



Never Dare a Duke

Gayle Callen

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Only desperation could make her do something so reckless. Only desire could make him risk something so precious.

An Indecent Proposal

Abigail Shaw is a proper young lady, hardly the sort to boldly offer a deal to London's most distinguished and perfect duke. But Abigail, desperate to save her father's newspaper business, is after a good scandal. She'd have the sensational headlines that would keep the *ton* talking—and the family business thriving—if only she could uncover the secrets of Christopher Cabot, the Duke of Madingley. What better way than a pretend romance? Yet, with all his seductive glances and stolen caresses, she somehow has to keep from succumbing to temptation.

Christopher finds Abigail—and her proposal—intriguing. A fake romance with the stunning commoner would allow him time to choose a suitable wife from among the would-be duchesses nipping at his heels. It seems like a perfect plan...as long as he can keep her from uncovering his one deep, dark secret. But as he falls for the cunning beauty, he will be tempted to reveal all—his secret, his heart, and his soul.

Never Dare a Duke Details

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Author : Gayle Callen

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From Reader Review Never Dare a Duke for online ebook

Terra says

Never Dare A Duke by Gayle Callen is a delicious sweet to be enjoyed whenever a good book is needed. A wonderful Regency period piece that will make you lick your lips in anticipation. A spunky heroine and an overly cautious hero make for a delightful game of romance unbridled.

Abigail is not your average girl of this time period. She is pretty but not too pretty, a bigger than average girl and does not want marriage at all. To her, marriage is a stifling curse worse than death. She does not want any man to be able to control her and she is bound and determined to make a place in society for herself but as part of the working class. She longs to be a writer in the worst way for her father's newspaper but can she find the precise article that will show her the stairway to her dreams and save her father's newspaper company at the same time?

Christopher is a Duke. A tall, dark and handsome man is the understatement of the year where he is concerned. His family's is of the opinion that he takes his position too seriously which proves to be more fact than fiction. He is overly protective of his private life, does not like or care what society has to say or think and prefers his time away from the Ton and all of it's rules and gossip. Oh, and did I say he is the most desired bachelor of the day! Hmm...how could I have left that fact out.

This story is quite comical with our heroine Abigail making a pact with our hero Christopher to help him with a couple of ladies who are like bloodhounds on the scent of the a prized piece of meat. They say "The Thrill Is In The Chase" and oh my how true that is in this delicious novel. Christopher is really in a run for the money with ladies who know that persistence pays off nicely. Or does it?

What starts out so innocently with Abigail and Christopher very quickly gets complicated. Trust turns into deception and lies. Maidenly virtues turn into carnal hunger and then all Hell breaks loose giving us a page turner that will delight your appetite.

Our author has given us a treat sure to be savored long after we finish. She plays our characters for all they are worth and you can't help but get sucked into each and every scene as if it is playing out right before your eyes. A novel that you will surely giggle with, hunger over, gasp at and make you glad that we the women of today are so much stronger and less likely pull someones hair out if they should cross our path the wrong way.

Nadine Jones says

I think this author is local. The library features her bodice-ripper books a lot, so I figured I'd try one out. You think the front cover is bad, you should see the back! It's flat out embarrassing. I'd planned for this to be a beach read, but I think I need to read it now, in the privacy of my own bedroom, so that no one else can SEE it.

*

This book starts out not-very-good. It suffers from a problem common in this genre: tell, don't show.

Compounded by a related and even more annoying problem: if you missed the premise and/or heroine's motivation the first, second, and third times it was mentioned, do not worry, it will be mentioned a fourth, fifth, and sixth time too. All in the first chapter. And then a few more times in the second chapter, in case you fell asleep in the first or something. Ugh!

I kept reading, and managed to enjoy it, although it never really moved into "good" territory. We have heroine Abby, daughter of a newspaper publisher, aspiring journalist, who is friends with Lady Gwen, and tags along on a party invite to this dukedom. We have hero Christopher, said Duke of the title, who is dark and a little brooding and very handsome and nice. I can see what the author was trying to do with the characters, but it never really worked for me. First of all, WHY does the hero suspect the heroine in the first place? We're never really given a good reason for that -he doesn't seem terribly suspicious of any of his other house guests. Second of all, the heroine is DECEIVING him and his family. I have big (HUGE) issues with deception and I could not get past that. Third of all, she's a complete innocent, never-been-kissed, the whole nine yards. One night (and maybe this is a spoiler - read no further!) he fucks her with nary a how-de-do, and walks away. She's down with that. The next time she's all over him with the seduction. Where did THAT come from????

In the end I did manage to derive some enjoyment from this, but it is unlikely that I'll ever read another book by Ms Callen.

Annalice says

4.6

Very original. I really liked Abigail.

Daneesha says

EXCELLENT! I have only read one other Gayle Callen book. I wasn't impressed, but I loved this book. The heroine is a wannabe journalist and she's trying to uncover secrets about the hero...who is a hunky half Spanish duke. You know there's a happy ending to this one, but I just loved getting to it. :)

ies says

[Abigail Shaw, bapaknya punya morning journal yg artikelnya bkn gosip2 gt lah, sering dijadikan bahan debat di parlemen, memperjuangkan kaum minoritas dst dst dan Abigail itu punya cita-cita buat meneruskan karir bapaknya, die jg penulis yg handal dan selama in

Lisa Jo says

Never Dare a Duke, book 2 in the Sons of Scandal series, was not as much fun as the first book, but still a pleasant read to pass a lazy Sunday afternoon. A trail blazing heroine and a proper young duke make for an intriguing tale of romance and scandal!

This was a unique story to read...determined girl pretending to be lady of nobility in order to sneak into a house party to research a scandalous story. I have to say the premise worried me, but in the end, I liked it. All the risks Abigail took led to really interesting encounters between her and Chris. There was a great cast of supporting characters that made the house party really interesting. Not that she had many scenes, but the chaperone for Abigail and Gwen always made me laugh. I also liked the secondary romance with Gwen. It never took away from the main story and was always cute to check in and see how their romance was progressing.

Abigail was a great leading lady. Despite her deceit concerning the party, she was a young woman brought up in circumstances that made her value honesty and integrity. She wanted a truthful story but she also wanted to write what sells. Watching her battle that line was really interesting for her character. And her actions toward the end (view spoiler) showed what a kind and talented person she really was. I loved how the story progress with her investigation and how the truth influenced her actions in the end.

I rated it four stars because of Christopher. He seemed just a tab bit on edge at times...to put it mildly. He seemed like he had a wild temper. If he really hadn't let his temper get the best of him, I wouldn't have made my rating suffer, BUT the first time he has sex with Abigail is kind of frightening. You don't hate the hero after what happens, but it does cause you to worry. As always, everything works out alright in the end, but it was definitely a rocky road to get there. Otherwise, I liked his character. He was the gentleman that sowed his wild oats and as he matured tried his best to avoid scandal. At this point in his life, his family comes first and he will do whatever he can to uphold a scandal-free reputation. Watching him battle his desire and feelings for Abigail was always entertaining.

Overall, really enjoyable read. Loved the development of the romance and especially love the extremely sweet ending! Made it well worth the time!

Éowyn says

I do enjoy unwinding with an historical romance and I know they are not generally examples of great literature, but I found this particular book to be a pretty weak offering. At times I found myself skim-reading over passages...

Abigail Shaw, daughter of a newspaper owner and potential journalist herself, with a little help from her friend insinuates herself into a house party at the home of the Duke of Madingley in the hope of uncovering a scandalous secret from his past, publishing it in daddy's newspaper and thereby saving it from ruin. That's put quite bluntly, but for me it made the 'heroine' seem pretty unattractive in character! I found it really difficult to see what on earth the hero saw in her, especially as he didn't trust her. OK, she didn't fawn over him, but her actions were pretty underhand.

Most of the supporting characters are pretty weak and underdeveloped too. Lady Gwen appeared tainted by the deception of her friend and the whole ghost hunt sub plot was a bit childish.

The 'scandal' when finally revealed seems a bit odd, as since witnesses seemed so keen to come forward,

surely no one would have been able to keep it so totally under wraps for ten years?!

Not a winner for me; I won't be rushing to pick up another by the same author.

Arksongbird says

3.5. It was okay...

Monique Takens says

Ik heb de Nederlandstalige versie gelezen : Schandaal gezocht - Candlelight Historische roman 876
Leuk verhaal maar de manier waarop het verteld wordt is niet mijn smaak .

MaggieReadsRom says

3,5 stars

Abigail Shaw secretly writes for her father's newspaper. When the paper is in trouble and on the verge of going down, she decides to try and save it by boosting up the sales with a juicy gossip story about the secret that surrounds the Duke of Madingley, Christopher Cabot. In order to get her story she accompanies her friend Gwen to a house party held on the duke's country estate. Abby offers Chris a pretend courtship that enables her to get close to him and get her scoop and gives Chris a way to keep the title-chasing, marry-minded ladies at a distance during the party.

Things take a different turn when another journalist shows up to stir trouble and Chris finds out the real reason behind Abby's presence and their pretend courtship.

Abby is bold, confident, daring and smart. When she sets her mind to something, she goes after it with determination and mostly succeeds. She's also realistic. She knows that she is not of Society and accepts it but she does not settle for the easy way out.

Chris is a bit of a contradiction. He is charming, ambitious and there's a hint of wickedness surrounding him. But he is also reserved, keeping to himself and very loyal to his family. The past has put its stamp on his decisions and behavior and he's determined to keep his family away from scandal at any cost.

There's an immediate attraction between Abby and Chris. But it's an attraction they both fight for different reasons. Abby doesn't think she has a chance with a duke, being the daughter of a newspaper owner. Chris suspects Abby is up to something and she doesn't fit his image of a future duchess. Still these obstacles don't keep them from falling for each other. Despite the many reasons not to get involved with her, to Chris she's like a breath of fresh air compared to all the marry-hungry ladies chasing him for his wealth and title. To Abby, who has never felt anything for any man in her life, as focused as she is on her writing and career, Chris turns out to cause a quantity of undeniable emotions within her. Before long she must chose between her feelings and finishing the job she came to do.

This was a lovely, solid historical romance read. It is not mind-blowing but a perfect book to read in between extremely intense books or for variation of genres. I liked how Gayle Callen set up the plot and the romance.

It was believable and entertaining, even if the plot was a little bit predictable. Still it was attention capturing and the pace was good. I really like this trilogy by Callen. Where the other trilogy I've read by her hand, was average and simple, the two books in this trilogy are above average and more interesting.

The pattern of themes such as parental influence, problematic youths and financial troubles reappear in some form throughout all the books I've read and in this book they were wrapped in a slightly more attractive package because of the slightly more intense chemistry between the main characters and a plot that was executed better than in some of other books.

With NEVER DARE A DUKE Gayle Callen has delivered another installment in the vast collection of nice and easy historical romances, guaranteed to provide an entertaining and pleasant read before diving into complicated and emotionally intense books

Amanda says

Maybe I'll pick this one up again, I don't know. But I've entered the stage where I'd rather watch TV than read Never Dare a Duke, and if that happens in the evening, I know that if I don't finish the book before I go to bed, I'm not going to be inclined to pick it up later.

There's nothing terribly *wrong* with this book. It just doesn't hold my interest. I'm not quite pulled into the story as I would have liked, and on page 135, I still feel no real connection with either Abigail or the duke.

Then, of course, there was THIS. On page 5. I completely understand why women feel that their brown hair and brown eyes are considered plain -- I once did too. But this is a tricky subject for authors, one that needs to be treated delicately. The duke never saw Abigail as plain, but a woman shouldn't need to learn that she's beautiful because a man saw it in her. It's nice to feel desired, yes. But we have to learn to be confident with what we have, not wish for something else. It's disappointing to see it in my romance books.

Jacque Mcneal says

Wanting to save her fathers paper, she needed a scandal about Christopher Cabot.
Once she got to know him and his scandal, could she still expose him?
Suspense though out the book and a surprise or maybe not a surprise ending.

Melissa says

I do believe this one of those times where you can successfully judge a book by it's cover. The cover of "Never Dare A Duke" is beautiful and captivating. It was what really drew me in. I'm glad it did.

This is because Gayle Callen's book became the first romance i've read in a long long time where i literally could not put it down. The dogs even missed a walk because i couldn't stop reading. It was that good to me. Now it didn't contain any tragic or tortured hero. Nor were the chapters leaving on cliff hangers. Instead Gayle created an amazingly witty heroine whose sole desire is to find some scandalous past on the Duke aka

Chris Cabot.

Abigale's desire for this is to save her father's floundering newspaper and prove that women could write just as well as men can. So when her best friend Gwen asks her to accompany her to the Duke's sisters house party Abigale readily agrees. Together they set forth to find out the Duke's scandalous secret. Unfortunately things don't work as well as they plan. This is because everyone and anyone is so tight lipped about Chris's past. So Abigale makes a bargain with Chris that they should "pretend to be together". She does this in order for him to get away from the overbearing misses and for Abigale to secretly investigate Chris. Now Chris, of course, is extremely intrigued by Abigale and doesn't believe her for a moment when she said she wants nothing from him. This leads him into doing a little investigating of his own. These two separate investigation leads Abigale and Chris in finding more than they ever expected from each other.

Abigale's and Chris relationship with each other was really brilliant. You could sort of say it was Nancy Drew meets Pride and Prejudice with a touch of Emma. Neither of them trusted each other to say the least. This is especially true of Chris. Yet during the course of the book they start to realize that each other is not as they seemed. That they both were wrong in the initial judgement of each other. This later leads them to having a more open and trusting relationship. One where they are on equal terms.

I noticed that Abigale seems to get a lot of strife from other reviewers because they don't think she learned her lesson. I actually think she did. Her character had a lot of "Emma" in her and it took for her to see the possible consequences of her actions to realize they were wrong. She also makes up for them. After the horrid article was written about Chris she makes a point of writing one that contradicts it. She does this even though Chris swears he would never forgive her for doing so. Abigale loves Chris so much that she doesn't care. So not only does she write the article, but she makes sure that the world knows it was a lady journalist who did. Thus freeing herself to be what she truly wants to be while helping the damage done to her beloved name. Chris later uses this "lady journalist" scandal to propose to her in a really cute way.

Final Rating: 5 stars. Great set of main and side characters, interesting plot, and for being a non put-downer.

Lover of Romance says

Abigail Shaw, has a deep love for writing, her father owns a respectable newspaper, and without knowing it his daughter is one of its writers. Abigail, learning that the fathers paper is having financial trouble, wants to find a scandal that will help her father, and to be respected as a woman author in a newspaper. So when she hears that there is a Duke in the Realm that appears to have a perfect past, she knows she needs to find out what scandal there is in his past. Knowing that the Lords of the realm are used to scandals, this could help save her father, so she poses as someone else at a house party hosted by his family for his younger sister who is coming out in society. But she knows the key part of her plan, is to gain the trust of Christopher Cabot, the Duke of Madingley. But there is something about the Duke, that causes her to be tempted by his kisses, where she starts to forget the real reason she is there. Christopher, after having a terrible event happening in

his past, he overcomes it and prevents any scandal occurring. But when a young woman comes to him with a proposal that he can't deny, he knows he is in deep trouble. For he is getting closer attached to this woman who tempts him to sharing his secrets and thought to her. But what will happen when he falls for this enticing beauty where despite the deceptions he has found something more precious than he ever thought he would find.

I have always loved reading from Gayle Callen, and *Never Dare A Duke* was no different. I love the whole aspect of the mystery side of the story. It kept me in suspense until the very end. Christopher in his younger years suffered and has to live with it ever since, and just when he starts to come to terms with his past, he meets Abigail who is unlike any other woman he has ever met. There is a mystery about her, and he is anxious in his endeavor to find the truth. Abigail, at first is firm in her resolve to find the scandal in Christopher's past, however after spending time with him, and sharing some intimate moments, she starts to doubt herself in the plan she has set in motion, wondering if she could ever hurt the one who has made her feel and experience things she never thought she ever would in her lifetime, and find a love so precious she never would want to give him up. As we see these two characters collide, and a ride that will take them and bring them exquisite joy and sorrow, we also see a tender love that blossoms between the two but will it destroy them or unite them? I found I truly enjoyed reading this story, and plus the cover is every bit as tempting and sensual as the story portrays. *Never Dare A Duke* is truly a WONDERFUL read!!!

Julie (jjmachshev) says

Reviewed for queuemyreview.com; book release Dec08

I'd never thought much about feminism and journalism until I read "Never Dare a Duke" by Gayle Callen. The heroine in her book dreams of 'making a difference with words' by openly becoming a journalist. Just another thing to enjoy about romance novels...I always learn something I never knew and then go looking for more information. What I learned is that mid-19th century women reporters were rare as hen's teeth! And that made me appreciate this story's hero even more.

Abigail is desperate to save her family and prove her worth as a journalist. She's been secretly writing articles for her father's paper for a while now under an assumed name. When the editor lets her know that her father's paper is in trouble, she decides to find 'the story' that will save her father's paper; and what sells better than scandal? With the help of a friend, she decides to ferret out the hidden scandal of the Duke of Madingly—who is admired for his good works and good ton. What Abigail never counted on was developing feelings for the Duke. Who will she save, her family or her love?

Christopher has learned to leash his desires and practice moderation in all things. Since the life-changing disaster of his youth, he has managed to mold himself into a paragon of dukedom and now it's time to continue the journey and take a suitable wife. His mother's house party should have been the perfect setting to spend time with his 'possibles'. So why can't he keep his mind (not to mention his hands) off the mysterious, untrustworthy, and totally unsuitable Abigail?

"Oh what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive." Sir Walter Scott's famous line kept running through my mind as I read this book. Even with the best of intentions, thoughtless actions always hurt. I was inclined to dislike Abigail because of her lack of concern for the consequences of her actions. But then I shook my head and realized...this is a light-hearted historical romance, and Abigail is younger and

more innocent at twenty-five than most 15 year olds today! And sure enough, Callen did a good job of having Abigail gradually realize what her snooping could do...and who it could hurt.

I appreciated the fact that Gayle Callen didn't try to turn this plot into a moral tale as it would have been so easy to do. Instead she added a bit of humor and romance to turn what could have been a harsh blow into a delightful read. My only reservation is the light treatment of the thoughtlessness and consequences...which I just said I enjoyed! Maybe it was that dichotomy that was part of the tale's attraction for me. Whatever it was, I did enjoy "Never Dare a Duke", even if it won't stay on my keeper shelf.
