



# A Dangerous Invitation

*Erica Monroe*

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## **A Dangerous Invitation** Erica Monroe

She's given up on love, and wants only independence...

Torn from her life of privilege by her father's death, Kate Morgan survives in London's dark and depraved rookeries as a fence for stolen goods. The last man she ever expects, or wants, to be reunited with is her first love, who promised to cherish, honor and protect her, and instead fled amidst accusations of murder.

He's the reformed rake determined to win her back...

One drunken night cost Daniel O'Reilly the woman he loved and the life he'd worked so hard to create. If he ever wants to reclaim that life—and Kate—he'll not only have to prove he's innocent of murder, but convince the pistol-wielding spitfire that he's no longer the scoundrel he once was.

Together, they'll have to face a killer. Time is running out...

## **A Dangerous Invitation Details**

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Author : Erica Monroe

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## **From Reader Review A Dangerous Invitation for online ebook**

### **Eva Rose says**

I have a very small threshold for forgiving men who leave the women they supposedly love abandoning them to their fate in a world that is incredibly hostile to them. I don't believe that a man who does the above truly loves you and I think you should never take them back because if they did it once, what stops them from doing it again?

That's right. Nothing.

Women should leave these type of men behind because they are unreliable little boys who will never bring you security. Also, once your trust in a person is completely broken you can fix it but you can still see the cracks in that m\*\*\*r\*\*\*ng reflection.

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### **Wollstonecrafthomegirl says**

Nope, nope, nope. Not because it's terribly written or repetitious or for any of those obvious reasons. It was just really boring. Entirely set in the 'underworld' but without ever capturing a sense of what that means. Didn't care about the H/H. Sex was nothing at all to write home about. Got to about 74% and I just didn't want to read on. I didn't care. I don't care. I never got to the HEA. Life is just too short. This was like the book equivalent of a shrug. So: my first DNF in quite some time and my first ever one star.

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### **Meredith says**

This was a fun book! The historical aspect was really interesting; I could tell a lot of research went into the story, and it was nice to not have it just be a bunch of high society folks, but it felt a bit long and dragged in some spots. Overall I still enjoyed it, so I'd give it 3.5 stars.

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### **Carole says**

Hard book to review. Interesting plot twist to a historical romance, in that Hero and Heroine are flawed; she is a fence for stolen goods living in the London Slums and he is a recovering alcoholic addicted to gin. There was good character development in places, but the middle portion of the book has too much repetition, agonizing and whinging from both key characters.

I found the writing oddly uneven in places. There were some paragraphs of good prose, but in several places there were puzzling or incorrect use of words that slowed my reading considerably.

For example, in one place the author has written "His arm was slung across Kate's torso, her chestnut locks spilled out over his pillow in the most succulent display he'd ever seen."

Ok I could understand if she or her body were succulent (meaning full of juice, moist, ripe) but in this sentence how can that describe her hair? Is this an incorrect word or just awkward word placement? Either way, figuring out this meaning bogged down my reading considerably.

I also had to read the following passage several times regarding a character who "...would face trial by jury if arrested, they'd need some impregnable evidence to get him to that point."

OK maybe irrefutable or incontrovertible evidence, but impregnable again feels awkward and required several re-reads.

I know the whole book is not in the following florid style, but enough of these confusing clunkers are in the book that they became mildly amusing enough to share with my husband as an example of 'please no'!

The author describes a love scene between the Hero and Heroine starting with "...They kissed like adrift sailors... "

I'm sorry what? Sailors are in a little boat asea and kissing??

Have to admit the whole sentence is somewhat agonizing..."They kissed like adrift sailors, their lips the only raft to keep them afloat in stormy waters..."

This convoluted prose made reading what had the bones of a good story a real slog, and I admit I skimmed the last half to get to the HEA. Final Rating: 2 stars.

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## **Karma♥Bites ^.^~ says**

*\* ARC provided by author/publisher via NetGalley (via anthology/box set, Tempted by His Touch)\**

Wow?\*this\* is why I love to try different anthologies. What a great intro to a NTM author! I read several HRs almost back-to-back in recent weeks so *A Dangerous Invitation* was a palpable (and welcomed) change in tone & storyline. Aside from it truly being a romantic suspense, definitely darker w/ an alcoholic H, romance & storyline set in London's underbelly, and incorporation of true events re: 'resurrection men' in England during the early 1830s.

Full review to come (still debating whether to bump up rating).

NB: Believe that the anthology/box set is 99¢ until 21-Sept-2014. Also, altho not necessary, some may want to first read the prequel novella, *A Wayward Man*. Seems currently free at most major retailers. :)

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## **Melanie says**

I honestly don't know where to begin with this review. Do I start with my praise of it, tell you the synopsis or just shout GET IT! READ IT! NOW!

After I was done reading it, I just sat there, absorbing it all and the only coherent thought in my head at that

time was, this is a début?!

If you like your romances with a lot of fairy tale dust, light prose and plenty of fluff, saccharin sweetness, don't bother with this amazingly realistic, character driven story of true love.

The name of this series, 'The Rookery Rogues' tells you exactly what to expect, only if you know what the word 'rookery' means, and Wikipedia says this:

"A rookery was a colloquial term given in the 18th and 19th centuries to a ....Thanks for jumping to b2b to finish reading my review....

<http://bookworm2bookworm.wordpress.co...>

\*Melanie for b2b

\*Book provided by the Author.

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## **Maria Rose says**

This review also appears at All About Romance: <http://allaboutromance.com/book-revie...>

Erica Monroe's début historical romance, *A Dangerous Invitation*, takes us into the back alleys of London in an engrossing tale of betrayal, redemption and second chances. Kate Morgan has been forced into the rookeries through the bankruptcy of her father's company, which happened as a direct result of her father's defense of Daniel O'Reilly, an employee accused of the murder of a co-worker. Daniel fled and Kate's life turned upside down – her father died, she was left destitute and she is eking out a survival for herself serving as a fence for stolen goods. Daniel is an alcoholic who fled the false accusation of murder, abandoning Kate in the process. Now recovering from his addiction, Daniel is determined to restore his good name and rebuild his relationship with Kate. Can he convince her that he's worthy of a second chance?

The majority of historical romances set in London tend to feature upper class citizens. In contrast, this story shows the seedy underbelly of society. The characters here are thieves, beggars and prostitutes, people struggling to make a living and stay afloat in a world that cares nothing for their situation. It's clear that author has researched the time period well. The attention to detail in the setting – the language, idioms, images and descriptions of everyday life bring the reader fully into the story and into the daily lives of the poor and those eking out a survival as best they can. Yet it is not told in a depressing manner, but rather with a matter-of-factness that enables readers to immerse themselves into the life being lived.

Kate's situation is heartbreaking and shows the narrow edge of survival for people of her class. The ruin of her father's company, his death, and her gender leaves her without many options. But to her credit, the drastic change in her circumstances forces her true character to the surface. Kate is a strong confident woman who will do what she must to survive. She has no qualms about her new chosen profession or about the company she keeps; she is courageous, daring and suffers no fools. Daniel's re-appearance in her life evokes strong emotions but she is wary of trusting anyone, especially him.

And then there is Daniel. Such a flawed hero! He knows full well that his addiction to gin has cost him everything – his good name, his employment, his relationship with Kate, and his complete memories of what

happened the night a man was killed and he was blamed for it. Believing the hangman's noose was in his future, he abandoned Kate to her fate and continued down the path of alcoholic destruction. Eventually his memories of Kate haunt him and lead to an epiphany that he has to give up gin to save himself. Daniel knows how much his betrayal has cost Kate, and how much he must do to redeem himself in her eyes. I love the portrayal of his character. He continues to struggle with alcohol as is realistic for any recovering alcoholic. He is dogged and determined to prove his worth and clear his name. It's this ability to admit his mistakes and fight to be a better man that makes him hero material.

Kate and Daniel have an explosive sexual chemistry. Despite their rocky history, their attraction to each other is undeniable. Daniel wants to recreate and strengthen what they had before while Kate fights the memory of their lovemaking. This creates a delicious sexual tension and as a result, the ensuing and inevitable love scenes are steamy and believable.

There are several intriguing secondary characters in this story – on both sides of the law. The suspenseful plot proceeds at a fast pace as the mystery of the murdered man is uncovered and the danger to Kate and Daniel increases. Readers will find themselves unable to put the story down as it races to its conclusion.

A Dangerous Invitation has everything I want in an historical romance – an excellently researched setting, wonderfully realistic flawed characters, steamy love scenes, fast paced action and an overwhelming feeling of complete satisfaction at the end of the story. Knowing there are more novels in the Rookery Rogues series is the icing on the cake.

Favorite Quote:

'I cared about you Daniel, I would have run away with you.' Those thoughts rose up, gossamer threads to be snipped by rusted scissors when she remembered their place.

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### **Tracy T. says**

This was a good book. I enjoyed it. It is way different than you normal historical romance. There are no balls, teas, rides in Hyde Park, house parties etc. It's strictly set in the Rookery with all the thieves, public houses and refuse on the streets.

I really liked the heroine, she was strong, smart, witty and took no crap from anyone. I liked the hero as well, but I have to say I am not a fan of gingered haired hero's. Just doesn't sound sexy to me.

The story line and plot were solid! I liked the mystery of finding out who really killed Tommy Dalton, and all the other underlying discoveries (I don't want to give away spoilers) . There was a lot of fantastic dialogue though out the entire book.

I will definitely read the next book in this series. I like that its different from the normal HR.

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### **liz says**

I received an ARC of this book from the author in exchange for a fair review.

I enjoyed the story of Daniel and Kate. It involves redemption, mystery, and a bit of action. Kate is a bada\*\* in her own right, and that was very cool. We know her background was far more privileged than her current life. We're introduced to Kate with her gun in hand and walking home in the slums. The author gives a detailed view of the life Kate lives now.

I like that Kate didn't immediately forgive Daniel upon his return. She didn't blindly believe in his innocence or accept his apologies. While I'm all for forgiveness, his trespasses require groveling. I think the author allowed for a good amount of that.

I would also say, this book had a lot of historical accuracy. This is mostly assumption on my part, as it's not my most read genre. There were many descriptors throughout that led a feeling of authenticity to me.

I'd recommend this for anyone interested in an historical romance utterly lacking in tea parties, dukes, and doilies, but full of adventure, mystery, and love.

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### **Hilary Mack says**

When I say I've read this book, I mean I got 20% of the way through it before I did that thing that is rare for me - I put it down and turned to something else. I just could not take any more, I'm afraid. It's not something I am happy about, since I know how much work goes into writing a book and I wish to support an author as much as I can.

I assume the author is American. I'm assuming this because she thinks that leaving London for Dorking (which, by the way is in Surrey and NOT in Sussex) would make him safe from the police who are looking for him in connection with a high profile murder. I am under the impression that crossing from one state to another in America can put one beyond the reach of the law. However, it doesn't work like that in England. If you're wanted here, you're not safe here. Anywhere. Had Daniel left for Europe, Ireland, America, India... he would have been safe while he sorted himself out. In Dorking, or indeed in Sussex, he would have been a fugitive, and actually more likely to be arrested than if he was in the middle of London, since Dorking was a smallish market town and Sussex has always been rural, and therefore he would have been more noticeable.

Sloppy research aside, the main flaw was that I just did not care for the characters. They didn't engage me at all. And by the time I left them, I couldn't care less who did what, why or how.

That said, I haven't written Ms Monroe off. She isn't a bad writer, and it is refreshing to come out of the ballrooms once in a while. I daresay other books will be enjoyable. It's just a pity she was let down by this one.

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### **Mary - Buried Under Romance says**

This is a personal reminder to review this book, so...uh, it'll come soon. (OTL)

Meanwhile, if you're reading this, check out this picture of a cute bunny:  
<http://dailypicksandflicks.com/2011/1...>

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## **Tracy Emro says**

There were many things that I liked about this book and a few things that I didn't.

Basically this is a second chance romance with a murder mystery. Kate and Daniel were in love and betrothed three years ago, before their lives were destroyed by a murder and the downfall of her father's shipping business. Daniel was accused of murder and ran without a word to Kate. Kate was beyond hurt by his leaving and then six months later her father died and his company went bankrupt - leaving her penniless and homeless. She learned to survive in the rookeries and has made a life for herself, that doesn't include Daniel.

Daniel has spent the better part of the last three years drinking and whoring his life away. He is innocent of the murder - but in my mind - guilty of betrayal. He has sobered up and now wants to clear his name and reclaim Kate. He wants to be worthy of her and seems shocked that she doesn't want to have anything to do with him. He convinces her to help him clear his name and they work together to uncover the real murderer.

So here is what I did like. I liked that Kate and Daniel are just regular people, not nobility. I liked that Ms. Monroe shared enough information about their past relationship to give me an idea of why they each reacted as they did. I thought the writing was very well done and the mystery was thought provoking and not oblivious. I liked how she handled Daniel's addiction and recovery. I thought the love scenes were timed perfectly and very warm. I loved the secondary characters of Atlas and Jane (I would read a book about either of them). I liked that the villain(s) get their comeuppance and that Kate and Daniel get a HEA.

What I didn't like was Daniel's behavior for most of the book and how he behaved during their time apart - I have a hard time sympathizing with a drunk who left the only woman he "loves" without a word and then proceeds to drink himself to death and sleep with countless (the author's word - not mine) other women. I get that he was trying to be noble and left her so she could marry and have a better life - but the sleeping around while he "loves" her seemed wrong. And I also agree with other reviewers who said he didn't give Kate enough time to process the huge amount of information dumped on her. He was self centered and in my opinion unfair to her - he left her without a word, doesn't contact her at all for 3 years and then expects her to just accept him at his word without any questions? Seriously? I also have to mention that my mother read this book and was upset that the author kept saying Dorking was in Sussex - My mom is from a small town in Kent, England and knows Dorking very well - it is in Surrey - NOT Sussex.

When all is said and done I thought this was a decent read and I would recommend it. I will definitely read the rest of the series and keep an eye out for this author.

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## **Marguerite Kaye says**

3.5 stars rounded up.

I was attracted to this book because it was set in the London Rookeries, with no balls, no society, and a lot of crime and grime. I was impressed that Ms Munroe didn't at any point pull her punches in describing the setting, peppering it with stench and sewage, abject poverty, gin hells and gin drinkers, and crime in



abundance. Her research was brilliant, her ability to evoke the time and place really great. This was Dickens's *Oliver Twist* and not the prettied-up version of the musical.

I loved the many colourful (and often hateful) secondary characters too. I really liked the way she used history (the Italian child resurrectionist case). I liked the way she showed the many injustices of the life (especially for women) and demonstrated that in such a life crime is not necessarily wrong, it's simply another way of surviving. There was no moral lecture, but the lessons were there all the same.

But I did have issues with the story. We first see Kate defending herself with her pistol against a pending attack. It turns out her 'attacker' is Daniel, her lost love, accused of murder, Newgate escapee who abandoned her to her fate. Daniel has returned to clear his name, and he's horrified to discover that Kate, whom he'd imagined would be happily married, is now forced to operate as a fence. And here was my first problem. Daniel was only in Dorking. He is connected - well connected - with the underworld. Yet he claims to have known nothing. And worse - for let's not forget this is a romance. He actually dumped her in the hope she'd marry into money - yet he claims she's his true love - and I'm not sure which was worse, his hoping she'd marry, or his not really knowing her well enough to understand that she would make her own life rather than rely on another man.

I really liked Kate. I loved that she didn't just let Daniel reclaim her, though I must admit, in the early part of the story where she was sighing and almost succumbing, I got quite annoyed with her. Luckily, she quickly came to her senses and realised what an a\*se (to use her own language) he'd been.

Daniel took much longer to come to his senses, and I have to say, I never really warmed to him. He assumed he'd come back, apologise, and Kate would fall into his arms. This, I thought was both brave to write and pretty realistic too, for his character. But what I got fed up with was how long it took for him to realise she wasn't going to play ball (no pun intended!).

The thing is, as they both recognised, they were very different people from the ones who'd been in love. But though they both said as much, the romance wasn't a rediscovery, it was based on the fact that they couldn't resist each other, and this, I felt, was an opportunity missed. It would have been so much more satisfying for them NOT to have felt so strongly at the start, and to have fallen in love again against their wills - though to be fair this is kind of what happened with Kate. So what I guess I'm saying is that my main problem was Daniel. In the end, I felt he simply didn't deserve her.

That said, this was an excellent take on the Regency genre, and an exciting and brave one, and I'm really glad that I read it. Highly recommended for those who aren't squeamish!

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### **Kate Sherwood says**

I wish I'd been a beta for this one, because I feel like a lot of what I didn't like could have been fixed fairly easily, making this a much more enjoyable book (at least for me!)

I wanted it to be better because I loved the start. The setting, the heroine, even the plot - all intriguing.

But I couldn't STAND the hero. I'm all for flawed characters, but I like the flaws to be acknowledged. In this case, apparently we were just supposed to ignore that he's an asshole. He ditches the heroine without a word of explanation and comes back to town after three years absence and expects to just pick up where they left

off. His reasons for wanting to be with her are all selfish - she keeps him sane, etc., and he never stops to think whether he's a good thing for HER. (And when the plot makes it clear that he's NOT a good thing and his very presence puts her in serious danger, it doesn't really seem to matter). When she says she needs time to think about things (he's been gone for three years, back for a week or two) he acts like it's a personal insult. When she finds out things about her father and needs time to adjust, THAT's all about him, too. He was completely selfish and self-centered and I think she'd have been much better off far away from him.

There were a few other little niggles, too. Like at the end of the book, a police officer just suddenly appears at the exact right time and just happens to know all about everything... and somehow the heroine thinks he's going to arrest her, but I'm really not sure what evidence the officer would have on her. And I was disappointed that the book didn't FULLY commit to a few things that would have made the story bolder - like after a bunch of foreshadowing about the heroine having been a whore, the book backs down and it turns out she was just tricked into going to a whorehouse and (maybe? maybe not?) raped while there. I'm not saying that wouldn't be traumatic, but I think the character would have been a hell of a lot more interesting if she'd actually been a prostitute. And the hero was an acknowledged drunk and on the night of the murder was apparently too soused to know what was going on... but then the book backs away from THAT, too, and it turns out he was drugged in order to be so out of it. Grrrrr.

I hope the author writes more, because this felt authentic and I really liked the idea of reading a historical about 'normal' people rather than nobility. But this one just didn't work for me.

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## **Amanda says**

*“Before you came back, I knew exactly where I stood. There were lines, clearly demarcated and categorized. Things I promised myself I’d never do again if I wanted to survive, and I lived by that code. It’s kept me alive.”*

*“Some lines are meant to be crossed, Katiebelle.” His voice dipped lower, a caress to her tired body. Their eyes locked. Heat sizzled between them, an almost palpable spark. Slowly, his face inched closer to hers. “Live dangerously.”*

*No amount of fighting or sensible decisions would save her now. “Devil take it all.”*

3.5 stars

I'll start off first by saying how refreshing it was to read an HR set COMPLETELY away from the *ton-ish* set and featured aristo-free characters. The dark and gritty world of the rookeries was well portrayed and I commend Erica Monroe for entrenching us in this rarely explored netherrealm. My one main criticism was that her writing could read as scattered at times, not fully cohesive. Plus there were so many people and plottish things going on that it could get a bit overwhelming trying to keep track of it all. Still, the mystery and intrigue of the main plot managed to keep my interest when the romance failed to do so (more on that later). Personally I liked the author's prose but I just thought I should throw a warning out there for those who probably wouldn't be so tolerant.

Next we have the romance. I don't know what didn't work for me exactly, all I know is that somewhere along the way, I was totally disconnected from it and didn't really care whether Kate and Daniel ended up back together or not. Maybe because they had so much baggage and shit to sort through that I didn't see it working out since they kept going around in circles about what went wrong in the past. Also, Daniel himself was not the most sympathetic of heroes. I did feel bad about what happened to him, but he constantly came

across as rather selfish and whiny. And the way in which he seemed to NEED Kate's validation at every turn was grating. But I think that was just a part of his addictive personality, he substituted gin with Kate and it wasn't healthy. Daniel did eventually (emphasis on *EVENTUALLY*) come to realize that Kate wasn't the cure-all solution to his problems and that he alone had to WANT to be better. Still, I wish there had been a little more *oomph* chemistry-wise between the couple.

Unlike Daniel, I thought Kate was a fantastic heroine all-around. She was beautifully flawed, stubborn, fierce and had a penchant for pointing her pistol at anyone and everyone. Her journey from shipping magnate's spoiled daughter (which is touched upon in the prequel novella), to complete ruination, escaping a whore house and finally becoming a fence for stolen goods was a little out there and not wholly believable but between her and Daniel, I did FEEL her personal growth more so than his and that's always a big plus for me. The bad times in her life didn't defeat her and instead made her stronger, what's not to admire about that?

I don't have much else to say other than that I enjoyed this book, but LOVED the world. I saw sequel bait in a quite a few different characters so I'm really excited to see which of them Erica Monroe decides to explore further.

**\*\*Note:** I HIGHLY recommend you read the prequel novella *A Wayward Man* before reading *A Dangerous Invitation* as it really lays the groundwork and sets the overall tone going into this book. I actually tried to read book 1 without reading the novella first and I was completely lost, couldn't get a feel for the story at all. So yeah, READ THE NOVELLA FIRST Y'ALL.

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