



# Loving Lucianna (A Hearts in Autumn Romance, #1)

*Joyce DiPastena*

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Sir Balduin de Soler gave up long ago on love. He never had the means to support a wife until an unexpected advancement in his fifties allows him to reassess his future just as the lovely Lucianna enters his life.

Lucianna Fabio harbors a secret, painful memory from her past that has kept her unwed, as well. Now in her forties, she thought herself too old to marry until she meets Sir Balduin. Now suddenly their lonely autumn lives feel very much like spring again . . . until Lucianna's brother appears without warning and threatens to revive the secret that will destroy Lucianna's second chance at love.

"Loving Lucianna" is the first in Joyce DiPastena's new "Hearts in Autumn" romance series, medieval romances revolving around heroes and heroines "in the autumn of their years." Because you're never too old to fall in love!

## Loving Lucianna (A Hearts in Autumn Romance, #1) Details

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Author : Joyce DiPastena

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## From Reader Review Loving Lucianna (A Hearts in Autumn Romance, #1) for online ebook

**Shree says**

*Note : This review is up & live @ Readers' Muse*

A book of this genre is bound to attract adept readers with that mystifying old world grace and charm. This book is no exception.

The protagonist Lucianna is a fiery red head who has given up on love owing to tumultuous relationship with her brother and has a dark secret which her brother uses against her. Her secret is so explosive in nature that the man who loved her left her jilted after he heard of it from her brother.

Enter our “hero” Sir Balduin De Soler, a man who for long didn’t have the means to have a wife and couldn’t find the perfect wife when he finally had the means. He eventually falls for Lucianna and courts her with silly songs and expensive needles (Sewing Needles). Finally they find each other in spite of Lucianna’s heavy emotional baggage.

The characterization was highly realistic so much so that I had trouble believing this book is actually a work of fiction. The writer apparently has put in a lot of effort to research about Medieval culture. The narration slacked in the beginning but as the story progressed it improved immensely. The metaphorical reference of Autumn has been well justified by the writer. After all, one is never too old to find love.

The key to the success of any romance novel, I believe is portraying beautiful courtship. Sadly, there are few aren’t many writers around who write about a proper courtship before the love proposal. There are even lesser people who prefer reading such books. Romance, today has become like Instant Noodles - Two minutes and done! Not that I have anything against love at first sight, I simply prefer the old fashion way.

The writer has made a fantastic job of incorporating light hearted humour into perfect medieval romance. If only the humour element wasn’t there, the story would have been really bland. Her writing skills certainly deserve a mention. The writer sure does know her way around words and their effects. The other highlight of this book is a switch between timelines. Though I would have preferred a chronological narration, nevertheless the shift of timelines simply added the mystery dimension to the story. Throw in some Italian/French words and la – The perfect romance novel with perfect romance setting.

For some reason Sir Balduin’s character reminds me of the handsome bond actor Sean Connery (particularly from the movie – The first Knight)

To sum it up, a perfect medieval love story with all essential elements like mystery, romance and humour.

***VERDICT: Curl up on that favourite couch with a cup of hot chocolate and pick this book up. You are bound to lose yourself to old world charm.***

RATING: 4 on 5

## Julie says

This is such a wonderful read. Lucianna is flawed but oh so relatable. Her red hair fits her fiery personality. She's been scorned by love and is fine with the idea of never getting married. When her knight-in-shinning-armor Sir Balduin sweeps her off her feet... ok so maybe he's graying a little and has a limp from his battle days but he is a knight and he's desperately in love with her. Lucianna is finally getting married at the age of forty-four. When her brother Serafino shows up she's certain he will ruin everything by revealing the truth about her. The truth she has kept hidden for so long. Lucianna is determined to push Sir Balduin away to save him from the humiliation of her past.

In a flashback we get a glimpse of Lucianna's beginning years in the convent where she was raised by nuns. We experience a beautiful friendship develop. Elisabetta and Lucianna were inseparable after their time in the convent together. After Elisabetta's death Lucianna takes care of Siri her daughter as if she's her own child. She's now helping Siri with her first pregnancy and it's the only thing keeping Lucianna in France. She wants to flee back home to Italy so her rotten brother will follow her there.

There are so many wonderful characters in this book. We get to revisit with characters from previous books by Joyce DiPastena, which is always fun. It's a quick and uplifting read. It is a book I know I will reread over and over again. I loved every minute of it.

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## Yolanda says

Captivating!

Joyce DiPastena once again takes us on a journey to medieval times with the story of Lucianna and Sir Balduin. Though they are in the 'autumn of their lives' they find love; not without difficulties. Lucianna has a secret she does not wish exposed, however when someone from her past shows up just before she is to be married her life may change forever. This is a story of sweet romance with a dash of mystery. Once I began to read it I couldn't put it down until I discovered Lucianna's dreaded secret...and then until the outcome of it all was revealed! If you read *Illuminations of the Heart*, you will be happy to read more about Siri and Triston. This is a quick read and well worth it! I look forward to the next book in "The Hearts in Autumn" Romance Series.

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## Lisa Annesley says

4.5\*s

LOVING LUCIANNA is a sweet romance, like a medieval ballad. It stars a heroic knight with courtly manners and his worthy lady.

Sir Balduin and Lucianna are middle-aged, and past the time they ever thought they'd be married. But they find each other, fall in love, and become engaged. And then Lucianna's secret past catches up with her. The noble Lucianna feels she must leave Sir Balduin and break their hearts in order to protect him. But Sir Balduin won't let her go without a fight.

LOVING LUCIANNA is full of history, mystery, humor, romance, and wonderful surprises.

A hallmark of every DiPastena book is the rich, accurate history. In LOVING LUCIANNA, she even

included a fun tidbit from her own family history.

So read LOVING LUCIANNA, and enjoy it for the history, mystery, humor, romance, and surprise ending. And have fun guessing which bit came from the author's own ancestor.

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### **Sarah Reads "Reading in Sarah's Corner" says**

Everyone deserves to fall in love no matter their age and Author Joyce Dipastena tells a beautiful story of just that. She brings the world of Lucianna to life as she tells the story of Lucianna finding love and acceptance when she least expected it. This story is well written and full of character. I had to know what made the snarky heroine Lucianna Fabio running.

You cannot read this story without wanting to hug Lucianna and growl at her in the same sentence. This woman makes being stubborn look easy. She is full of life and has a tongue that will give anyone a good lashing if you cross her. But deep down she does not mean to sound so cross with everyone.

Lucianna Fabio had written off love. She cannot risk her past being discovered. The pain of her past keeps her tight lipped from the people dearest to her heart. She never wanted to marry after past almost caught many years ago. She's been running ever since. But a sweet man captures her heart and she takes a leap of faith.

Sir Balduin de Soler had given up on love as well. He never thought he would be blessed with a wife until he meets Lucianna. He falls head over heels for her. He wasn't the best at expressing his love. You could tell he loved her more than anything. A few times I wanted to hug him when his romantic gesture was thrown back at him by Lucianna. He could not figure out what was chasing her to push him away so much. Every time she pushed he would just try harder to prove his love.

The way Sir Balduin never gave up on Lucianna made me all swoony. It was about understanding his woman not taking her growls to heart. He knew she wasn't telling him something he just did not know what.

Oh. And little Perrin is such a cutie. I think now every time I do not like something I shall say "blah!" It's fun and will get my point across.

I do not want to give away some of the main plotline. It will ruin some parts for you. Just know that if you enjoy a great medieval read this book is for you.

You will laugh and fall in love with this story. I know it.

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### **Wanda Luce says**

Another in a line of exceptional books by Joyce DiPastena. I have read all of her books and always know that she will keep me turning the pages. Loving Lucianna was so beautiful and so beautifully written. It is also full of the unexpected. I highly recommend this book to everyone who loves a richly textured, historical romance.

## Melinda says

I found Loving Lucianna very refreshing. Yes, it's a love story but, making this a standout is the fact the couple involved is of a 'mature' age – forty's and fifty's. The message of the narrative is wonderful too, love is for any age and unconditional love exists.

I have an affinity for medieval times, another plus for this novel. The characters are adorable as well. We have a spirited lady and a gentle knight leaving every woman envious. Sir Balduin's manners and love are showered upon Lucianna, not a surprise this outspoken woman is smitten.

DiPastena cleverly weaves history, mystery, splashes of humor along with romance all merging to create a sweet sentimental story. As the threat of Lucianna's dark secret looms, you are held in suspense of what will happen to the couple destiny has united. The author provides insight into her own family tree, in fact she managed to incorporate a tiny bit into the plot, a very pleasant surprise for the reader when all is said and done.

Loving Lucianna is a story full of history, suspense, humor and surprises adding to an already delightful narrative. Highly recommend this tender story, I guarantee it will put a smile on your face and warm your heart.

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## Katie W says

3.5--I really enjoyed the setting, as well as the story of two people, who assume they are past the age for marrying, finding one another and falling in love. The story was slow for me and it took me while to get into it, but once I did, I really enjoyed it.

The story has some humor, as well as a mystery. The reader will learn that Sir Baluin isn't a poet, by any means. When everything came out, Lucianna's reluctance made sense. She has a secret that she doesn't want shared, but when her brother shows up, she knows that nothing good can come of it.

Sir Balduin was very persistent and knew exactly what he wanted, while Lucianna was more hesitant. She was a little frustrating at times, because she seemed content with what was going on and they would suddenly look for little reasons to doubt her choice. She didn't seem to handle things in a very mature way, despite her physical age. Of course, I thought the villain was perfect for the part.

A major theme that came through for me was the importance of family and relationships. I loved the emphasis placed on honoring ones word, too.

Content: Clean.

\*I received a copy in exchange for an honest review\*

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## Italo Italophiles says

Loving Lucianna is the first book in the author's Hearts in Autumn medieval romance series that features couples in "the autumn of their years". Lucianna is from the Venetian Republic, and she is proud of her wealthy, powerful, independent city-state. Through the twists of fate she finds herself in southwestern France, but her Venetian heritage is always in her heart.

The book's chapters move the reader from Lucianna's present to her past and back again to the woman's present. Unlike some romance novels, Luciana has a lover when the book begins, and is set to wed him in three weeks time. The rest of the novel is about Luciana's struggle to protect her lover from shame and hurt, even if it means giving him up. But true to the genre, true love prevails in the end.

It seems as if a whole novel is referenced in the first chapter of Loving Lucianna, and that is because that is exactly the case. The characters in Loving Lucianna first appear in the author's novel Illuminations of the Heart. I wish I had read that book first and been witness to Lucianna and her lover's courtship. I would consider Loving Lucianna a sequel, featuring characters who clearly became dear to the author's heart.

Lucianna's lover is a mature man with many qualities and skills. He feels capable only late in his life of supporting a wife, and Lucianna is the woman he wants to fulfill that role.

The text is peppered with Italian words, which are largely explained within the text. The author provides a small Glossary of the Italian words used in the book. There is also a helpful Glossary of Medieval terms, for those readers unfamiliar with the archaic words and customs.

Personally, I think I would have enjoyed reading the story chronologically, but the author is very skilful in weaving her story together, moving through time. It is difficult to comprehend the threat that Lucianna feels, since our present-day sensibilities are so different from the 1100s. Sometimes I found her fear silly, and often I found Lucianna's actions cruel. But those were different times. And all ends well. If her lover can forgive her, I suppose I can too.

For lovers of historical novels there is a nice sprinkling of historical detail, some cultural, some political. It never overpowers the story, which is how I like my historical novels, so I was pleased. We get a glimpse into the life of women in Medieval Venice and southwestern France. Women were the property of men, so the ladies' position in the book can be frustrating to read about for modern women, but it also can make us grateful for the changes that have come with time and struggle.

An extra at the end of the book is a section Discussion Questions. This is a book for fans of Medieval romances, preferably ones who have read the author's previous book Illuminations of the Heart. Loving Lucianna will be especially appreciated by mature women who will enjoy reading about "two autumn hearts".

Please read my full and illustrated review at Italophile Book Reviews.  
<http://italophilebookreviews.blogspot...>

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## Julie says

Loving Lucianna by Joyce Di Pastena is a 2014 Tyger books publication. I was provided a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Yay!! I have discovered another wonderful medieval historical romance!! But, that's not all... this book tells the story of two people in the "autumn" of their lives finding love. I love stories like this since I have a really

hard time finding them in the midst of all the New Adult and Erotica titles and of course... regency. So, it was a real pleasure to discover this author and to learn she writes a series of books with characters in their middle age years.

Lucianna was raised in a convent where she met Elizabetta who became her very best and dearest friend. Now Lucianna is in the household of Eliabetta's daughter, Siri who is married to Triston de Brielle and expecting her first child.

This is where Lucianna meets Balduin de Soler, a knight in Triston's household. Balduin, now in his fifties, had never earned enough money to support a wife, but now, that he has met Lucianna and is earning more under Triston, he is more than ready to marry. He will just have to manage to get Lucianna to the alter. It looks like he has finally convinced her to go through with the wedding but Lucianna's evil brother arrives with knowledge of Lucianna's heritage that could cause Balduin to change his mind about her and Triston himself may decide to have her removed if he were to discover the truth. Taking matters into her own hands, Lucianna calls off the wedding. She longs for Venice, but Siri makes her promise to stay with her at least until her child is born. Will the truth stay buried? Will Lucianna and Balduin lose their chance for a life together in their twilight years?

Despite the age range the book is centered around, there is a high amount of angst present. Lucianna was certainly a difficult and interesting character. Perhaps in modern times we would describe her as "high strung". She lives in fear of her past catching up to her and certainly things in the 1100's were viewed far differently than they are today. So, on many levels her fears were legitimate. Past heartbreak can attest to that. What she didn't count on was Balduin being a true man of honor. Balduin is so smitten and in love with Lucianna, I don't think there was anything she could do that would have caused him to turn her away. Despite the high emotions of Lucianna, Balduin steals the show. He was just awesome!! This book is a short read and is a "clean", sweet romance.

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### **Margaret Larsen Turley says**

Joyce diPastena had written an ageless tender love story in *Loving Lucianna*. An older audience will appreciate the author's sensitivity to our sensibilities. Serafino is a perfectly despicable villain, Sir Balduin is a wonderful hero and the reader will love Lucianna with all her charms and faults. Joyce creates her novel with such authenticity it transports the reader into the Medieval era. I highly recommend this book.

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### **Kathy Heare Watts says**

This is a beautiful story of sacrifice and love even in the "autumn years of life." Sir Balduin de Soler never felt he had the means to support a wife and had worked instead. Being in his fifties he meets and falls in love with Lucianna Fabio who is in her forties. But fate and Lucianna's greedy half brother destroys what should have been her chance for happiness. The story weaves the life and devotion that Lucianna had with her closest friend, Elizabetta and her daughter, Siri. Just when she thought she could finally marry a man she loves, Serafino Amorosi makes his appearance and starts trouble. Secrets that go back to childhood have reared their ugly head once again. "Someday, someone who does not care about dowries or wicked fathers or unscrupulous brothers will love and cherish you." Oh if that could only be true.

### **Aurora says**

<http://sveta-randomblog.blogspot.com/...>

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### **Suzana says**

What a fun read.

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### **Sheila says**

It's always a treat to run away from my troubles and escape in a lovely romance written by Joyce DiPastena. It makes the journey even better when you can revisit characters that you loved from Joyce's other books.

Readers first met Lucianna in Illuminations Of The Heart as she was a minor character in Siri and Triston's love story. Lucianna always intrigued me as I wondered why she acted the way she did. You knew that she had to have had a hard and painful past. This difficult past is the mystery that comes storming out in the middle of Loving Lucianna. The book starts with the serene picture of an "Autumn Romance" between Lucianna in her forties and Sir Balduin in his early fifties. As someone who fits into that age bracket, it was refreshing to read about a romance between people not in their teens or twenties. Of course it couldn't stay perfect and wonderful too long because soon, Lucianna's past comes to haunt her once again. Her older, half-brother Serifino, shows up to cause trouble and continue his blackmail of his sister. Serifino is a well-written fiend that readers will love to hate. Readers will be incensed as they "watch" Serifino manipulate every situation and person within his reach.

I'll not be giving away any more details now, but there will be many misunderstandings, deceptions and some very humorous scenes before this story plays itself out, leading to some sigh-worthy moments. Loving Lucianna is a must read for all of Joyce's fan's and those wanting to read a clean medieval romance. I'm very excited to read more books in the "Hearts in Autumn Romance" series.

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