



Seven for a Secret

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One of the bestselling names in romantic suspense delivers a strong new story of scandal, suicide and seduction. Young Frederica is trying to adjust to her new home and school in Wiltshire. But secrets and sensuality are starting to stalk her.

Seven for a Secret Details

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From Reader Review Seven for a Secret for online ebook

Eva Seyler says

Another author I keep hearing about from my friends. I don't know if all her books are this rubbishy or if I just picked a bad one, but it read like the magnum opus of a fifteen-year-old who reads too many sordid newspaper articles. How else can you cram seduction, suicide, identity crises, divorce, deception, illegitimate children, and South Sea islands into just one story?

Also, the NAMES. Tamarisk is bad... but Crispin?!?

I rest my case.

Kavita says

What a mess of a book! I usually enjoy Holt, even if I don't necessarily like her romances, but this book was a complete mess. It started off quite interesting with Frederica growing up with a bitter mother who pines after her old grand life. But when she moves to be with her aunt, the story becomes becomes darker. The first half of the book held my interest. There is the secret of the Seven Magpies, her new friends, Rachel and Tamarisk, and the different men in the vicinity to keep the story moving. But then the plot got convoluted and every two pages I began to exclaim "Wait, what, why?" Like, a man agreeing to accept some other man's child as his own. What if it had been a boy, and not a girl? What about inheritance and such?

I asked the same question about Tamarisk blithely telling Crispin he must stay on and deal with the estates. What if she had a son? Would she be happy about this child living in some remote island or would she want him to receive his inheritance? What if she had a daughter - wouldn't the money come in handy to provide a dowry for her? The entire British aristocracy was built on such flimsy ideals. Why even depict it when you're just going to evade it all to suit your story?

I also did not really feel the romance between Frederica and Crispin. I mean, what the hell, really? He lied to her about having a living wife and was going to go ahead with a fake wedding with her because he "loved" her. Instead of being furious and protecting Frederica, which would be their duty under Victorian custom, her aunt and father prose on and on about true love. What utter nonsense! How about introducing her to other eligible bachelors? As for Frederica's trip to some island near Australia, it didn't add anything to the plot or the story. It didn't even make any sense.

Some of the dialogues were excruciating and didn't bring out any emotions at all. Frederica particularly annoyed me consistently with her pompous dialogues. Tamarisk tells her about the biggest tragedy in her life and all she could say was "Poor Tamarisk!" Same with her other friend, Rachel. I mean, who talks like that? There was also incessant repetition with the dialogues. She told her father five times that he ought to have returned to Aunt Sophie to be cared for and he responded five times that he couldn't have done that because she deserved better. Didn't understand it the first time, Fred? Are you stupid? Same with Crispin. Same, same, same, ugh!

There are other books by Holt that make better reading and at least have a coherent plot, if nothing else. This book was published the year before Holt died. Clearly not her best effort!

Mary Cushnie-Mansour says

In my teens, I was an avid reader of Victoria Holt novels and had every one I could get my hands on. However, after lending my collection to someone, with the promise they would all be returned, then never seeing my precious books again, I moved on to other authors. I picked up "Seven for a Secret" at a used bookstore, thinking to re-visit my childhood author. "Seven for a Secret" did not totally disappoint; it is a nice story, as were all of Victoria Holt's books. However, I felt there was something missing.

The story starts out strong enough ... the tragedy that befell the heroine, Frederica, could very well have been such during those times. Her mother, born into luxury, lost it all - the money, the marriage, life as she had known it. Yet, in trying to keep up appearances, she loses her mind, and then her body crashes and Frederica is collected by her mother's sister. The young child has never known her father, as he left when she was but a baby. The aunt is much different from her sister - more practical - and she and Frederica get along well. Frederica becomes friends with the two young girls in the area, Rachel and Tamarisk. Rachel is quiet and withdrawn; Tamarisk is rich and spoiled, and the three girls take lessons at Tamarisk's estate. Tamarisk has a brother, Crispin, who scars Frederica upon their first meeting when he calls her plain.

The story is interesting enough to keep one engaged. There are incidents that happen around the lives of the three girls, but they are not dealt with in a profound manner - actually, the writing is a bit naive, although I suspect for the target market, it is what is expected. I must admit there was a nice twist at the end (which I had suspected much earlier in the book), but nice all the same. I am not sure if we live in a fairytale world like is being depicted in "Seven for a Secret," then again, did we ever? And, what is a story supposed to do for us? Maybe it is just meant to take us into an alternate universe for a time so we don't have to dwell on the everyday mundane events of our lives.

Is "Seven for a Secret" worth reading? Yes. A nice story for a rainy afternoon. Three stars (for old time's sake)

Emily says

I like Victoria Holt generally, though sometimes the gender dynamics are problematic to say the least. What creeps me out a bit is the hero, who is supposed to be appealing.

1) He is fully willing to marry our heroine, despite the fact that he believes he is legally married already, and thus would be a bigamist and make our heroine an adulteress and their children illegitimate. Because "he can't risk losing her." Fan-freaking-tastic. Because HIS feelings matter so much more than her right to understand the situation fully.

2) He doesn't want the world to know that he has no right to his estate, and he certainly doesn't want to tell the rightful heir because he really LIKES the estate and he's GOOD at estating.

What a fantastic moral compass he has! I sure see why she loves him so! He has some good qualities of course but he seems to me to be cowardly and self-serving in very crucial everyday kinds of ways. Anyone might reasonably be afraid of mortal combat (the kind of cowardice these books always deplore) but apparently basic moral courage and decency are highly negotiable because FEELINGS and LOVE.

Also why do so many of her books seem to involve heroines going on long pointless boat trips? Seriously, what did that detour accomplish that couldn't have been as neatly achieved by an outing to Scotland or something?

Shalini M says

Now, this did not turn out to be as interesting as I expected. I don't know whether it is one of her worse works, or whether her books may not so intriguing to a mature adult as they could be to a school/college student. I read a few of her books way back then, and loved them. I was never much into romances, but found her kind of romantic thrillers quite enjoyable. I didn't find another of her books since then, and was therefore thrilled to find one at Blossoms a couple of weeks back. And I was rather disappointed. It was all too predictable, and the suspense/secret wasn't that good for all the build-up.

Tammy Chaffins says

great book

Carrie Dalby says

I'd give it 3.5 if I could. It took me a few days to get into it, then parts in the middle were a bit repetitive (mostly the main character's inner dialog), but one night it kept me reading until 2am and I was moved to tears at another point.

Neja says

Books written by Victoria Holt are so cheesy, but sometimes that's exactly what you need. I've read a looooot of her books when I was 14/15 years old..that was the last time I've read them. I absolutely loved them at the time. I'm thinking of reading one of her books just for the old times sake! =>

Bobbie says

This is certainly not my favorite of Victoria Holt novels. It started well but it just went on too long. Certain sections could have been totally omitted as far as I was concerned. Also, the mystery became very obvious to me. The writing seemed very stilted and I simply could never seem to get emotional involved with the characters concerns or feelings. I hate being so critical since I have really enjoyed other V. Holt novels in the past but this one was generally a disappointment.

Laura says

Needed a mindless story. This fit the bill.

Jamie says

One of my all-time favorite books, I first read *Seven for a Secret* when I was in high school. For a few years I looked in local book shops for a copy of my own, but didn't find one until recently. It was still as good as I remembered it being seven or eight years ago.

Adelein says

3,5 tähteä.

Seitsemän linnun taika kertoo Fredericasta, joka muuttaa äitinsä kuoleman jälkeen Harper's Greenin kylässä asuvan tätinsä luokse. Frederica tutustuu kyläläisiin, muun muassa Lanen sisaruksiin. Heillä on kuitenkin jokin salaisuus kannettavanaan.

Kyseessä on tyypillinen Victoria Holtin romaani: on kartanoita, menneisyyden salaisuuksia, matkoja kaukaisiin ja eksoottisiin paikkoihin... (ja toisteista dialogia ja turhan helppo loppu.) Eniten harmitti, että tässä käytettiin samaa juonikuviota kuin Holtin aikaisemmassa Tuhannen lyhdyn talo -romaanissa: (view spoiler)

Juonessa olisi ollut mahdollisuuksia vaikka kuinka monimutkaisiin koukkuihin, mutta sen sijaan meno olikin melko yksinkertaista. Tämä oli mukava luettava kaiken kiireen keskellä, mutta ei olisi toiminut niin hyvin pitkissä pätkissä luettuna.

Prathiba A says

moving...total suspense

Laurie says

She is such a good writer. I love how she writes from childhood and unravels all these cryptic mysteries. My husband was excited that I was reading a romance. But this disappointed him for it was really really clean and more a story of discovery. I loved it and I love her books

Maria Elmvang says

I'll be the first to admit that Victoria Holt doesn't write great literature. Her stories are fluff - meant for entertainment and not much else. But so what? Once in awhile a bit of entertainment is all I really ask for in a book, and as such *Seven for a Secret* did a great job. The writing was tighter than I've seen in some of her other books and while somewhat contrived the plot wasn't altogether improbable and the ending very satisfactory.

It's not a book that'll leave a lasting impression on a reader, but if you need a bit of light literature to read by the pool or on a long plane ride, you could definitely do much worse than picking this one.
