

Call of the Highland Moon

Kendra Leigh Castle

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Gideon MacInnes is a werewolf from the Scottish Highlands. He loves the haunting beauty of his home, but runs away to upstate New York, grappling with his destiny of being his clan's next alpha. As a snowstorm closes in, Gideon is attacked by rogue wolves working for an enemy he never imagined existed. He stumbles, wounded and bleeding, to collapse on the doorstep of Carly Silver's tiny romance bookstore-ironic, as she's never been very good at relationships with men.

A warmhearted woman, looking for a new pet ...

Thinking he's a dog, she takes him home, treats his injuries and wakes up to find a devastatingly handsome naked man in her bed.

Trapped together through the raging storm, Gideon discovers that he's found his mate and Carly has to choose between becoming a werewolf, charged with protecting humankind from the inhabitants of an evil otherworld, or giving up the one man she's ever truly loved ...

Call of the Highland Moon Details

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From Reader Review Call of the Highland Moon for online ebook

Cindi says

New author (to me) and one I will be looking forward to reading in the (very near) future! Especially since Ms. Castle writes about gorgeous, hot werewolves. The only way she could make it better? Make her wolves from Scotland! Oh, right, she did ;)

Thanksgiving weekend was a wonderful time to read about Carly in her upstate New York snowed-in town (I live in South Texas, an anti-snow city). Carly is a double-header for me: she's a major pet lover and owns a chicks' book and jewelry store called "Bodice Rippers". How awesome is that? During a blizzard, she hears a hesitant scratch against her door and opens it to find a large dog laying in a puddle of blood on her doorstep. Her heart goes out to the poor, torn up critter and she brings it inside for the night; she can't really do any more as the town is snowed in so getting it to the vet is a no-go. Carly doesn't really expect the dog to live through the night but decides that if it does, well, she's always wanted a pet...

Call of the Highland Moon is not terribly original but it is terribly sweet and I fell in love with each character as they were introduced. Carly's world is our world (sorta) so was easy to relate to. And there was a satisfying resolution at the end (which doesn't happen much anymore, I gotta say!) yet the door was left open (pun intended - just read the book!) for a follow-up story. And Gideon has a brother. Yay!

Sammy says

2.5 stars

I had to force myself to keep going and that's never promising. The story itself wasn't bad, BUT it took way too long to for something to happen, and even then just ended up being okay for me.

April ♥ "LOS" ♥ says

I really enjoyed this book! A Scottish, highlander, wolf-shifter?! What's not to love:) I look forward to continuing this series.

Heather Book Savvy Babe says

Let's see, werewolves in Scottish highlands...yes please! That being said, I enjoyed the book, it was not fantastic or whatever, but it was a fun read, I enjoyed the characters, Gideon as the run away alpha and Carly the bookworm turned feisty heroine. The characters families were quite entertaining as well. I will probably be reading more of this author's work in the future, but it's not quite a "must-read"...more so, an enjoyable, fun, sexy read, which let's face it, that's pretty cool too.

Daniela says

This first installment of the MacInnes werewolves finds us first in a small town in North America where our two main characters meet. She's a romance book store owner (love the name of the bookstore!), he's a werewolf trying to hide from his destiny. Bad catches up with him, she gets tagged accidentally and they end up in Scotland where he's from... In this book there are bad werewolf-creating creatures that are called Drakkyn which give this a little new spin on an old tale and add to the suspense and tenseness in the book. Romance and the story itself develop fast and one does feel immediately immersed in it. The characters are believable...and it would probably sound a little silly to say about a supernatural book that some of the actions and reactions seem a little fast and far fetched... isn't the whole idea?!?
All in all a good read.

Melissa Levine says

I had a really hard time trying to get through this book. There was so much unnecessary writing that I was more skimming through the pages looking for something actually interesting. It was just so boring, but I did manage to get through it.

One thing though, when I read a book involving someone that has an accent, I like the author to actually do the different wording for that accent. For example, I know a Scottish person will usually call their father 'da'. In this story I think Gideon and/or his brother Gabriel called their father da like once, otherwise it was always dad. My point is that if you want to keep mentioning the fact that Gideon and his family are from Scotland then you need to have the appropriate writing to go along with it. It helps the reader become more involved with the story.

Couple of questions I have are:

1. Mario and Luigi? Seriously? I assume the author wasn't able to think of any other male Italian names for these characters?
 2. When Gideon first met Carlys family at her house, how did he know her mother had dressed up for him? Considering he'd never met her before, didn't know how she usually dressed or anything.
 3. How was Gideon able to get Carly on a plane with no problems? All because they had her passport, so no questions asked as to why she was unconscious?
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Barbara says

Oh...Yes! Yes! Yes!...Enough said.

Julianna says

Reviewed for THC Reviews

"2.5 stars" I've been looking forward to reading *Call of the Highland Moon* for quite some time.

Werewolves. Highlanders. Heroine who owns a bookshop dedicated to romance. She also loves animals and

finds the hero on her doorstep in his wolf form, mistaking him for a large wounded dog. Stranded in a snowstorm. All of these things I would typically love in a romance, and it sounds awesome on paper. I mean, what's not to love about those things? Well, as it turns out, a whole lot. All throughout reading it, I kept thinking things like Where's the plot? Where's the world-building? Where's the character development? All three of these things were seriously lacking, IMHO, and that combined with an overabundance of introspection and passive narration made for a slow, plodding read that never really captured my imagination or engaged my attention well at all.

One of the few reasons I didn't give the book an even lower rating is because I didn't dislike the characters like I have in some other books. But then again, I didn't really get to know them well either. Both Gideon and Carly seemed like decent people, but I just didn't feel connected to them at all. Their characterizations simply didn't have much meat on their bones. We know that Carly owns a cute little bookstore that's dedicated to romance in a touristy-type town in New York and that she has a rather overbearing but well-meaning family. She also loves animals, which is why, when she finds Gideon injured in his wolf form on her doorstep, she takes him home. Gideon, for his part, is apparently running away from his destiny as the alpha male of his pack, but I never really understood why. His mother, a human, died while trying to make the change into a werewolf, and he has a father and brother back home in Scotland, where he supposedly helps run a Bed & Breakfast in his family's castle. Other than that, I couldn't tell you much about either character. Unfortunately, these things are all external factors in their lives and don't really speak to who they are inside and what makes them tick. Also I found it a bit hard to swallow that Carly was so quickly accepting of Gideon being a werewolf. She also has a tendency to get upset with him at the drop of a hat and oftentimes over things I thought were rather silly misunderstandings that could have been cleared up with better communication. Quite simply, both characters were distinctly lacking in motivation, which made it hard to fully understand or become invested in either of them.

Probably in part, because I didn't connect well with Gideon and Carly on an individual level, I also didn't feel the connection between them as a couple either. There just wasn't much to grasp onto, such as expressions of feelings, body language, or other things like longing looks and lingering touches that would stir my emotions. Apparently they're fated mates, which makes them really hot for one another, but I couldn't feel much of anything passing between them, much less this all-consuming attraction. I've read plenty of paranormal romances where the hero and heroine are mates and their attraction to each other is immediate, powerful, and palpable, which can also help me to buy into them making a lifetime commitment within a few days time (like in this story), but with Gideon and Carly I felt nary a spark. What passes for a relationship between them is told much more so than shown, which is a major problem throughout the book.

Normally I'm a fan of rich introspection, but IMO, it's way overdone here. It can drag on for paragraphs or even pages, leaving my mind wandering and making me forget what's happening, because there's so much space between the character's actions or dialogue where they're not doing anything except simply thinking. Eg. The hero says or asks something and then we get paragraph upon paragraph of the heroine thinking about stuff before she finally responds or vice versa. If someone took that long to think things over in real life before responding verbally or doing something action-wise, it would be stupendously boring and awkward, and I can't say it's all that much different in a book. This book is so overwritten, it, quite frankly, was difficult for me to read. It was like constantly reading stream of consciousness narration from the characters, leaving very little room for actual storytelling. Introspection can be an extremely useful tool for building characters and plot, but here there are lots and lots of words that just didn't say much of a meaningful nature.

This also makes for extremely passive narration. Very little happened from an action standpoint until the last few chapters of the book. There were several instances where the author told about something after the fact when showing it in the moment would have made for richer and more interesting storytelling. Eg. She jumps

from Carly finding Gideon in his wolf form, injured on the doorstep of her shop and deciding to take him home, to her waking up in bed with him in his human form in the morning. I wanted to know how she got him home since he was probably far too big for her carry and whether she did anything to tend his wounds. Instead we get barely a mention that she had to somehow coax him into and out of her car. Another example is that Carly apparently had a conversation with Gideon, asking questions about werewolves, but rather than showing that discussion, the author throws in a few minor parenthetical comments about the mythology in Carly's introspections. Yet another skimmed over scene that I think would have been much more fun and interesting written out was when Gideon helped Carly out in her shop one day and practically got mauled by her customers. Again, disappointingly, it was only told about, not shown. There were also lots of other instances where some intriguing tidbit would pop up in their introspections, making me say things like What does that look like? or Show me that; don't tell me! It all made for a pretty frustrating reading experience.

As a writer, I've learned that writing effectively and making that all-important connection with your readers isn't just about the words that you choose, but also how you put them together. It's like taking building blocks and figuring out the best way to construct them into something solid. In this book, some of the sentences are constructed in a confusing way, so that I had to re-read them several times to figure out what was being said. Other times, it wasn't just confusing, but that they weren't constructed in such a way as to engage the reader's attention. Many, many sentences could have been broken up or easily reworded to say the exact same thing, but in a much more succinct way that also would have been significantly more vibrant and dynamic. Instead the prose really drags most of the time, because the author insists on over-explaining things. Eg. There was a huge overabundance of phrases such as "she saw," "she thought", she asked herself," etc. that to my way of thinking, were totally unnecessary. Of course, she saw, thought, or asked herself those things because it was written in her POV. And it wasn't just this but other things as well. IMHO, the author should dispense with the hand-holding and trust her readers to be intelligent enough to grasp the nuances of her writing without telling them every little thing. When I first started reading the book, I wasn't certain if there were any hard and fast rules about using parentheses in fiction, but I knew that I rarely saw them. Later, I looked it up and most sources tended to concur that parentheses are generally too jarring for fiction and should probably be used sparingly, if at all. Yet in this book, they're used to excess. This is yet another example of the hand-holding I was talking about where the author seemed to feel the need to insert sub-level introspection into a character's main introspections. IMHO, 99% of what was inside the parentheses didn't add anything to the story, but instead slowed it down. I'm really surprised the editor let her get away with this.

Last but certainly not least, I thought that for a paranormal series, the world-building was pretty weak. I didn't really understand what was going on in this regard throughout most of the story, mainly because until the very end, we only get tiny tidbits of the werewolf mythology that are muddled in with the overabundant introspection. All I understood is that the werewolves are the guardians of a mythic stone, which Gideon's cousin, Malachi, is trying to get his hands on. Also Malachi is trying to kill Gideon to prevent him from taking his place as alpha. I thought the villain was rather weak too, because for the most part, he's a distant threat, far across the ocean. He sent some henchmen to do his dirty work for him, and these wolves, known as Drakkyn, are different and more powerful because of an amulet they wear and perhaps some other reasons that aren't entirely clear yet. Unfortunately, none of this made much sense to me until the climactic scenes at the end, but by then, I couldn't really be bothered to care much. And as an aside, (this doesn't really have anything to do with world-building but it did bother me greatly), I absolutely couldn't buy into a guy carrying an unconscious woman through an airport and onto a plane. TSA would never allow something like that to fly (pun intended :-)).

Anyway, despite having a number of themes and story elements that I typically would love in a romance novel, I'm sorry to say that *Call of the Highland Moon* was largely a disappointment. Aside from generally liking the hero and heroine, the only other thing that kept the book from getting an even lower rating from

me is the three or four scenes that were written more actively and with a better balance between the dialogue or actions and introspection. It appears that Gideon's brother, Gabriel, will become the hero of the next book, *Dark Highland Fire*. Although he seemed like yet another nice and perhaps even fun character, I have no real desire to repeat this reading experience, so I'll likely not be continuing with the series. Readers who are more forgiving of passive narration and sub-par character and plot development may enjoy this book (and the series) much more than I did, but I have a plethora of new authors to try, as well as the backlists of far too many favorite authors to read to spend any more time on a book series I'm not enjoying.

Kari Chapman says

It seems like there was an interesting story in this book. Unfortunately it was hidden by way too many words. I made it through page 100 and all that had happened was the introductions of the two main characters, their meeting and the introduction of the bad guy. After the first couple chapters I mostly skimmed and still managed to keep track of what was going on.

I think the wordiness also contributed to my not liking any of the characters. They all seemed like they could be interesting if they would just stop thinking and get to the plot. As it was, they all spent way too much time over analyzing everything about everything and it drove me up the wall.

Sonia189 says

A sort of 2.8...

Something about the main characters failed to captivate me. This read as boring to me and I struggled to keep reading.

The premise is interesting and some details were interesting too, such as the mate idea and the family bonds. However, this was boring and I couldn't care less about the character's choices. The bad guys weren't intriguing either and towards the end, I lost interest.

I had had this book to read for 8 years and I got it at a time I was devouring PNR. Would it have been perfect then? I can't tell, but now, after having read many other stories with the theme and genre, this "world" just didn't captivate, neither did the characters.

I feel like changing many details so... average, really.

Jennifer says

i was so bored i couldnt even finish this..... boring. with more boring

Laurie Garrison says

****3 1/2 stars****

Very good and easy read.. This books has humor and romance..

I really like Carly and her family, they drive her nuts. I liked Gideon even though he lies to Carly at first they both fit together well.. The story line starts off good but slows in the middle has a good ending, also the ending make room for more books to come.

Julie (jjmachshev) says

WOW! Can I just say, WOW! I'm in love...with this book. With the whole 'creatures of the dark' thing going on in the publishing world lately, it's hard to find new authors who can put a different, but still intriguing, spin on any of the legends. Ms. Castle has managed to do just that with "Call of the Highland Moon". The follow-on book "Dark Highland Fire" is scheduled for release in Oct 2008 and you can bet it'll be on my to-buy list.

Carly is the successful owner of a romance bookstore called 'Bodice Rippers and Baubles'. She's also a sucker for wounded strays. But on a snowy winter's night when she finds a badly injured, really huge wolf?/dog? behind her store and takes him home...she gets way more than she bargained for.

Gideon is the future Alpha, but doesn't feel quite ready for all the responsibilities it will bring and feels somehow restless. So, he heads out from his small Scottish valley to see some of the world. The big cities he thought would be so exciting are TOO big, and TOO noisy, and TOO populous for his tastes. Somehow he ends up in a small, rural northern New York town. After he's attacked and badly injured by some rogue werewolves, he crawls off to die...only to be drawn by some incredibly lucious smell to the door of a small shop.

If you want to know what happens next, you'll just have to read this book. The author combines, history, legend, Scottish lore, and mystery to give us a new take on what these creatures are and why they exist. Fabulous job...and the hot hero, gutsy heroine and incendiary sex ain't so bad either!!

Kami says

While the story wasn't bad, it takes too long to get to the point. The style of writing is ditracting--sentences which are interrupted by random asides about character or descriptions--by the time the author returns to the original point, I found I had to go re-read the first part of the sentence to remember or be clear on exactly what she was trying to tell the reader. I like the story itself but it's drawn out and seems to take forever to come to an actual plot point when something significant will occur. The book is only okay...I had to put it down several times and come back to it because the writing was so distracting which is unusual. I am usually able to read straight through any book of an interesting nature without pause if I have the time but this book just couldn't hold my interest steadily.

Bitten_by_Books says

Gideon MacInnes is next in line as alpha and clan leader but he's not sure he is ready or willing to fill his father's shoes. He leaves his home in the Scottish Highlands and travels to the U.S. to figure out exactly

what he wants and to find that something that seems to be missing from his life...

For the entire review please go to the Best Paranormal & Urban Fantasy Review site on the web, Bitten By Books for the review of Call of the Highland Moon in it's entirety. You won't be sorry.
