



Let It Be Love

Victoria Alexander

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When *New York Times* bestselling author Victoria Alexander created the Effingtons, she introduced an irresistible clan. Now, meet her most unforgettable hero yet . . .

Dashing Jonathon Effington, the Marquess of Helmsley, has had more than one lady willingly fall into his arms. But he's so delicious none has ever complained at their inevitable parting. And while Jonathon's no stranger to passion of the flesh, his heart has remained untouched. Until now . . .

At each Christmas Ball, Jonathon selects a delectable lady to share the pleasures of the evening—after all, it's a holiday tradition! But he is shocked to discover that his choice is replaced by an enchanting stranger who surprises him with a proposal of marriage. Beautiful Fiona Fairchild is desperate—only a wedding will save her sisters and her inheritance. But Jonathon has no interest in marriage, and what starts as a shocking proposal turns into a scandalous proposition that might ruin them both . . .

Let It Be Love Details

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Patria says

This really should have been the 2nd to last book in the Effington series, and should have followed "A Visit From Sir Nicholas" because both stories happened around the same time and involves Elizabeth's brother, Jonathan. However, the reason that it was the last book is because Jonathan's friends are involved in the series that follows (Last Man Standing) where they make a wager on who will be able to avoid marriage for the longest period of time.

I enjoyed this story and it was cute but not as much as Prince Alexai's story. This one involved Fiona, whose fortune and dowry of her 3 sisters is contingent upon her marrying the American, "Mr. Whatshisname" as per her father's will (or any other acceptable man). Therefore, she heads back to England after an independent life in Italy to try to find a husband on her own before she has to do the inevitable and marry someone that she doesn't know. Oliver, her cousin, is one of Jonathan's good friends and thinks that they would be perfect for each other as Jonathan has always said that when he meets the right woman (free-thinking and spirited) that he will marry her right on the spot. Of course, this is not the case. Fiona proposes to him, he thinks it's a hoax, says yes, then reneges. But, he feels obliged to help her and they start to work together on an erotic book of sorts (her nude portraits and his words).

In the end, they end up together, Mr. "whatshisname" turns out to be quite dashing and helps out. So does Jonathan's old mistress and friend, the widow which will appear in the next book, Judith. All in all, a nice read.

Kim says

Same old, same old: enjoyable until the last 50 pages, when the dreaded last-minute-lovers-tiff-that-just-might-end-it-all saunters onto the scene:

HEROINE: You've LIED to me!

HERO: Yes, um, sorry, but I only did it 'cuz I loved you and I didn't know it yet.

HEROINE: I'm only an OBLIGATION to you!

HERO: No, not at all. I'm just, y'know, an idiot. Which I have, by the way, told you seventeen times in this novel. So you shouldn't be surprised, really.

HEROINE: I don't want to be an OBLIGATION, you dastard!

HERO: Uh...but I love you?

HEROINE: Get out! GET OUT!

HERO: *doesn't say anything about heroine's own flaws/overweening pride/compulsive fear/cold feet*

HEROINE: GET OUT!

HERO: *shuffles slump-shouldered away*

HEROINE: And DON'T COME BACK! At least, not until you've figured out some grand gesture to prove how perfect I am and how stupid you are.

HERO: *obligingly sets the stage for a married life of henpecked misery*

Why is it always the hero who's wrong? Why can't they both just be human beings from time to time, each imperfect in their own way, each willing to admit their flaws and forgive both one another and themselves? This sort of thing is what separates good romance novels from good bonfire material.

Sylvain says

Dashing Jonathon Effington, the Marquess of Helmsley, has had more than one lady willingly fall into his arms. But he's so delicious none has ever complained at their inevitable parting, And while Jonathon's no stranger to passion of the flesh his heart has remained untouched. Until now... At each Christmas Ball, Jonathon selects a delectable lady to share the pleasures of the evening-after all, it's holiday tradition! But he is shocked to discover that his choice is replaced by and enchanting stranger who surprises him with a proposal of marriage. Beautiful Fiona Fairchild is desperate-only a wedding will save her sisters and her inheritance. But Jonathon has no interest in marriage, and what starts as a shocking proposal turns into a scandalous proposition that might ruin them both.....

Libby says

Very mediocre offering. The writing was strong enough but the unappealing hero and the implausibility of several plot points made for a weak overall read. In another tale about a dead father manipulating his daughter's economic and marital future beyond the grave by making absurd demands in his will. Fiona must marry to ensure her inheritance and her sisters' dowries. Deceased papa also contracted marriage of Fiona to the son of a colleague. Desiring to avoid an arranged marriage and protect her funds, Fiona decides to offer herself in a marriage of convenience to Jonathan a young, ne'er do well Marquess. Fiona has been secretly smitten with Jonathan since she observed him and his amour de nuit in mid Christmas Eve tryst. Yes. Jonathan is famous for his decade long tradition of allowing one lucky lady to screw him in a library on Christmas Eve. Yay. Nothing says heartwarming holiday cheer like a traditional Christmas Eve screw. And just so we know how special it is, no Christmas Eve repeats are allowed. With this kind of reputation, is it hard to imagine finding Jonathan unappealing? This is just the beginning. Jonathan is an adult man with the emotional maturity of your average 13 year old. He is lacking in character and character development. He agrees to a marriage and then reneges. To redeem himself, Jonathan engages Fiona in a ridiculous scheme that involves him writing erotica, her illustrating his stories, and the subsequent publication of this masterpiece. Somehow, we are to believe that Fiona is so stupid she would actually believe that a fortune could be made from publishing one book. Give me a freaking break. Also, this is two decades into the reign of Victoria. Long gone were the hedonist days of Georgian society and the high living Regency period.

Tracy says

It was a drag. It would have been better if it were shorter by a hundred pages or so. Men don't get together for drinks and talk about love. The romance between Fiona and Jonathan was a bore and so was their awful one time lovemaking.

It was good enough to finish, but not good enough to care about reading the rest of the series.

Natalie says

A pretty great Romance Novel. Just what I needed to escape the stresses of the holidays for a few hours. Funny in parts, silly in others, good characters, and just Christmasy enough without being completely cheesy. I think I'll read more by this author!

Pton says

This series started off so promising with Wedding Bargain. I thought it was funny and clever. And so I was looking forward to reading the series and purchased a few of them. Unfortunately, none of them have come up to par with the first and all have been a bit unexciting to read.

nssa says

It was indeed funny. I love Fiona. She knows what she wants.

Mashaël says

I really liked this romance novel, it was fun and exciting and most of all, the characters acted more like real people than in any other romance novel I've ever read. Most romance novels have a point at which you know the heroine is about to succumb to the hero for no real reason when if she had a brain, she wouldn't. As I read this, that point came up and just as I'd sadly resigned myself to it, I turned the page to find her refusing him, giving sensible reasons, and going straight home. I was dumbstruck and yet this novel isn't unromantic at all, it's just that the character motivations for the things they do are actually smart.

Kate says

While I enjoy that the heroes in Victoria Alexander's books tend to be emotional bumblers for the most part, I did not at any point believe that Jonathon read like a 32 year old Victorian man. This was complicated, as it usually is in Victoria Alexander's books, by a rational female character, in this case even more so because Fiona was honest about her feelings hopes, and fears from the very get go (something which hasn't happened in any of the other Effington books I've read). I was glad, at least, that it wasn't a willful misunderstanding that provided conflict, that there was in fact a lie and some justified anger.

I also have to say, having read all 11 of the Effington books pretty much in a row, they are deeply, deeply derivative, repetitive, and formulaic. Which wasn't as frustrating as I expected it to be, but it is definitely noticeable. It makes me glad Victoria Alexander has taken such a long break from this world/these characters, even though there are so many background characters whose stories I want (she writes amazing background characters), and I have to wonder if they'll ever be written.

Maura says

Jonathan Effington has been saying that if he meets his perfect woman, stubborn, willful, beautiful and passionate, that he'd marry her on the spot. So it's a bit of a surprise to him when he encounters said perfect woman and she asks him to marry her. Thinking it a hoax, he says yes, but then begins to wonder if it wasn't serious and finds that all along, he's been lying to himself and that he's not ready for marriage. Fiona is less than happy when he revokes his acceptance because she has to marry before her dead father's arranged husband shows up and she has to marry him. She'd like to be financially set before he shows up so she can refuse him and that means either marriage to a man of her choice or coming into money some other way. Jonathan, feeling responsible now that he got her hopes up, agrees to help her out.

This book came down to a matter of preferences. It was a good, solid story and was, at times, enjoyable. Although I didn't care for the heroine's lack of modesty regarding her appearance - it walked the border between self-confidence and smug arrogance - I did like her. She was a woman who knew what she wanted (although she could change her mind in a heartbeat) and was not afraid to go after it. On the whole, she was a strong heroine and she deserved a better hero. For all that the Effington's churn out strong heroines, it seems they turn out foppish heroes. Here's a guy with no passion who is pretty much duller than a butter knife. He came across as quite bland. He becomes tongue tied and idiotic in the presence of his perfect lady, often saying the wrong thing, but in this case it isn't all that endearing (as would be the case with a geeky hero). He is in all other ways a confident, self-assured hero supposedly, but all we see is a guy who makes rather stupid and sometimes selfish decisions. I wasn't impressed with him. I actually liked it when the three teenage sisters put him in his place for his renegeing on his promise. And perhaps the fact that they were able to make him feel sheepish is why I couldn't respect him. I'm not sure what the heroine saw in him except maybe a malleable husband.

Jessi says

Every year at the family Christmas Eve party, Jonathon Effington sets up an assignation. This year is different. This year, Fiona Fairchild has talked Jonathon's assignation into letting Fiona take her place. See, Fiona's father set up a will whereby, if Fiona doesn't marry, neither she nor her sisters will get their inheritance. An old romance trope, but it's okay. When Jonathon sees Fiona, he is immediately attracted to her, but he believes her to be an actress sent by his friends. When she proposes, he accepts thinking it is a hoax. However, he soon realizes that Fiona is actually the cousin of a good friend.

The next day, Jonathon rushes over to his friends house to rectify the error, but Fiona is not anxious to let him escape. She can't disappoint her sisters and she had also had a crush on Jonathon years ago so she thinks this might be fate. Both Jonathon and Fiona's cousin, Oliver, offer to pay the girls' dowries, but Fiona is not interested in being the poor relative.

Instead, Oliver and Jonathon come up with a plan to give Fiona money without her knowing that it comes from them. They will take her (nude but not really naughty) paintings, pair them with a story that Jonathon will create and tell Fiona that they are selling the book.

As they create the book together, Fiona and Jonathon (of course) fall in love. But Fiona finds out the plan and is offended... *offended*. She decides to marry the man that her father originally set her up with, create a business relationship that will last long enough to get her money, and then divorce him. But Jonathon manages to convince the prospective groom that Fiona and Jonathon should be the bride and groom. The two marry and live happily ever after.

Amanda says

I felt the need to open an easy romance after some of the heavier stuff I'd been reading lately, and on a whim, I picked this book up from the library.

Among a group of young bachelor's in England, Jonathon Effington is known for his annual Christmas Eve tryst, as well as his lack of desire to get married. That is, until he's propositioned by Fiona Fairchild, the cousin of his close friend, and a young woman in a dilemma over her father's will: she must marry if her dowry AND the dowries of her stepsisters are to be released from the estate.

Though he finds her intriguing, Jonathon maintains that he is not ready to be married. Determined to continue to help her though, he formulates a fake partnership in which he will write erotica and she will supply the drawings for which she has a talent. Keeping from her his true intentions, he puts them in a position of high sexual tension, flirtation, and the passion that his friend's maintain he's never had before.

If you're not a fan of romance novels, you obviously are not going to be a fan of this book, as it follows the basic romance formula: handsome man meets charming woman, and through many misunderstandings, prideful mistakes, a lot of kissing and fondling, and usually some other dramatic crises, they still end up together as soul mates.

Even though the formula is common and simple, it's still fun to read and this book attests to that. It's quick paced and witty, with banter between the characters that is hard not to enjoy. There were a few parts that made me laugh out loud. And as a romantic, I can still get that little flutter at the end of the book when the hero and heroine end up together.

A good book for romance lovers, but be warned if your a purist when it comes to book series, this is number 11 or 12 in a collection that centers around the same family. You don't have to have the previous knowledge of the other books though in order to enjoy this one.

Tory Michaels says

If I weren't afraid of alcohol poisoning by the end of Chapter One, I would do a drinking game with this Author's books. The rules would be simple: every time a character murmured, muttered or spoke under their breath, take a shot. Since pretty much every page has one (or more) of those phrases I'd be trashed in no time.

That said, this was a decent enough story. Will continue reading her despite her over dependence on certain phrases.

Quinn Fforde says

Very funny dialogue
