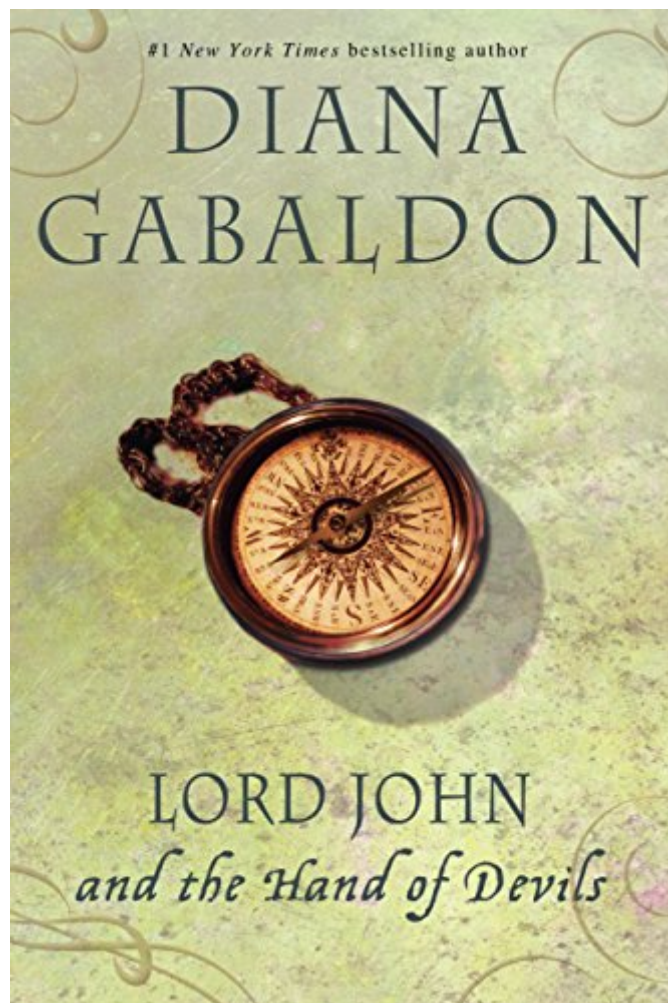




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Lord John And The Hand Of Devils: A Novel (Lord John Grey Book 3)



Synopsis

Diana Gabaldon, the New York Times bestselling author of Lord John and the Brotherhood of the Blade and the wildly popular Outlander novels, delivers three tales of war, intrigue, and espionage that feature one of her most popular characters: Lord John Grey. In the heart of the eighteenth century, here are haunted soldiers . . . lusty princesses . . . ghostly apparitions . . . dark family secrets. And here Lord John will face enemies who come in the guise of friends, memories in the shape of a fiery-haired Scot named James Fraser, and allies who have the power to destroy him with a single blow. . . . In Lord John and the Hellfire Club, Lord John glimpses a stranger in the doorway of a gentlemen's club "and is stirred by a desperate entreaty to meet in private. The rendezvous forestalled by a sudden murder, Lord John will wade into a maze of political treachery and a dangerous, debauched underground society. . . . In Lord John and the Succubus, English soldiers fighting in Prussia are rattled by the nocturnal visitations of a deadly woman who sucks life and soul from a man. Called to investigate the night-hag, Lord John finds a murdered soldier and a treacherous Gypsy, and comes to the stark realization that among the spirits that haunt men, none frighten more than the specters conjured by the heart. . . . In Lord John and the Haunted Soldier, Lord John is thrust into the deadly case of an exploding battlefield cannon. Wounded in the same battle, Lord John is called to testify and soon confronts his own ghost "and the shattering prospect that a traitor is among the ranks of His Majesty's armed forces. Capturing the lonely, tormented, and courageous career of a man who fights for his crown, his honor, and his own secrets, Diana Gabaldon delivers breathtaking human drama. And in tales seething with desire, madness, and political intrigue, Gabaldon once again proves that she can bring history to life in a way few novelists ever have. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

I enjoy the Lord John books and stories, because I like Lord John! He's a likeable fellow with a dangerous way of life. Not that one precludes the other, but in the 18th Century Sodomites, as they were called, faced a death sentence if found out. Lord John Grey is an urbane, attractive, adaptive and quick-witted man who happens to be what we call "Gay" in the 18th century. These 3 stories may not please all, but they are worth reading because they add to the body of knowledge about Lord John. They don't need to be read to enjoy the larger (in every sense!) Gabaldon books, but they do form part of the body of work and have their own value. That said, I think I liked "Lord John and the Succubus" best for the character development of some of the Other characters in the story, and shows us the cleverness of Lord John in a ... well, clever way! Highly recommended!

Of course Lord John is not as exciting as the main Outlander characters, and in the main books to me he seems a rather flat character, convenient for providing Jamie and Claire with access to money, supplies, and to keep us informed of the life of Willie. But these stories, set between the years of the separation between Jaime and Claire, make John a much more interesting and complicated character. There is a small mystery in each of them and a larger mystery that flows through all the Lord John stories so far, which is worth the read. They can be read alone (and in any order according to Gabaldon) but they greatly enrich the main storyline in the Big Enormous Books. As an entire collection, they contribute a lot to understanding the historical background for all the characters and they add new ones of interest to the larger series as well.

IMHO, Diana Gabaldon cannot write a bad story. That said, I've liked some of the books in the Outlander series better than others. The same is true in this combined series of three novellas. Of the three I liked the third one, Lord John and the Haunted Soldier, the best because it touches briefly and indirectly on the deeply poignant feelings that Lord John has for Jamie Fraser. It also

highlights several admirable aspects of LJ's character in a story that is a very good and entertaining read. For me, Lord John is the absolute best of the Outlander secondary characters and I will read any story involving him. He absolutely touches my heart.

The book contains 3 short stories about Lord John, two of which were published previously. The first, "Lord John and the Hellfire Club," previously appeared under the title, "Hellfire," in the anthology "Past Poisons" (Headline, 1998). It's the shortest at about 37 pages. In the chronology of Lord John books, it comes first (before "Lord John and the Private Matter"). "Hellfire" takes place in 1756, shortly after Lord John's return from Ardsmuir (the prison that held Jamie Fraser in "Voyager"). It deals with the murder of a young man invited to meet with the secretive Hellfire Club. No one knows much about it. But John receives a sobbing induction, is framed for murder, and saved by Harry Quarry (his predecessor at Ardsmuir) all in the space of about 8 pages - a major feat for Gabaldon. The second story, "Lord John and the Succubus," is clever. It previously appeared under the same title in the anthology, "Legends II: New Short Novels by the Modern Masters of Fantasy." In the chronology of Lord John titles, it falls between "Private Matter" and "Brotherhood of the Blade." The story takes place during 1756 and 1757, when England was at war against France and Austria. While serving as a major in the English army, Lord John investigates rumors and deaths attributed to succubi. I can't speak to the story's cleverness without giving it away, but suffice it to say that the "devils" in this story are quite human and the hand controlling them quite present today and since the beginning of time. The third, "Lord John and the Haunted Soldier," is an original publication. In the chronology, it comes after "Brotherhood of the Blade." It takes place in 1758. Lord John has recently returned from the battlefield to respond to an inquest about a cannon that blew up under his command, killing several soldiers. The intrigue involves investigating the cause of the explosion. Lord John struggles with feelings of guilt and memory lapses (In the midst of a crisis, who can say what really happened?). Consequently, a request that he investigate the disappearance of a local young woman comes as a welcome distraction. Little does he know how the two - the disappearance and the explosion - relate. Of the 3 stories, I enjoyed Succubus the most. I like Gabaldon's writing style and her imagination, so I'll read anything she writes. But Succubus is a cut above the other 2 stories. If you haven't read it, it alone is worth the price of the book. For Jamie Fraser fans, you'll find references to him in all the stories. But he is most apparent in the "Haunted Soldier." For others, you might find this collection easier to follow, if you read the other 2 Lord John novels as well as the first 3 Outlander books. Gabaldon is truly a gifted storyteller in that she can retell episodes from earlier works from the viewpoint of another character. It's quite well done and

I'm amazed that she does this without planning for it.

Lord John and the Hand of Devils: A Novel I have been following this series from the time I accidentally picked up the first book The Outlander. Lord John is a character in the books, who with Claire loves Jamie without question. He has his particular interests but somehow is able to blend in well despite the times he lives in. I think he would be very happy living in our century and very successful. This book covers his story during 1756 to 1758 with 3 different stories about his activities during that time period. (prior to the war of independence in 1776) I like historical novels with a good story to tell history with because it makes more sense of what happened during that time. Diane Gabaldon certainly does her research to make more to the point. I am glad she gives us details of Lord John so we can understand where he fits in the whole story of the series. His stories are usually quick reading compared to the Outlander books and do fill in the time waiting for the next one in the series.

This collection of 3 novellas gives us an insight into Lord John Grey. Poor John not only has the obligations of being a military man. But then he gets sucked into a constant role of private investigator. To top it all off, John is lonely! He struggles with his sexuality. Underground sex clubs, a lingering look, a spark in a quick glimpse...what is a man to do? I feel that John wants to just find the sole mate who understands and loves him for who he is. That person just so happens to be Jamie Fraser. This is a good collection of short stories. A must for anyone that adores the Outlander series.

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