of being a lady in the 1500's. As I turned the last page, I thought: I would be so happy if it ended right here.

Even though this book is part of a series, it stands alone. I know I have read others in the series and a few of the characters cross over but you won't get lost in any way. Overall, this is one fun read and filled with romance of Highlanders.

Farrah says

This review also appears on my blog at <http://www.thegoldenruleof666.blogspot.com>

I LOVED The Warrior. It was a brilliant book with romance, action, and drama. Basically, it was perfection.

All of the characters were well built. There was more to each one than just their assigned role. Even the antagonists had more than one side. All of them catch your interest and make you feel something for them, be it love, hate, or something in between.

Moira is definitely a survivor. After years of marriage with an abusive husband, she emerges stronger than ever. She will do anything for the sake of her son, Ragnall, even enduring a marriage with a violent man. And when it came down to fighting for her life, she wasn't afraid to do whatever it took to stay alive. It was all very admirable. And she doesn't hold grudges. I was worried that I would end up with a book where Moira spent 90% of it acting like a shrew because she can't forgive. But, thankfully, she is forgiving. But she's no doormat. She wasn't afraid to call Duncan out on his crap and get her way. I really liked her character. She's probably one of the best romance heroines I've seen.

Duncan was also a fun character. He left Moira years ago after her father found out about their relationship and sent Duncan away. There's more to it than that, reasons that go deeper. But I'll let you discover that for yourself. But besides that, he proves to be a great hero. He's sweet with Moira and protective of her. After making a mistake the first time around, he's determined to do it right this time. And I loved how he acted with Ragnall. He was sweet with the little boy, and as protective over him as he was with Moira. He's definitely a worthy love interest.

The plot was fast paced and never had a dull moment. There are a few twists along the way, but nothing very big. The ending was perfect, not a single complaint there.

The Warrior is a wonderful book that combines romance with action and quite a bit of drama. I adored it!

5/5

Thanks to Netgalley for a copy!

Duchess Nicole says

Listened to the audio...the narrator's voice really grew on me. He does a fantastic job with inflection and such, I just have a hard time finding old British men sexy...it sounds like a Grandpa telling the story or something.

The hero is Duncan, the biggest, baddest fighter of all four men. He lost his heart long ago and now he comes to find that her forced marriage was the reason she left him. And that her husband is horribly abusive...and other tasty little secrets. So he comes in to save the day, as heroes should.

I liked the historical notes at the end of the book. The way the dog was portrayed was a bit silly. Dogs don't have an innate knowledge of human commands. And I'm not sure what I think about having a "series villain" in Hugh. I almost feel like that part of the story is old and tired. But maybe it'll make for an epic climax in Connor's book coming up next. We'll see.

Sha Mslvoe says

This is a beautiful story about wounded warrior named Duncan and his teenage sweetheart Moira, princess of the MacDonald clan. Duncan has been ordered by Laird to fight in France and left Moira. He doesn't want to go but Duncan knows he's just a bastard son. Moira thought Duncan abandoned her. When she realized she's pregnant Duncan's child, her father arranged her to married with abusive man, Sean.

Duncan was having a doubt with Sean and start looking for her in castle. He heard Moira's screams, and saw blood everywhere. Moira killed her husband and saved by Duncan.

Duncan and Moira still loves each other but the trust has been faded because of misunderstanding. They thought they were abandoned.

The true hero in "The Warrior" is Sar, wolfhound. I googled about wolfhound and the dog is huge. Wow!!!

I loved both characters. The plot fast, a quick read and perfect ending. I can't wait for "The Chieftan". Connor and Ilysa's story.

Aly is so frigging bored says

Both hero and heroine made me want to smack them... but I loved it!

romancebookjunkie says

I've been craving a good medieval romance and this one delivered! It's a second chance romance with a secret baby and good lord did I gobble it up and read in one sitting!

..
Our hero was born a bastard but couldn't help falling for his Laird's precious daughter. When her father finds out he gets sent away and a marriage is arranged for our heroine. 7 years later and our heroine is in an abusive relationship and our hero comes to the rescue having worked his way up and now made a name for himself.

..
This book was full of action and romance and Clan feuding and I didn't even mind that it wasn't as steamy as I was hoping for. Both characters definitely had a lot of growing up to do from their youth which they definitely did for their relationship to actually work the second time around. I need more medieval romance in my life!

Lover of Romance says

Duncan, has never been able to forget his one true love, the one woman who has held his heart all of these seven years. When she married another man, he felt as if his world had ended, but he knew he could never give her a life that he wanted to give her. Now his closest friend and his Laird, has asked him to go in search of Moira and make sure that all is well. Even though that is the very last thing that he want to do, he knows he needs to do it. Moira, felt like Duncan had broken her heart, abandoning her when she needed him. She once would have sacrificed everything to have a future with Duncan, but she knew he saw her as others did, a sheltered princess. So she ends up marrying a handsome Laird of another clan. However she fully regrets that decision now, seven years later. She is now a mother to the most wonderful boy, but his father is abusive and she knows their time grows short. Moira, knows that both her life and her son's life is in danger. So she tries to escape, only to have her son taken from her and to almost be beaten to death by her husband, until Duncan saves her. Now it will take both Duncan and Moira working together to save her son. But Moira never expected to fall in love all over again with the one man that broke her heart all those years ago. But now she is willing to fight for their love...but will Duncan fight for her and the love that they share?

The Warrior is the third installment in the Return of the Highlander Series. I have been fortunate enough to have been able to access it through my library. First off I have to say I just love this cover and portrays Duncan perfectly. He is well known for knowing how to sail on the sea, and is a very skilled warrior. Normally I am not a fan of long hair, but on Duncan it has a sexy appeal to it. Duncan is the silent warrior type, he broods a lot and we see this in the earlier books in the series. But he also has some hidden talents we

see peeking through. I also really enjoyed Moira, she had spunk. I really enjoyed seeing how protective she is of her son, and she is willing to fight to save the ones she loves. I found that a very positive quality, and I liked how she interacted with Duncan and tries to prove to him that she isn't a fragile doll about to break. There was some good tension mixed in with a sizzling romance. I also enjoyed the secondary characters that livened up the story as well. There was also a danger element to the plot that added to the flavor of the whole story. As a side note any of those that like a good canine in a romance...this one is for you. The boy's dog Sar is so protective and such fun to see the way he is blended in with the story. I have truly come to fall in love with the master story teller that portrays a vivid world which takes the reader back through time and makes 1500 Scotland come alive in the readers mind. Such a sexy romp that fully engages the reader with enchanting characters, a plot full of adventure and intrigue, and a sensual love story that will just break your heart. A Wonderful addition to a series that has me completely hooked. A Must read for those who love a fun and sexy highlander romance that will curl your toes!!

Judy & Marianne from Long and Short Reviews says

Originally posted at: <http://www.longandshortreviews.blogspot.com>

Margaret Mallory, as she has often done before, pulls the reader into a memorable vicarious experience in long-ago Scotland. Her rich, eloquent writing style sweeps the reader into a sensory loaded adventure—spine-tingling, sometimes frightening, and, best of all, has magical love scenes that take the breath away, set the heart pounding, and assures one that true love finds a way—even if it is thwarted at every turn. The Warrior is another of Return of the Highlanders series. It sizzles with love and captivates with intrigues, and sends the heart racing with the dangers.

Eight years after the warrior Duncan last saw Moira MacDonald, Tearleg, the clan seer, tells him she heard Moira's voice, sees a pool of blood, then a savage storm. He must go to her. It will change his fate and help the clan in its time of need. Connor, Moira's brother now the chieftain of the clan, tells Duncan to go.

Seventeen-year-old, willful, beautiful, spoiled Moira MacDonald has her chieftain father wrapped around her little finger and thinks she has eluded detection as she meets Duncan in their special place. Then Duncan leaves without telling her goodbye. He goes to war in France. She doesn't know the truth about why he left. But angry, bitter, broken-hearted and desperate, she marries the Irish chieftain MacQuillan. Her charmed first seventeen years of life deteriorated to years of a living hell, fearing for her life, trying to protect her son, and keeping both their souls from being destroyed by her cruel, abusive husband. She becomes a complex individual with unique strengths. She blames Duncan for her misery and guards her heart, feeling she could not survive it being ripped to shreds again. While some of her selfish traits seem ingrained into her very being, they serve her well. Her intelligence and understanding of human nature prove invaluable to her and her clan.

Now captain of guard for the MacDonald clan, Duncan is a mighty warrior and respected by his men. The bastard son of the nursemaid for Connor and Moira, he'd grown up with them. He and Connor watch each other's backs as they fight the enemy. They trust each other implicitly—tried and true friends. Silently Duncan carries the shame of his sire violating the Highland tradition requiring the man claim his child, regardless of whether he is married to the mother or not. Their stations in life are very different, but it does not show in their relationship. However, Duncan knows it is different with Moira. Even though she is his forever love, he believes she has to wed a chieftain of another clan to strengthen alliances according to

custom.

Secondary characters add a rich, varied texture to The Warrior. The antagonists are fearful, mighty force that test the mettle of all the Macdonald clan. They keep the tension high. One of the most interesting characters is the wolfhound Sar. He is forever loyal to Moira and her son Ragnall, but proves to be a true ally to Duncan in a time that is pivotal to the plot. Tearleg, the seer, adds a touch of humor as well as a touch of the supernatural, while Ilsya, Duncan's sister, also adds a touch of the supernatural but most of all she lets the reader see loyalty, industry, and unrequited love. So many more of the characters are intriguing and all blend to create a mesmerizing story.

If you have read The Guardian and/ or The Sinner you will get to caught up on some old acquaintances. If you have not then The Warrior is a great place to start. I am looking forward to The Chieftain.

The Warrior is a riveting historical tale that throbs with life and love.

Elis Madison says

Duncan MacDonald knows that lovely Moira, his best friend's sister, is not for him. She's a laird's daughter, he's a nameless bastard. But when she sets out to seduce him, he can't resist. He keeps warning her that the day her father finds out about them, he's toast, but Moira is naïve and spoiled, and she truly believes that if she tells her da she wants Duncan, she'll get what she wants.

The only reason Duncan's not dead is cuz a seer told Moira's father that he'd one day save Connor's life. So he gets to live...

And as for Moira, her da hooks her up with a real winner.

Seven years later, Duncan's back, and a seer tells him Moira's in mortal danger to hie his arse off to the rescue. He's been pining for her all these years, but she obviously didn't feel the same way—she married this other guy not two weeks after he sailed away. So he's a little reluctant.

But, of course, he goes.

Moira, meanwhile, has had about as much of wedded bliss as she can stand. The last time Sean (her hubby) decided to beat her, little Ragnall, her six and a half year old son (note the timing), tried to defend her. The nasty bastard (the father, not the son) punished the boy by making him get rid of his dog Sar.

My favorite breed.

Moira uses her wiles to try to trick Sean's brother into helping them escape. Sean feeds his brother to the fish and fosters Ragnall out to the MacLeods—Moira's clan's bitter enemies—to punish her.

When Duncan arrives and asks to see her, he's unfortunately not too subtle in the way he looks at her. And Sean takes one good look at him and, well, if Moira wasn't in danger before, she's toast now. Seems Ragnall bears a more than passing resemblance to his da.

Moira becomes a widow that night in order to avoid becoming dead. Duncan spirits her off the island and they head for home with Sean's clan hot on their keel. A storm saves their arses, but they have to divert to another island to seek a healer after someone is hurt. The clan in this town is related to Duncan's mum, and while he's there, Duncan learns who his true father is. The man kidnapped and raped Duncan's mum, then was forced to send her home (along with a payment) when her grandfather complained to the laird. Coincidentally, the bastard (Duncan's father, not Duncan or Ragnall) also is babysitting Ragnall while the MacLeod laird is away.

About the ending, I'll just say Duncan finally gets to make his daddy proud, and gain a family he never knew he had. It's just (sniff) heartwarming.

All kidding aside, I find myself looking forward to the next installment in the series. This one deserves at least four stars.

Laura the Highland Hussy says

I've been following this series since the first book and I've just loved it. **I don't think you can go wrong with a Margaret Mallory book.**

In this one, Tearlag (the witch) is sending Duncan to check on Moira, Connor's sister. We see Duncan angry about being sent to Ireland to check on the woman he once loved. Moira and he had a fast and furious fling about 7 years ago, but her father found out and sent Duncan away, marrying Moira off to someone else.

This was the worst thing to ever happen, not just because she loved Duncan, but Moira's husband beat her constantly. This horrid man made their son get rid of his dog, and beat Moira in front of him. *Their 7 year old son.* Suffice it to say, that the only reason she let her son go foster with a neighboring clan was she knew it would keep him out of Sean's reach.

But shortly after their son is sent away, Hugh (the bad guy) is back in the picture, and he wants Moira's son.

Meanwhile, Duncan is furious he has to go see Moira being happy go lucky lady of the manor. Little does he know, he's going to prove Tearlag's vision correct—he finds Moira in a pool of blood. This sort of rekindles their relationship, but really Moira just wants to get her son back. Especially because of something that happened with her husband (can't tell, it's a spoiler!).

I think the beginning started off strong, but I started to not like Moira right about here. I mean, I liked her, but wanted to see her grow up a bit.

I think the author wanted to show the younger version of Moira as being spoiled and headstrong, and not thinking things through. This may have worked a little too well with me. Like the hero, too often I felt she was still behaving rashly and impulsively. With everything that she had been through, I would have thought she'd have grown up a bit more.

It wasn't until the last third of the book I really saw Moira's growth. I think it was supposed to have been there all along, but I didn't see it. Duncan and Moira have a lot of hurdles in their path, but they deal with them, and they both learn a lot about who the other is now. They are no longer young teens, but adults with a lot of hurt, anger and betrayal between them. Yet they are able to overcome their obstacles and re-fall in love.

That being said, I did enjoy the book, and I really have loved this series. **I absolutely recommend this one to any Historical fan, any Scottish Romance fan, and really, anyone who just wants good romance.**

***ARC courtesy of netgalley and Forever Romance

Laura says

I couldn't have picked a better book to initiate me into the world of Margaret Mallory's Return of the Highlanders. Having never read one of Ms. Mallory's books I had no idea what to expect, but after reading "The Warrior", in one sitting (!), I went out to buy the first 2 in the series. Duncan and Moira's story grabbed my attention from the first paragraph to the last. From their heartbreak separation to their reuniting in Moira's husbands keep, the twists and turns of their story keeps the reader wondering "what else could happen?" and then something DOES happen! As I said before I read this in one sitting, thank God for 2 hour toddler naps :D , because I could not put it down. The villain, or villains, were just evil enough to make them believable and surprising in certain ways.

I look forward to seeing how the prevailing villain is dispatched in the next novel The Chieftain. Keep 'em coming Ms. Mallory!

Jewels ♥ My Devastating Reads says

Originally reviewed at www.devastatingreads.blogspot.com

I really like Margaret Mallory's Return of the Highlander series. I was looking forward to Duncan's story and I was not disappointed. From the previous two books, we know that Duncan had loved and lost that love earlier in his life. While the woman in question, is still alive, Duncan doesn't have any hope of winning her back because Moira is married.

We learn a lot about Duncan in this novel. For instance, we already knew about his past history with Moira to some degree, and we knew that he was a great warrior. Big, brawny, the most skillful of Conner's men, Duncan always had this air of mystery about him because he was the strong and silent type. It's been pretty clear that he's been broken hearted for a long time. But in this book, we learn a lot about Duncan that I was expecting. I expected that there would be some misunderstanding between him and Moira, but I hadn't expected it to be so...personal on Duncan's part. While Moira's father is the reason why Duncan and Moira didn't have their HEA when they were younger, what's really kept Duncan away from Moira is that fact that

he himself doesn't believe he's good enough for her because he has no idea who his father was, and I wasn't expecting him to feel the need to prove himself worthy of Moira. I was delighted to find out how sweet and passionate he is, and I admire his unflinchingly loyalty. There's something really romantic about how steadfast his love for Moira is, so I really enjoyed Duncan.

Moira, on the other hand...well, she's feisty and she knows her own mind and I admire that. I appreciate she felt abandoned by Duncan and even betrayed. I know she has a hard time trusting Duncan not only because of what Sean has done to her, but because she feels unsure that Duncan didn't leave her of his own accord. I get it, it's just she made me mad how stubbornly she held on to the idea that Duncan didn't think she could care for herself. I also thought she was rather hard on Duncan. The poor man must have told her a hundred times he loved her, and yet there was always some niggling reason she couldn't bring herself to really trust in that love. It got irksome after a while I thought.

The plot is full of twists and we're beginning to see the beginning of the end being played out. I'm anticipating in that in the next novel, Conner will have defeated all the MacDonald enemies and claimed back all of their lands. He'll establish himself as the undisputed chieftain, and I'm sure we'll get to see Hugh defeated. I'm rather looking forward to it. This series has a good dosing of action and I love that about it, because everyone gets involved--from the warriors to small children. I loved the way each of these highlanders love stories have played out so far, and I have a sneaking suspicion that the next novel, *The Chieftain*, will be the best yet.

4glittering stars

Fiona Druce says

Duncan MacDonald is the bastard son of a mystery man who never claimed him. With no name to give him credence, Duncan becomes a renowned warrior in his own right and Captain of Chieftain Connor MacDonald's forces. He wins many a battle, but lost his heart years ago to Connor's sister, the beautiful Moira.

But what can a bastard offer a Scottish princess?

Moira is strong-willed, strong-headed, and strong-hearted in this tale of love lost, regained, and renewed. Wedded to a man not even his own mother could love, she fights for herself and moreso for the son she bore six and half years ago.

The story begins in the middle of the tumultuous reclaiming of MacDonald lands, once ruled under the tight and cruel fist of Moira's uncle, Hugh Dubh. Connor has since wrested control of his home, but now he and his three warriors must regain control of the lands that have been overtaken by his life-long enemies. A prologue whisks you through the affair Moira and Duncan had in their youth before both were cast away in opposite directions by her father; Duncan was sent to war, and Moira was sent to wed. During Duncan's time away, both have faced trials and dangers that have hardened their hearts.

Moira is wife to an abusive and self-absorbed violent man. She dreams of Connor arriving to rescue her, while her heart longs to find its once-love, Duncan. Duncan is in the middle of fighting battles with Connor to regain the control and safety of the MacDonald lands.

Connor decides that it's time he had word of his sister, Moira, and sends Duncan to check on her. After accidental but deserved bloodshed, Duncan returns to Connor with Moira at his side. But Ragnall, her son, is gone, in the hands of their enemies.

Moira and Duncan navigate the trials of the heart, while fighting through trials of betrayal, secrecy, and war to find each other and to save the young heir of the MacDonald clan.

Duncan is truly the definition of honor through this story, managing to narrowly walk that fine line between heroic honor and downright stupidity. He does it well, I might add. I thoroughly enjoyed Duncan, even with his very serious demeanor. Ms. Mallory works hard to ensure the reader understands the background behind Duncan's approach to life and I found myself nodding at his decisions.

Moira's driving motivation changes from *joie de vivre* to protecting her son and keeping her heart locked away tight. I understand her need, completely, but did find that, at times, she let her pain make her decisions for her. While I wanted to shake my head, I did come to understand why she made certain choices and had particular reactions.

The overarching storyline continues with Hugh "Dubh" MacDonald betraying anyone and everyone to regain what he wants. The fighting focuses on Duncan's fighting and- surprisingly- musical skills. Ms. Mallory doesn't disappoint and readers will wait ecstatic to read her final installment in the series.

The majority of the action was somewhat predictable, but that didn't take away from the enjoyment of reading it.

With such great characters, storyline, and action, the only thing keeping this book from near-perfection is the quick changes from scenes. I had some difficulty feeling the emotions of the characters during highly dramatic scenes. While I'm not a huge fan of narrative, a bit more emotional input from the characters through action and thought would have perhaps helped me to really grasp the scene as the character felt it. The issue wasn't enough to take me from the story, but I had to put a bit more into it in order to really stand inside of the story and feel the characters. As a result, I found myself somewhat distanced from Moira and Duncan, throughout the story.

I do recommend this book, however! The story is lively, creative, and quite historically accurate. You'll learn a great deal, while enjoying a massively entertaining tale. Ms. Mallory obviously worked very hard to ensure her facts were straight and what areas she made fiction still hold well to history.

If you're looking for love, drama, action, and handsome men in kilts, Margaret Mallory's "The Warrior" is definitely a choice for you!

Shauna says

Didn't really have any depth.

Debra Taylor says

" Four fearless warriors return to the Highlands to claim their lands and their legacies. But all of their trials on the battlefield can't prepare them for their greatest challenge yet : winning the hearts of four willful Scottish beauties. "

The Warrior is an action packed historical thriller. The third in author Margaret Mallory's Return of the Highlander series. This fast paced story features Duncan MacDonald & his one true love Moira (sister to Laird Connor MacDonald) . Seven years ago young lovers Duncan & Moira were parted by deceit & betrayal. Duncan was sent to France to fight alongside Connor & cousins, Ian & Alex. And poor Moira was wed to a vicious man chosen by her father. Now that the old Laird has died, the four warriors have returned to reclaim his legacy from Connor's usurper uncle. Connor sends Duncan to rescue his sister & her son after the old witch who foresaw the four warrior's future has a bloody vision of Moira. The story was riveting as Duncan fights to save the woman he still loves & the son he never knew he had.

What I loved about this series : DUNCAN. He was an honorable man. However, I found it not hard to like Moira. She seemed selfish to me.... blaming Duncan for her problems.

Three highly emotional moments stand out in my mind . (1) It was an emotionally gut-wrenching scene where Duncan sees Moira for the first time since their parting. Although I understood her reasons, when she coldly stated that she didn't remember Duncan at all I felt like grabbing that girl right up & giving her a good shaking. (2) Then there was the moment when Duncan first sees Ragnell & realizes that the boy is his own son. The author brought forth his sense of betrayal that Moira had lied to him about the boy's age. (3) Finally, the beach scene where Duncan confronts the depraved man who is threatening Moira & Ragnell. His own father.

Margaret Mallory is an amazing writer.... capable of evoking powerful emotions with her stories. I have enjoyed the first two books in this series. But this one is by far my favorite one yet. The story line was fast paced & action filled. Full of highly emotional scenes. This reader can only hope that the final book in the series (Connor's story) will be half as good as this one .

A flying five stars for The Warrior.

My thanks to Netgalley for allowing me to read this ARC early in exchange for my honest opinion.
