



The Unexpected Bride

Lena Goldfinch

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What's a man to do when his father orders him a bride?

Rebecca Sullivan has been “Becky” all her life, a real hoyden. Her childhood sweetheart taught her to ride bareback and shoot a rifle, but then he chose a “perfect lady” for a wife—a real Southern belle, who’s now expecting a baby. Heartbroken, Becky signs up to be a mail-order bride to a Seattle man, sight unseen. She resolves to squelch her hoydenish ways and become a “perfect lady” for her future husband.

If logging-operation owner Isaac Jessup had wanted a bride, he’d have chosen a sturdy frontier woman, not some fragile lady from back East. Ready to explain the mistake, honorable Isaac takes one look into Rebecca’s vulnerable eyes...and knows he’ll marry her, even though this delicate waif is obviously unsuited for wild Seattle.

Can an unexpected marriage ever be a match made in heaven?

Book One in The Brides Series

Sweet Historical Western Romance / A Mail-Order Bride Novel

*****Excerpt*****

The lean-to was chilly and not for the first time, Isaac considered boarding it up proper and calling it a barn. He sat on the stool and began milking the goat, all the while mentally preparing for the worship service they planned to go to later that morning. The Scriptures he’d read first thing that morning were fresh in his mind, and his prayers kept returning to the problem of Rebecca. One inner voice urged him to send her back home, but another voice spoke of commitment. He’d said vows before God to love and keep her till death do them part. Those weren’t words he was willing to dismiss lightly.

“What’s her name?” His wife’s voice was suddenly in his ear, quite close.

Isaac jumped. The goat bleated at him.

“Sorry, girl.” He patted her side and resumed milking her with slow, careful hands. He glanced over his shoulder toward the subject of his thoughts.

Rebecca stood watching him, leaning over the rail and peering in at them with curious eyes. He was surprised to see her out this early. She usually left him to his morning chores, and most times he’d get back inside the cabin and find her already up preparing breakfast.

“What’s her name?” she repeated.

“Name? The goat?” He looked at the goat dumbly. It was a goat. He’d never gotten much further than that. She gave them a daily supply of milk, but other than that she was generally a nuisance. She liked to butt down the stall door. And whenever she got loose, she’d eat what few vegetables he was able to grow in the

summer. She also liked to nip at his shirts and underthings when he hung them out on the line—if he was lucky. Most times she'd tug the whole line down and drag it through the mud.

“Yes, the goat,” Rebecca said, a pleasant-sounding smile in her voice. “Don’t tell me she hasn’t got a name?”

There was something nice about hearing a woman’s voice in the morning. It reminded him a little of when he was young, and his mother had chatted with him in soft tones while they ate breakfast. As if speaking too loud would jar them too quickly out of whatever dreams they’d had the night before.

Rebecca’s soft voice put him much in mind of those times.

“All right. I won’t.” Isaac focused on his milking.

“She doesn’t have a name?” Rebecca pressed. “How can you have an animal that doesn’t have a name?”

“Never gave it much thought. She’s good for milk, but other than that she’s nothing but trouble, always munching on the laundry.”

“Well, then I think your choice is clear. Either you call her Milky or you call her Trouble.” Her teasing tone brought a reluctant smile to his lips.

“Well, then, if I have to choose, then I guess she’s Trouble.” The real Trouble was standing behind him, her elbow propped against the top of the rail, her chin cupped in one dainty hand.

The Unexpected Bride Details

Date : Published October 4th 2014 by Indigo Road Publishing

ISBN : 9780692264959

Author : Lena Goldfinch

Format : Paperback 270 pages

Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Historical, Historical Fiction, Western Romance, Westerns, Christian

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From Reader Review The Unexpected Bride for online ebook

Cheesecake says

Becky the liar and Isaac the long suffering.

At about half way i just started skimming like mad til 80% and I was just plain 'mad' at the book. DNF!

Waaaay too many misunderstandings for Waaaay toooooo long. At first I could understand Becky wanting to keep her true character a secret. I mean, all her life her so called father and mother have treated her like poop, and she is believed it was because she was a tomboy. That would be fine if she lived out west, but she lives on the East coast. Even the boy she grew up loving ups and marries a gentile southern bell. Becky decides to be a mail order bride, but she is determined to be a 'Lady' to trick her new husband into loving her. Her new hubby, Isaac, didn't even know she was coming. His dad ordered her for him because he wants grand kids and knew that Isaac was still a virgin.

She mentions her old love in her sleep and so now Isaac, who was willing to make an effort, is pissed that she would come to marry him while being in love with another. And I gotta say, that I was kinda pissed too. Every time it seems like they will make some headway in their relationship building, the author contrives to throw the ghost of her old beau up in Isaac's face.

Basically, this story was an exercise in frustration...

Christine Woinich says

I fell in love with Rebecca and Isaac right away. Their struggles to get to know each other without being completely honest with each other pulled on my heart. There were moments I had tears in my eyes and moments when I wanted to yell "open your eyes". This was a hard-won HEA, and I am glad that I made the journey with them. I look forward to the next book.

I had the opportunity to read this story for an honest review.

SheLove2Read says

Predictable, but not a bad read. If you like historical chaste western romance, give it a try.

Amber says

A simply ravishing and utterly enthralling tale of always being true to yourself no matter what! This story will echo inside your soul long after it has ended. Its message will firmly grip your heart and promise to take you on an unforgettable ride! You are a beautiful treasure that God created to bring a very special message to this hurting world that only you can deliver. This is something that we all have to learn for ourselves, but once we learn it, the most important thing we can do is to teach it to others who are hurting and hiding.

Becky Sullivan knows that something is not right with her. She is happiest when she is riding her horse and doing other things she loves that are considered not proper for a real lady. Her family has never made her

feel that she truly belongs. Her longtime friend has betrayed her, and she has just discovered a life-changing secret about herself that has left her heart broken and devastated. It's time for a change, and she is determined that her new beginning will happen a long way from the place she calls home. Issac Jessup is a man completely dedicated to ensuring that his business with his father is successful. He has no time for things such as marriage even though he has never been opposed to the idea. The business just takes up all of his time, but he's slowly coming to the realization that perhaps he wants more for his life than just working with his father. Options are limited for him, so unknown to him his father takes matters into his own hand. Sam Jessup is convinced that arranging for a mail order bride is just what Issac needs. Does his father truly know what's best, or does this arrangement have no hope of success?

This story hit so close to home for me that it honestly hurt to read at times. Becky feels that something is truly wrong with her. What she enjoys is not what is considered to be proper for a lady, and she prays with all of her heart that God would change her to become proper like she should want. She is so consumed with comparing herself to those around her that she doesn't see how truly amazing and wonderful she is. She only hurts herself in trying to continue her façade of being a proper lady while in the harsh wilderness of Seattle. Her heart suffers greatly as she tries to live two lives - a lady of grace and propriety for her husband and her true self while no one is looking. What she doesn't see is how her lies are only driving her and Issac further apart. Only through the loving encouragement of her father-in-law and new friends does she finally understand that she doesn't need to fear or dislike who she really is, but instead she should celebrate it and allow her husband to truly appreciate and admire her precious heart.

While I have read quite a few books written by Lena Goldfinch, it never stops me from being helplessly and eagerly swept away into a new world filled with unforgettable characters and incredible storylines. My expectations are always exceeded, and she never fails to pull at my heartstrings. I love her amazing creations, and I am grateful for being given the privilege of experiencing her boundless talent that is richly infused with her passionate and giving heart. This story is one that everyone needs to read and experience! It is not only life changing but filled with a love and determination that you don't see much anymore.

Joann Maggio says

The Unexpected Bride written by Lena Goldfinch ****

Another endearing western romance from Ms Goldfinch. 1866 Rebecca (Becky) Sullivan is broken hearted that her childhood sweetheart married a sweet lady like girl from the South. Becky has been repeatedly reprimanded by her father for her hoyden ways and is coming to realize perhaps he was correct.

She is very unhappy at home and signs up to be a mail order bride and travels to Seattle to meet her future husband. The whole concept of these Mail order brides to me is unbelievable but I know to be true. When she arrives her intended knows nothing about this proposed marriage and is taken a back. Apparently, his father cooked up the whole idea. Becky arrives as miss lady like personified and her future husband is doubtful she can survive such harsh living.

The story examines the strength and weaknesses of both Becky and Isaac. He is a good honorable man and she comes to see that and falls in love with him and he learns who the true Becky is and he too falls in love with her.

I enjoyed the freshness of this relationship. Ms. Goldfinch takes a simple story and manages to draw you into

her characters. She is quite the storyteller. I would recommend this book for all ages.

Karen says

I found the groom mostly judgemental & not accepting. Wife feeling she has to hide true nature.

namericanwordcat says

It should be no secret by now that I love Mail Order Bride romances. I adore strangers who need a partner getting to know each other and falling in love.

This is a lovely example of the sub genre. The setting in a logging operation is interesting as are the reasons behind our heroines decision to become a Mail Order Bride.

Our hero is both tough and tender. The spiritual elements of the book are well done and more reflective than pedantic which I like.

I think the basic conflicts ring true but all last a bit longer than needed.

Enjoyable overall!

Britney says

The Unexpected Bride is a wonderful, historical romance! Lena Goldfinch's talents abound and I was so excited to read this sweet story. Engaging, humorous, and romantic, The Unexpected Bride is pure delight! I enjoyed the vivid imagery and attention to historical details, as well as the endearing characters and enchanting storyline. I loved this tender tale and can't wait to continue the series!

Miranda A. Uyeh says

This is one of the best books I've read this year. Once again, Lena Goldfinch didn't disappoint with this piece. It's amazing how her author voice remained strong and true to the plot elements and settings despite the change in genre (she's published YA/Romance before now). Her attention to detail—even the language attitude of the historical setting—was delightfully brilliant. There's a right mix of emotions, humor, and every other flavor needed to make a story just right and enjoyable, including excellent pacing.

This story is partially based on the story of Isaac and Rebecca, but it's not Biblical fiction. Goldfinch went ahead to take the lead in crafting the story of the characters to a fine finish. I especially enjoyed watching the

building blocks of Isaac and Becky's relationship come together. Each character's monologue made a lot of sense—this was the meat of the story. The theme rang true to me on a very deep level—there's nothing wrong with being different from the people around you. That you didn't turn out as intended by someone's standard, and like everyone else, and so you don't fit in, doesn't mean there's something wrong with you, or that you don't have a place in this world. God has prepared you EXACTLY the way you are, for a reason, and for a place, and has determined the time that you will glow, rise and shine. It may be a difficult journey to this place, but God who hears the prayers and cries of our hearts, will certainly lead you there if you'll just hold on.

Altogether, this was a wonderful read with a poignant message that blessed my heart.

Dawn says

++Spoilers++

Meh. Squeaky clean Christian romance.

I don't mind clean reads as long as the romance is sweet, but here is was just plain frustrating.

Long story short:

Girl pretends to be something shes not which causes problems until she realizes she just needs to be herself.

The rest in between is a series of lack of communication and presumtations between the H & h that could have all been resolved if they just spoke to each other and told the truth.

The ILY's don't come until about 85% of the book.

I found myself skimming towards the end and truly didn't care much about the characters anymore.

The writing was ok, but far too repetitive and lacked decent conflict.

I don't plan to read more by this author.

Safety: Squeaky clean. No issues. Both MC's virgins.

Penny Watson says

4.5 stars, rounded up

Sweet inspirational romance.

Julie Graves says

I really enjoyed this sweet romance! Rebecca is quite the character. I love that she was so determined to make her unconventional marriage work. She did frustrate me for a while with trying to be someone she wasn't, but it was understandable considering her background. I really liked Isaac as well. He was an honorable and handsome character. I loved his desire to provide for and protect Rebecca. I think that a good story causes the reader to feel like the characters are real, and that is the way I felt while reading this book. I was connected emotionally and found myself shaking my head in irritation at Rebecca and Isaac sometimes. When they assumed they knew what each one of them was thinking or feeling I wanted to go in and shake them, but then I realize that I do the same thing in "real" life! I'll definitely be looking forward to more books in The Brides Series.

Stephanie says

Such a great tale of a new couple finding the rhythm that fits them just right.

Becky is a hoyden which I have inferred she was a hellion growing up and a little bit of a tom boy. I absolutely loved Becky and I am pretty sure everyone else will also. She has a strong personality but tries to transform herself into what "society" deems to be the best outlook of a woman. For anyone who has ever felt that they had to be someone they are not in order to be accepted then you will fall in love with Becky. Isaac is a man who has just been focusing on making his business thrive. The thought of children haven't really entered his mind, much less fully formed thoughts about a wife. However Isaac decided to go along with his father's crazy scheme to marry Becky. When all he wants now is Beckys love he will do anything to get it.

When these two get together they both try to change a bit in order to make the other feel a little better. However due to some secrets, presumptions and just bad timing it takes a bit longer for the truth to come out so these two can get together. Overall this book was a great read, and recommended for historical as well as regular romance readers.

Shantelle says

The Unexpected Bride turned out to be quite the sweet and heartfelt story. Book one in The Brides series by Lena Goldfinch, this old-fashion, mountain romance is an unexpected treat, :)

Desperate to get out of the shadow of her father's disapproval, and the lingering reality that her beloved chose someone else over her, Rebecca Sullivan signs up to be a mail-ordered bride. She's also leaving behind her "Becky" side, and that young woman's hoyden ways. Reading a letter from a kind man named Isaac, she decides: An Isaac for my Rebecca. Perhaps it's a sign from God. And so she embarks on a journey to the Seattle mountains, hoping for a new beginning. But things are not all as they seem. Namely, Rebecca finds herself unwanted yet again. Brokenhearted and worrying that she's a disappointment to God and all others, she works ever harder to become the perfect lady. Yet God has an unexpected way of bringing truths to light, and beauty to even the seemingly most impossible match.

I really enjoyed this tale. I liked Becky, and I felt her pain, her joy, her sorrow, even her wild spirit. It was

lovely to go on this journey with her, finding a path to startlingly beautiful truths, and deep, lasting love. Isaac was also a sturdy and likable character. His father, a bit nosy at times, but a friend really! :)

I didn't know quite what to expect as I first started reading *The Unexpected Bride*. Becky's questions in the beginning of the book had me wondering how that was going to conclude. And there's definitely an adult theme. Also, some characters can be a bit blunt in what they say. I was wondering how deep and sincere this book was going to be.

Well, let me assure you that as I kept reading, my uncertainties faded away. Lena Goldfinch writes with emotion as before. Her characters struggle in real ways. I loved how Isaac read his bible every morning before chores, and how... well, everything else concerning that scenario! :) Not only did Becky seek guidance from God, but Isaac did also. Which I think is always profound of a hero in any tale. So often, it seems the heroes of stories are "too tough to pray", which is absurd really. So Isaac's faithfulness there warmed my heart.

Isaac and Rebecca's relationship came together quite beautifully. It was really well done, not dragging out too long, not happening too quick. I loved Becky's attitude; how submission and 'love thinks about others first' are touched on. Also, Becky's journey to understanding what the verse about a woman's "gentle and quiet spirit" means. It was just... so good. Some really thoughtful lessons woven throughout this book.

As I mentioned, this novel has a bit more mature theme. Marriage and whatnot. Some "adult" discussions prevail throughout the book. I would say perhaps sixteen and up. But recommend to even older, since that's who the book seems to be geared toward.

Overall, a sweet story that left me satisfied and wiser yet in the end. It's a romance for sure, but with lessons that left me feeling like I have learned something anew about marriage, true love, and the nature of God. Where adventure abounds in the frontier mountains of Washington, and dreams come true by the hand of the Creator... *The Unexpected Bride*.

Roxanne says

Love this book! Thanks to the author for providing me an advance ebook to read and review. Set in the year 1866 in "wild Seattle" this delightful inspirational read revolves around the arranged marriage of Rebecca "Becky" and Isaac. A marriage arranged by his pop. Complete strangers Isaac and Becky must decide whether this marriage is to endure or not; whether they can open their hearts to each other and love or not; whether they can trust God or not; whether they can be real and transparent with each other or not. Can an arranged marriage even work? Hmmmm..... Several reasons I enjoy this book. It is not a chore to read. The theme of the book flows easily from beginning to end. It is a book that I did not want to put down until I finished and I wanted more, like a great dessert. So glad that Ms. Goldfinch is continuing the story in additional books. Her writing not only illustrates the main theme well, but the characters physical appearance, their emotional ups and downs, their personalities, the grind and hardship of daily living in the frontier land of the Seattle area... The book pulls you right into Isaac and Becky's lives, into their story, into the lives of other wonderful characters.. Lively entertaining Christian historical fiction that I highly recommend.
