



## La Dama Inocente

*Nicola Cornick*

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La señorita Lister se sentía una dama respetable. Era una lástima que fuera una antigua sirvienta convertida en heredera de una gran fortuna. Ahora, el atractivo e insoportable lord Miles Vickery estaba seguro de que podía apropiarse de esa fortuna chantajeándola para que se casase con él, aunque con su encanto engañoso ya le había roto el corazón una vez. Sin embargo, estaba segura de que él no podría cumplir las condiciones de su herencia. Después de todo, ¿qué libertino podría ser completamente honesto durante tres largos meses?

## **La Dama Inocente Details**

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## From Reader Review La Dama Inocente for online ebook

### Julie (jjmachshev) says

"The Scandals of An Innocent" is book two of Nicola Cornick's early regency period trilogy. This series is set in Fortune's Folly, a fictional town in Yorkshire where the greedy 'Lord' has reinstated a Middle Ages 'Dames Tax' which will allow him to take up to half the fortune of every unwed woman of marriageable age after one year. Needless to say, every fortune hunter in the country has made his way to Fortune's Folly in an effort to wed an heiress; and the women of Fortune's Folly are literally under seige!

Alice is the young maid-turned-heiress who inherited a fortune from her last employer. While the money certainly made the lives of her, her mother, and her brother much easier, it has also brought about their horrible situation of 'not one nor the other'. They aren't ton, but they're not servants either. Alice HAS made some good friends, and she considered herself heartsore but lucky when the fortune hunter she cared for dumped her to woo a richer heiress. Unfortunately for her, now HE's back and still in need of her fortune...and he's got her over a barrel this time.

Miles has inherited not one, but two bankrupt estates. It's certainly not fair that HE wasn't the one to bankrupt them, but now he's saddled with trying to keep his family out of the poorhouse. A family estrangement and the horrors of war have removed every trace of caring from his being...at least that's what HE thinks. His situation is becoming desperate when he finally gets the break he needs--so he promptly blackmails Alice into an engagement.

I think most women like to read about 'bad boys'. We love our tormented heroes, our hard Alphas, and our regency rakes. BUT, we DO want to see them reforming. My beef with this story is that he really doesn't reform until the last few chapters of a 360-page read! For the vast majority of the book, he was a total A\$\$-- constantly trampling Alice's feelings, not protecting her from the snobby locals, and being a jerk to just about everybody! How in the heck do I try and like a guy like that? Over and over again, he stressed to Alice that: 1-he was marrying her for her money; and 2-he was also happy that he would get to 'bed' her. What a guy, eh?

On the other hand, I did like Alice. She tried her best to deal with the jerk in a reasonable manner, even under duress. So having confessed that I hated the plot (well the nature of the hero and whole blackmail thing anyway), I CAN say that Nicola Cornick writes with lovely pacing and there's always a reason for the ongoing action in her stories. There's a bit of mystery (WHY is someone trying to kill Alice?) with small clues thrown here and there. I didn't figure out the 'bad guys' til the author did the unveiling at the very end. The supporting cast was a mostly likeable mishmash of family and friends that were first introduced in book one, "The Confessions of a Duchess". This story can stand alone with no problems, and as long as you can tolerate the jerk of a hero, you'll probably enjoy "The Scandals of An Innocent" much more than I did!

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### SheLove2Read says

This was my first Nicola Cornick and the second book in the Brides of Fortune series. I didn't feel lost coming in on the second book because there was enough back-story rehash to bring me up to date. That being said, I'm not sure I'd read another NC story. I'm on the fence.

The book had one trope I loved: "commoner" Alice, a former maid receives inheritance from her employer and now is an heiress in her own right. Alice didn't have any of the sometimes insane notions that those born to the Ton have about working or their place in society. She's just a working girl made good, with a Mama who has let the \$\$ go to her head and a brother who still works the fields, although he's now master instead of laborer. Quite a family dynamic there. She has loyal friends she has made in two middle echelon women who have fallen out of favor with their upper crust families, and she's made a life for herself, even if she's single. Unfortunately a ridiculous middle age (stone age in my opinion) decree says that any unmarried heiress in said town will have to forfeit half her fortune to the town's coffers if not married by a specific date. To this, we meet our hero Miles.

Lord Miles Vickery is a near destitute baron in search of a wealthy heiress. Last year, (apparently this happened in book 1) he was courting Alice but threw her over for an even richer heiress. Alice's heart was broken and Miles himself was thrown over for a richer Lord, and now you have your story: Miles wants to pick up with Alice where he left off. Hard to get very excited about that kind of "hero", at least in my opinion.

I loved Alice in that even when she was on the receiving end of horrifically rude behavior from other "ladies", she never let them see her die inside. She never let on to the men who made crude remarks or the women who swished their skirts the other way that they affected her. She was a true lady inside and I loved her for it. Even with Miles, who admittedly coerced her in a truly abominable way to be his betrothed, she didn't let him see how his actions hurt her. Some might say that's being cowardly, but I think it's more along the lines of not letting them know how much you DO care, in order to avoid them purposefully damaging you further.

Miles, for all that he had a few good moments, also had some REALLY bad ones too. He was hard to forgive, even when his "dirty little secret" was revealed. I'm not sure I ever warmed up to him like the author intended. I also didn't think the ending was all that, and to me, it was more of a "ok let's hurry up and end this because I'm almost to 400 pages" than a happy resolution to the story.

3 stars / Recommendation: only if you're a fan

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### **Fangirl Musings says**

Pages Survived: 126

No. No way!

This book was a flunk from the start. I didn't even bother with finishing the thing for the simple fact that, first of all, the writing seemed so jumpy. One thought or description of a character's actions would barely finish itself before another completely varied thought or action would take place.

I found the hero to be TOO much of an ass, and while that more probably will change throughout the story, that wasn't enough in my book. Add that to the fact that I find the heroine, Alice, to be entirely unbelievable. She is jilted by the same man who comes up a few months later to blackmail her into marriage, admitting all he wants is her body and money, and while the believability to her outrage at this character is entirely lacking.

While I realize that for a romance story to take place, the storyline must progress with the two characters thrust together, however, I found Alice's character to be a bit of a joke. She barely scrapped together enough condemnation of Miles to be any where near the reality of a strong, admirable heroine.

Overall, I just couldn't stomach much more of this book, and decided to throw in the towel. The ONLY reason I would have kept reading till the end would be to see Miles groveling like no man has groveled before. He is depicted as an ass to the fullest, and if the author had planned on slowly revealing that such was not the case, she should have dropped subtle hints, enough to allow the reader to read this character without wanting to kick him in his fiendish man-business!

Simply put, it is impossible for me to ever finish a book or story where I have zero respect for one of the characters. In this case, depressingly enough, I not only had zilch respect for not one, but BOTH leading characters!

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### **Pauline says**

Historical romance. Light and frothy read. Just what you need sometimes.

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### **Mafi says**

Sabe bem ler estes romances históricos de vez em quando! O Miles é um cretino mas a Alice conquistou-o. :D

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### **Lisa says**

Charming. Great plot. Well written. Could've have been condensed though.

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### **Harlequin Historical says**

Second book in the The Bride's of Fortune series.

Umm, what can I say, Nicola Cornick had another winner here definitely doesn't stress enough how good her books are. I love this series and Alice's story is wonderfully entertaining.

Alice cannot believe she is being blackmailed into marriage but it won't be that simple for her blackmailer, Lord Miles. For him to gain her fortune upon marriage certain terms have to be met according to the terms

written into her inheritance. There is no way the deceitful man can be totally honest for 3 months. However, jumping through the hoops to satisfy her lawyers teaches them both that they are perfect for each other.

READ THIS SERIES!!!!!! LOL

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### **Desi says**

leído en Julio 2014

Me gustó!

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### **Elaine says**

This is such a lovely well written story. I could read Nicola Cornick all day long! (and sometimes do).

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### **Andreia Silva says**

confesso que não esperava gostar tanto deste mini livro . A história está muito bem escrita muito bem desenvolvida e tem um sentido lógico e interessante.

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### **Alice Ca says**

Thought it 'd be better. She seemed a tough one at first but she soon became a "stupid" girl in love with the bad guy who eventually changed for his wife(-to-be)and love her back.....

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### **Zeek says**

Alice Lister has money. A LOT of money and Lord Miles Vickery is desperate to get his hands on it. He's two steps away from debtors prison and the beautiful, one-time servant, who's former eccentric employer left a fortune to, is his ticket to freedom.

After he dumped her for a richer heiress years before, Alice cannot believe Vickery has the gall to approach her once again. But when he pulls out his trump card- he knows something about her that can never come to light- she reluctantly agrees to an engagement. Of course Alice knows he'll never meet the terms of her inheritance- for Vickery is nothing if not a cold hearted scoundrel- the type of man that Alice's benefactor has ensured will never get her money.

But much to the surprise of both of them, he begins to meet those terms- in spades- so that when the chance comes for Alice to break from his blackmailing attempts, she finds it difficult to let go because she's falling helplessly in love with him once again.

Could it be true? Could love really change a man? Or is he simply the unfeeling man he portrays to the world and always claimed to be?

This one is not gonna sit well with Historical Romance purists, but I, for one, enjoyed it. Miles Vickery is an unapologetic manipulator. After suffering at the hands of his hypocritical father, he's shut off all emotions and he'll stop at nothing to get what he wants. Because he's distanced himself so far from his emotions- he usually does! When he blackmails Alice into marriage to save himself from debtors prison, he doesn't lie to her. He wants the marriage for one reason only, despite the fact he's drawn to her like none other. For this reason, he initially comes off more of the villain than the hero. But never fear, in the grandest tradition of romance, love will find a way.

Alice is kind-hearted AND a fighter and I found her to be engaging. Most aspects of the plot needs one to suspend belief- but then, what romance novel plot doesn't? These two sizzle together and that's evident from page one and I even enjoyed the mystery/thriller twist to the plot too- if for seeing the bad guys get it in the end alone!

My one issue with the story is that it felt like it took the author too long to get to where she was going. We knew right away that Miles wasn't really as cold hearted as he seemed and was going to redeem himself, but it wasn't till half way through the book that we actually SAW him getting there. Unfortunately this made the book drag in the beginning and steals the pleasure of the refreshing hook the sucked us in.

Still, it's good enough to make me curious about the rest of the gals she's writing about in the series!

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### **Holly says**

My first Nicola Cornick book and I ended up really enjoying it. This is book 2 of the Brides of Fortune series and while this did manage to stand on its own two feet there were times when I didn't know what the heck was going on.

I liked this book because of Miles and Alice. I liked them. They were two characters who were trapped by their circumstances and I felt so bad for them. For Alice, and yes, even Miles. At first Miles comes across as a, how shall I put this, as a humongous bastard. Call him every foul Regency era name in the book and it fits. He was an unrepentant bad boy and he snookered me completely. He was outrageous in his arrogance and ruthlessness and I fell for him like a rock. Then the book cuts to Alice and her anger and frustration at being once again at the mercy of an aristocrat killed my growing lust and I was ready to cut off his vital parts and lay them at Alice's feet for her approval. I found her likable and charming and never whiney. Which gets a big thumbs up from me. And Miles, while ruthless in his drive to get his hands on Alice's money and on her body, (in that order) should have disgusted me, or at the very least irritated me, but instead I felt so bad for him. He was a guy who had the deck stacked against him and I kept reading through this rather long winded book just so I could see him happy.

Having never read Nicola Cornick before I was surprised by the sizzle this book packed. Quite a naughty little Regency book this was. Nothing too overtly sexy but there was still a lot of heaving bosoms going on. And there's a naughty little secret that Alice is carrying around on her, uh, *person* that I found hysterical. OH, that was priceless. Though after I stopped laughing I had to cry out, "shenanigans!" If you really don't want one, nothing less than being shackled to a table will force you to sit still for it. Also, a brilliant move by the author had me laughing, after she had turned my own dirty mind against me.

All in all, I really liked it. It was amusing, had good pacing, I liked the the H/H and the zany family members. On the negative side it was a bit long winded, the author kept reiterating certain points and feelings, and since I did not read the first book in this series, the mystery lacked depth for me. Plus it was implausible. A servant girl even attempting to enter the aristocracy and reaching as high as a marquis? Please. But this was still enjoyable and I'm glad I read it and I hope to read the other books in this series again soon.

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### **Meredith (Austenesque Reviews) says**

Rakes and rich heiresses, blackmail and deception, mystery and murder, love and lust. Sounds enthralling, doesn't it? This is Nicola Cornick's second installment in the Brides of Fortune Trilogy which takes place in the Regency time period (1810) and in a small town called Fortune's Folly. Alice, our heroine, is a former maidservant who was left a large inheritance by her former employer and is now a very desirous heiress with a coveted fortune of 80,000 pounds. Miles Vickery, is a well-known and dangerous rake who intended to seduce Alice last fall and marry her for her money. The plan backfired when Alice discovered how black Miles character really was and decided she wanted nothing to do with him.

Miles, now, has fallen into some bad luck, he has inherited his father's debt and his cousin's debt, as well as cursed title. The future looks very bleak for Miles and he will soon face the consequences of these debts unless he marries a rich heiress. As luck would have it, he catches Alice in the act of an illegal crime and decides that, in his desperation, his best course of action is to blackmail Alice into marriage.

Alice is a very likable and admirable heroine, she cares very much about her family and staff. She does not act like a true heiress that sits at home idly, she answers her own door and does what ever she can to make the work of the servants easier. Remembering how harsh her life was as a servant and how dangerous it is for a female servant to ward off the attentions of lecherous gentlemen, Alice has much sympathy and compassion for those who work as servants. She is described by Miles, quite accurately, as "an odd mixture of innocence and impropriety." While she is disgusted with Miles behavior and ruthlessness, she cannot deny the fact that she is attracted to him and is aware that her judgment can be compromised where he is concerned.

Miles, what a cynical and cold-hearted rake! No one seems to like him and with good reason he doesn't care about anything or anyone. Or so he would have you believe . . . Miles has a dark past, it is known that he is estranged from his family, but it isn't known why. He is devious and deceitful towards Alice, but when stipulations of her inheritance requires him to become an honest and upright man for three months, he surprisingly doesn't find it as difficult as he thought it would be. Perhaps his soul is not so black after all.

The reason I gave this book four stars instead of five was that the mysterious aspect of this book was weak compared to the romantic aspect. There are actually several enigmas or intriguing secrets in this book: Where did Tom Fortune go after escaping from prison? Who is the real murderer if Tom is as innocent as he says he is? And who would want to kill Alice? I would have liked to seen these plot developments come into the foreground of the story more and be a little bit more elaborated. Some of the resolutions of these mysteries were disappointing in that they were hurried and inexplicable.

I enjoyed this installment of the Brides of Fortune, I am now eager to read the other two! I recommend this book to anyone who loves to read historical romances and especially likes regency romances. I, myself, love to read Jane Austen, so this was right up my alley.

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## Aquit says

### SPOILERS AHEAD

I can understand a cynical, emotionless, greedy, manipulator asshole for a hero. In fact, sometimes I prefer my men to be the “*monster*” rather than the everyday hero. It gives them a edge and an outlook on life that is both refreshing and realistic. Miles is everything I described but something about him irked me like no other. Miles' a selfish bastard and I would had preferred if he had stay that way instead of changing himself because “he fallen in love.” Then, he would had some character and I would had like him more. However, his development left a bad taste in my mouth especially with his abrupt change and the way it was just threw at us. *BAM! “By God, I've changed and seen the light!”*

And, don't get me started on Alice. Women like Alice annoy the hell out of me. We are told that she is strong and honest but from what I read she's nothing more than a simpleton woman who flutters around thinking she'll resist Miles but once he puts his kissable lips or strong hands on her she turns to mush and can't think of anything else but banging this bad boy. Granted, this is the same man who broke her heart a year ago and left her for a mistress while pursuing her with empty promises. I believe that I would had liked Alice more if she wasn't so much of a doormat and had a back bone or some kind of “oomph” to show me that she was much stronger than what Miles thought.

Especially because when Miles would tell her in the cruellest way that he was just using her to save himself from his debt and wouldn't hesitate to bed her if he had the chance you would think that this woman would grow up and move on with her life. But no, she fancied herself in love and thought that when Miles did something “honorable” it meant that he cared for her and was changing himself to become a better person for her despite knowing his true nature.

She lived in a black and white world. I just didn't find myself caring for her. I wanted to see how she would change as I read more but instead she stay the same and had no character development. I would had preferred it if she had picked herself up, threw away the excess baggage, looked into Miles' eyes, saw him as the ass he was and told him to go to hell. That she was going to find a real man who appreciated her, would walk through fire for her AND if he was going to manipulate her to at least be better at it because she wouldn't put up with that shit.

I'm going to reveal the climax, which was also the spot where I stopped reading. (*This is done from memory as the book is no longer in my possession out of fear that I would had shred it into pieces.*)

So, Miles' mistress (the same one he left Alice for one year ago) shows up and kisses Miles at some party or other. Alice runs away because she's heart broken because we are told she loves Miles—though Lord knows why. She wonders off somewhere and Miles runs after her and tells her that because he is honorable and that because he changed-*gasp*!-he's going to release Alice from their Blackmail Engagement. Alice decides that even though this asshole manipulated her and broke her heart, she wants to give her virginity to him to show him that she loved him or something. So they banged on the cement floor.

Then the magistrate or someone comes in and tells them that our “hero” Miles told him she's a thief who stole the dress that started this Blackmail Engagement (which she did.) Instead of lying and manipulating the

facts like he's always done before our "hero" finally decides to tell the truth and said that yes indeed, Alice did stole the dress. So, Alice is sent into jail right after f\*cking this man she so loves. He gets her out of jail and expects her to be grateful that he saved her from death. She's mad that he didn't lie to protect her. Then he had the nerve to tell her that he changed-*gasp-* and he decided to tell the truth because of her influence instead of protecting her. Instead of cutting this asshole out of her life she realizes that she can't resist his charms (*gag me please!*) anymore and why stay mad at him when you can f\*ck him instead?

I just quit there. I hope that whoever was trying to kill Alice succeeded because I truly hated this girl.

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