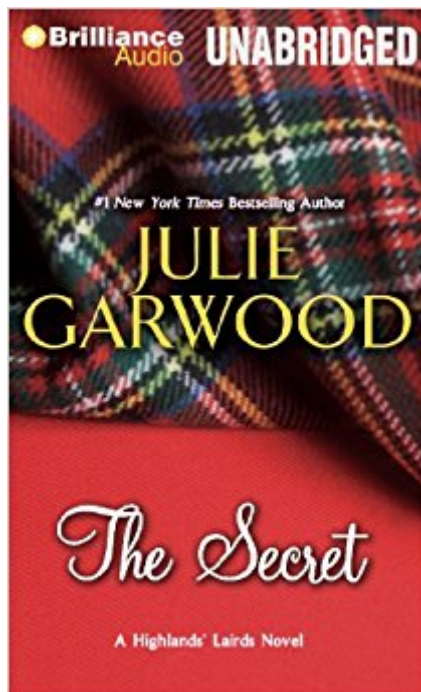


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The Secret (Highlands' Lairds)



Synopsis

New York Times bestselling author Julie Garwood captures the Highland splendor of medieval Scotland in this breathtaking love story. The inspiration for her acclaimed bestseller *Ransom*, this classic tale is a passionate masterpiece from one of the best-loved storytellers of all time. Judith Hampton was as beautiful as she was proud and loyal. Her dear Scottish friend from childhood was about to give birth, and Judith had promised to be at her side. But there was another reason for the journey from her bleak English home to the Highlands: to meet the father she had never known, the Laird Maclean. Nothing prepared her, however, for the sight of the Scottish barbarian who was to escort her into his land...Iain Maitland, laird of his clan, a man more powerfully compelling than any she had ever encountered. In a spirited clash of wills and customs, Judith reveled in the melting bliss of Iain's searching kisses, his passionate caresses. Perplexed by her sprightly defiance, bemused by her tender nature, Iain felt his soul growing into the light and warmth of her love. Surely nothing would wrench her from the affection and trust of Iain and his clan...not even the truth about her father, a devastating secret that could shatter the boldest alliance, and the most glorious of loves!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ever since they met as children at the annual summer festival on the border of their two countries, Judith Hampton of England has been fast friends with Frances Catherine Kirkaldy of Scotland.

Despite the enmity between the two lands in this period (the late 12th century), Judith is determined

to attend the birth of Frances Catherine's first child and find her father, a Scottish laird she has never seen (when they finally meet, it is not in the fashion she had anticipated). En route to her friend's Highland home, Judith charms her escort, Frances Catherine's brother-in-law Iain Maitland. So she is baffled when Iain withdraws into his role of clan laird. Equally confusing is Frances Catherine's claim that after years with the Maitlands, she is still an outsider. But Judith determinedly forges friendships and reexerts her charms over Iain, leading to a lively, unconventional wedding. Woven into Judith's story is an intriguing, almost heretical message for a romance novel: a woman needs more than the right man to have a full, happy life. That Garwood (Guardian Angel) can argue this point and still deliver a delightful tale is an accomplishment. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Audio Cassette edition.

YA-- Vivacious Judith, a Brit, visits her friend in the untamed Scottish highlands of 1200. Little does she suspect that she will fall in love, marry, bring women's lib to her new village, and find her previously unknown father. The simple plot offers a pleasant blend of historical fiction and uncomplicated mystery. With well-developed, amusing characters, this entertaining novel pulls readers back in time to an unusual era, and is difficult to put down. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Audio Cassette edition.

I believe this book might have first been published over 20 years ago. I know I read it many years ago. I remember absolutely loving every book that Julie Garwood wrote. I am sure I was just as in love with this one. I would have given it 5 stars, I am sure. Today, twenty years later, not so much. The author does write beautifully, but with very little attention to the how people of the day would have acted. I doubt there was a man anywhere, much less in the Highlands of Scotland who would have acted like these men. In fact, even today I hate to say it was silly and trite, but that's how I felt. A love story where everyone is almost perfect. I found it totally implausible. So this is why the 3 Star rating. 5 Star rating. I loved it years ago, and I am sure that a much younger audience will love it today. If you are looking for a perfect hero, and perfect heroine who live perfectly ever after, this is the book for you. I think years of reading have changed my taste, but, if you like beautiful people, falling in beautiful love and living a dream as I apparently did, you will love it. As always I love comments.

So my favorite author of all time since the age of 12 has bounced between Nora Roberts and Julie Garwood and Ms Garwood has written my favorite book of all time the sequel to The Secret,

Ransom. But we're not here to talk about that. The Secret is an excellent guilty pleasure read. As it truly offers no literary gain it is great for simple enjoyment. An easy and pleasurable read. That being said I downloaded the audio for those long car trips to work and first listening to it I burst into laughter. The kind woman reading this had an excellent voice and knack for accents. She does different voices for different characters and does them well. That being said her narration made it quite difficult to take my reading seriously for lack of a better term because as soon as she started reading Iain's parts I would giggle. All in all it's an excellent novel but the audio provides a nice giggle relief.

I love this book. I read it AT LEAST once each year. I bought it in print and e-published and audio. You'll laugh, cry, and be amazed by the difference one person can make on the world around her. Julie Garwood does not disappoint. The most amazing thing is the inner beauty of a young woman who suffered such loss and yet holds only love and understanding for others-the ability to finally, as an adult, to stand up for those she loves or simply stand against ugliness in others is downright inspiring. I appreciate the respect of the elders when leading them to see another viewpoint, and utter humility in embarrassing herself to spare the feelings of others. This woman is of such good character and spunky and innocent and strong. The trilogy is an absolute must read. They only get better. Start here!

This Author weaves a delightful story using a well played foundation. Strong characters are described perfectly and reinforced throughout the story leaving no doubt and no confusion as to why these beloved characters react (in certain situations) as they do. Never a dull moment here! This Scottish Alpha Male (Laird Iain Maitland) is so staunch and rigid in his Lairdly role that he finds English born Judith Hampton a refreshing respite to his duties. He finds himself relaxing just being in her presence, much to his surprise...and he (of course) likes it. His attraction, sudden possessiveness and need to protect (her) are overwhelming and confusing yet intriguing to him. Game on!! Lady Judith Hampton doesn't know to be afraid or intimidated of Laird Iain's power, strict authority or cowering ruthlessness. She is simply not threatened by his brass, which is altogether confusing (and humorous) to him, and intrigues him all the more. She sees through his bluster right from the start. She's open, honest, truthful and innocent...all characteristics that draws him to her even more. She comes from a sad and secretive childhood of lies and deceit. It's thoroughly refreshing having all the characters' feelings brought to the forefront right from the start. There are no misunderstanding scenarios with these characters (he thinks this..she thinks that and it's all

misconstrued and misunderstood)...they know and understand their attraction right from the beginning.I loved reading the men(s) perspective of women...these giant Warriors discussing "wimmin".....Absolutely and laugh out loud hilarious..utterly delightful. The Author has the unique talent and capability of pulling ones interest into the plot right away. You're immediately captivated.A lovely story of lifelong friendship between two women...a friendship of opposite sides (England/Scotland) that spans years and teaches many lessons to these blustery Warriors.Oh...and what a GORGEOUS title cover...off the charts superb!!!!

I am a Garwood fan. This is the first historical novel of hers I read and I became an even bigger fan. I'm sorry she's moved into modern fiction, though she does that very well too! The sequel would be "Ransom" which is my favorite of all Garwood's books. I like how many of her books all connect to each other, which allows the reader to check in with past characters from other books.

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