



A Bookish Affair Readalikes: *A Scot in the Dark* by Sarah MacLean

A Bookish Affair, LOPL's romance book club, meets monthly to discuss the diverse, inclusive world of romance novels! Did you love the swoonworthy romance, angsty hero, double-standards-busting heroine, and fabulous tartan of Sarah MacLean's ***A Scot in the Dark***? While we stay home and stay safe, check out this list of readalikes. It's the best thing since sliced haggis! (Is haggis even sliceable?) This list was compiled by Shandy (sdickinson@lakeoswego.city).

Someday, I'll write a list of readalikes that doesn't begin with an Alyssa Cole novel...but today is not that day. Remember Naledi's flighty best friend Portia from *A Princess in Theory*? In ***Duke by Default***, Portia crosses the pond to become an apprentice to a Scottish swordmaker. Portia and gruff Tavish drive each other crazy, but they also, you know, *drive each other crazy*. Then they discover that Tavish is actually a duke, and everything gets a lot more complicated. Besides being wildly romantic and great fun, this book is also a sensitive portrayal of life with ADHD.

In *A Scot in the Dark*, Alec longs for his Scottish homeland, but most of the book is set in England. ***Highland Crown*** by May McGoldrick will transport you to the rugged beauty of the Scottish Highlands. Beautiful physician Isabella Drummond, on the run from the British authorities *and* the Scottish rebels, saves the life of sea-captain Cinaed Mackintosh. Forced into hiding at Cinaed's ancestral home, they're powerless to resist each other...but what will they have to sacrifice for a happily-ever-after? This first volume in a series is followed by ***Highland Jewel*** and ***Highland Sword***.

You can't get much better than a hand-sell from Leah Koch of *The Ripped Bodice*, and that's exactly how I ended up with Maya Banks' ***Never Seduce a Scot*** on my shelf. Eveline Armstrong is beloved by her protective family, but no one knows the real reason she never speaks -- she's deaf. When an arranged marriage between clans makes Graeme Montgomery her husband, Eveline is delighted to find that he's kind and loving. Most wonderful of all, she's able to hear another person's voice for the first time in her life. But those pesky clan rivalries will threaten their newfound love, and Graeme will do anything to protect his bride. This is also the first in a series!

In Suzanne Enoch's ***Scot Under the Covers***, Miranda Harris is a whip-smart Englishwoman who can solve just about any problem. She just wasn't counting on being blackmailed into marriage to pay off her brother's gambling debts. Rakish gambler Aden MacTaggart may be the

perfect person to help her with the biggest wager of her life... if the Highlander and the Sassenach can just get past their inconvenient attraction.

First comes marriage, then comes...true love? Rebekah Weatherspoon is beloved by A Bookish Affair for her delightful contemporary romances. ***Xeni: A Marriage of Inconvenience*** (next in the series that began with the marvelous *Rafe: A Buff Male Nanny*) delivers on its delicious title with the story of Xeni, who's in line for an inheritance from a beloved aunt that will change her life. The catch? She has to marry to get the money, and Aunt Sable has already chosen the groom. Mason McInroy needs the cash just as much as Xeni does, so they take the plunge. They just don't expect to start falling in love.

Tessa Dare's popular *Spindle Cove* and *Girl Meets Duke* series have made her a romance fan favorite, and she'll whisk you away to Scotland in ***When A Scot Ties the Knot***. Miss Maddie Gracechurch's social anxiety has her dreading her first London season, so she comes up with what seems like the perfect solution: a fake Scottish fiance. When he meets an unfortunate (fictional) end, she retires to a Scottish castle to live out her life in peace and quiet. All is well...until a very real Captain Logan MacKenzie shows up at her door. He's read all of those letters she sent to her imaginary boyfriend, and he's ready to tie the knot.

Let's go back a little further in time, to the court of Mary, Queen of Scots. ***Bound to a Spy*** by Sharon Cullen features Rose Turner, a young Scotswoman sent to court to make a good match -- but she's too bold and independent to attract a gentleman of the court. When she overhears evidence of a nefarious murder plot, English spy Will Sheffield must step in to keep her safe. Will he choose his country...or the woman who's captured his heart?

If you love an angsty hero like Alec, try ***Trashed*** by Mia Hopkins. On his first day out of prison, ex-gang member Eddie Rosas has a romantic encounter with a mysterious woman. He's smitten, but doesn't even know her name...that is, until he accidentally gets a job washing dishes in her restaurant kitchen. Carmen Centeno is smart, tough, and talented, and she believes in Eddie -- he just has to believe that he's worthy of her love. This novel was a winner in the inaugural Ripped Bodice Awards for Excellence in Romantic Fiction!

Lily and her forthright, unconventional female friends would get along just fine with Frederica "Free" Marshall, the heroine of Courtney Milan's ***The Suffragette Scandal***. Free runs a suffragist newspaper, but not everyone in Victorian England is quite so enlightened, and she finds herself up against a powerful family with nowhere to turn. Edward Clark is ready to get revenge on the family that abandoned him -- but will his plan destroy his chances with the fiery Free?

Let's just go ahead and bookend this list with another Alyssa Cole title! ***Agnes Moor's Wild Knight*** is a one-sitting read (just 38 pages!). Agnes Moor is an African-born lady in the court of James IV of Scotland, and when the king offers a kiss from Agnes as a prize to the winner of a tournament, a mysterious knight will stop at nothing to win it all.

