



## The Real katie Lavender

*Erica James*

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## **A secret that changed everything...**

Katie Lavender has always thought she was pretty unshockable, until a year after her mother's death she receives a letter from a solicitor telling her that the man she thought was her father, in fact wasn't. Her real father, a man named Stirling Nightingale, has for years been building a trust fund for her. And now she's of an age to collect it.

But Katie's not interested in the money. She wants to know about the man instead. So decides to do some snooping. She tracks him down to a beautiful riverside home on the night he's hosting a birthday party for his ninety-year-old mother. And as she's hovering outside, Katie is mistaken for a replacement waitress - an opportunity just too good to miss. And so Katie discovers that the Nightingales are far from your normal family...But what makes a normal family anyway?

## **The Real katie Lavender Details**

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Author : Erica James

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## From Reader Review The Real katie Lavender for online ebook

### Dale Harcombe says

Twelve months after her mother's death, which occurred not that long after her father's death, Katie Lavender receives an unexpected letter from a solicitor that leaves her questioning all she ever believed about herself and her family.

In true Erica James tradition this is a joyful read about family and with a touch of romance thrown in. I liked the character of Katie and also of Cecily, the wise elderly matriarch of the Nightingale family. Any family would, I think appreciate a grandmother figure like Cecily. I also liked Pen, Cecily's daughter in law and Pen's son Lloyd.

I wasn't as keen on Stirling, Cecily's son, and thought in many ways he was rather weak. I liked Katie's friend Tess but her brother Zac was a cliché. However he is not a major character in the novel so I tended to ignore him. Other characters in the novel are definitely unlikeable and had me wanting to hit them, but that was exactly how the reader is meant to respond. Even Stirling at times produced similar feelings in me.

Although I would classify this as a light read, it still manages to cover such issues as family secrets, suicide, forgiveness, unconditional love, adultery, what constitutes a family, friendship, and of course a romance.

I didn't think there was an Erica James I hadn't read so was delighted when I discovered this one. Some of hers I have liked better than others. This one didn't disappoint. It was exactly what I was looking for at the time.

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### Jocelyn (foxonbooks) says

This endearingly silly novel was a romp through the life of Katie Lavender, a girl whose life is turned upside down when her real parentage is revealed. Katie doesn't know how to react to her new dad and his large, posh, dysfunctional family, but then the family hardly know what to do with Katie, either. Not something I'll remember for long, but perfectly entertaining and an easy holiday read.

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### Bertha says

Een super gaaf boek om te lezen. Dit gaat over familie, vertrouwen, liefde, en eerlijkheid. Mooi omschreven hoe een affaire van 30 jaar geleden na veel verdriet en pijn toch tot een mooi eind kan komen.

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### Sandy says

Very enjoyable easy read.  
Believable characters and well written.

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### Marie Godley says

Someone lent me this book to read and I'm glad they did,I couldn't put it down. It was easy to read with an

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interesting story line and okay I figured the love interest out before it happened but that's fine by me.

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## Maia says

Ok, this is certainly not the kind of book I read, much less one I'd normally want to comment on - I picked it up at the airport, for my flight to the UK to see family. I've read one or two other Erica James novels, all pretty similar but pleasant in a mild, good-natured slightly too sugary and simplistic way. I'd read these books, usually at airports or planes or trains or, maybe, sunbathing on holiday - then promptly forget all about them. Period.

But this one is staying with me -- and annoying me. Not because it's especially bad or even worse than any other book of its sort (it isn't -- they're all alike) but because the absurd, stranding suspense of disbelief soap opera cliches, one piled atop the other relentlessly, simply got to be too much, to the point that I actually found myself, astounded, flipping pages as I scanned as quickly as possible to the end of the story in a useless attempt to see if, at some point, the author would redeem herself. And nope, she never did.

Every character is cliché, as is every single storyline, bar none. Not only clichés -- annoying, unpleasant clichés. Including the absurd fake names.

The lonely, alone Orphan Annie-Katie (complete with "hated" flame-red hair -- hated though secretly made "special" by it! Oh yes, because red-haired people are Special!!) is called by a kindly, sympathetic solicitor who has a bombshell to drop - one that will, of course, save Cinderella from doom and loom. Our Plucky Heroine has a Silly Job (of course), a Silly Boyfriend (of course), thus 2 easily discarded things as soon as her life turns around - she also has a Best Friend who mouths every Best Friend Between Bookcovers cliché known to man, and a Zanny Gay Friend, yay! Katie's backstory is also straight out of Cliché Land: Larger Than Life Mom (who had weight problems! Who loved gardens!) dies in a car accident and so patient, steadfast and true that it smacks of pastiche Dad knew all about his wife's indiscretion (to put it mildly) but was A-Ok with it all because, y'know, HE LOVED HER!! And y'know: love means never having to say you're sorry ... It also, apparently, means never having to expect others to say they're sorry too!! Love, as per Erica James' life philosophy, is seemingly an emotion that demands no morality, no self-discipline, no control and no observance of boundaries: it is a feeling that allows you to overlook every failing in the other person - thus never forcing the other person to finally f-g grow up.

So Snappy Mom leaves Orphan Annie -sorry- Katie! a letter detailing, you name it, that nothing is as it seemed to be.

And when Katie The Redhead thoughtlessly, ruthlessly, rudely and incredibly selfishly barges into her new family unannounced, all mayhem breaks loose -- to the tune of ever-more clichés. So many that just when you thought you'd heard the last one, James Rams you in with yet another! The all-seeing, all-encompassing Maggie Smith ripoff Matriarch, a woman who dares to tell another woman she has no right to feel indignation or moral disgust at her husband's, the Matriarch's son's, infantile betrayal. Because, as we said earlier loves means... yeah, yay, yep. One gets the drift. If you truly, really, absolutely love him ... Then we have the ditzy with a heart of gold character who lost all interest in sex, and is ready to embrace her dead husband's mistress as her new BFF (yep, she loved him all right!). This woman was so downright stupid I wanted to reap into the book pages and shake her till her teeth rattled. And the philandering husband (with a name and last name straight out of a 60s Harlequin) all Chianti-loving and silver-haired, as cardboard as a UPS container, whom we are led to believe has been brilliantly successful for 30-odd years and yet just as his wife and kids discover his long-ago "mistake" (and she did arrive with Red Hair!) has zero self-control to the point that he immediately in one full scoop gets into bed with his dead brother's mistress. Now THAT 's clever! But it gets worse - because the story is presented as if this were an entirely understandable

development, as if his wife's horror and rage at this news were the problem -- not the lies and betrayal.

Ok - I'm not going to add anything more because 1) it's not worth it, 2) it makes me too annoyed and 3) I'm hungry...

Although, considering that the great majority of readers here has given it pretty high reviews, it does at least show that this writer has her audience down pat. And we'll, good for her ... I guess I'm just not the intended audience.

This makes it very clear why I will thankfully return to my usual reading, now.

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### **Ozone-nut/ Zoe says**

Poor, predictable, twee, trite, full of inaccuracies (by which I mean we are told facts which contradict facts we were given only pages earlier). Some people have rated this book very highly so there must be something to it, but I failed to see what.

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### **Shiva Patel says**

The Real Katie Lavender is a delightful story.

After losing both her parents, Katie discovers she is losing her job as well. It's been a year since her mother's death and a letter appears in the post. The letter is informing her to visit a solicitor about a personal matter. She is curious and intrigued.

At the appointment she reads a letter from her mother explaining her father is not her real father and she is now entitled to a trust fund.

Another letter is given to her informing her of her father's true identity, Stirling Nightingale.

Katie's life has turned upside down and she wonders should she find out who her father really is. Katie decides to drive to Henley to find out more information. She ends up being a waitress at her grandmother's ninetieth birthday party.

Stirling talks to her and wonders if they have met before. Even his mother thinks she is a delightful young lady. Her identity is discovered and this changes all of their lives forever. When Stirling's brother dies too he is torn with what should he do. Life is full of surprises and misunderstandings.

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### **Blodeuedd Finland says**

The book starts with Katie finding out that her dad was not her real dad. Her mother's letter explains it all, and now, does she want to find him? Well duh, the book is almost 500 pages of course she goes to find him and there is a lot of drama.

She meets a bitchy family, I mean seriously, they acted like 4 year olds. "My dad wont love me anymore!" Omg, pull it together, you are a grown woman! I get that it was done for drama but I wanted to slap those horrid siblings.

It really is a family drama and follows her "new" family and cousin's family. Things are happening, I will not say more there. But we get a short insight into everyone. They do have their issues.

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Katie has her own issues. Her job, her boyfriend that is pretty meh, being alone in the world with no family and then this big secret coming out.

Conclusion:

There is drama, there is romance and there is one messy family. I enjoyed it, even if I wanted to slap the S%tt out of a few people.

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## Gayle says

I love this author and this was definitely one of her best. Usually her books are about Cheshire and Derbyshire and that became more poignant to me when I moved to the area 5 years ago. This one is about Henley-on-Thames which is well-known to me from childhood but there was even a mention of Meganisi and sailing flotillas which are also very close to my heart!

The characters and the plot were extremely well-developed, so much so that you don't want to put the book down.

I hope I get a chance to meet the author again and tell her how much I enjoyed it.

Would definitely recommend for those who like this genre.

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## Jacqueline says

Oh dear. this was poor.

So many things didn't work for me in this story. The most irritating by far was the narration. There were pages upon pages of description and inner thoughts for every few lines of dialogue; so much, in fact, I found myself skipping over whole sections. The thing was, every character - from the older businessman to the younger artisan chap to the usual old person who speaks their mind - all seemed to speak with the inner voice of a middle aged woman.

Then there was the 'romance'. The build up was barely one chapter and then instead of building up the tension between the characters, there was a 'can I kiss you?' (and if you have to ask, the answer should be no in my opinion) and they were all loved up (although both 'thinking' as a middle aged woman as above). I've read every Erica James and enjoyed them, so this was a real disappointment.

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## Sam says

A chicklit - Within the first half dozen pages the reader is thrown straight into this story. It's quite fast flowing and unusually for me, I read this book within a couple of days - it had me gripped. I appreciated the way the Author understood the many feelings of bereavement. There are a lot of characters in this book, but I didn't get confused with who is who, which can sometimes be the case.

I was a little disappointed in what seemed like a rushed final few chapters. It was obvious she was tying up the loose ends - re characters changing their opinions for the sake of the end of the book.

This only negative wouldn't put me off recommending the book to other readers though.

## **Ciara Bardon says**

Not a great book.

The characters were rather one-dimensional - the bitter wife, the selfish son, the selfish daughter who turns into the unselfish daughter when her own child is born, the feisty straight-talking matriarch, the quirky friend, the gay hairdresser. They were all cliches.

The story wasn't super-interesting. It all worked out in the end but I didn't care enough about any of them to be that invested in the ending.

Not very well written either.

Two stars as I finished it to the end but maybe I should have given it one.

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## **Shafagh says**

I stopped reading at this:

"For instance Ian was a big U2 fan. Katie had never liked the band or their music. She especially disliked their constant save-the-planet posturing. Couldn't they do it quietly? Couldn't they save the planet without banging on about it? She should have told Ian this the very first time he had played one of their CDs. But because she hadn't, because she'd been too polite ten months ago when they'd met to be honest with him, he now believed her to be as big a fan as he was.

Honesty. It was the bedrock of a relationship. Of any relationship."

Our special snowflake can't listen to a CD cause the lead had said something about planet somewhere and she is too good for anyone that listens to it.

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## **Beth says**

I wasn't expecting to like this as much as I did. Thought it was a bit predictable, cheesy and unrealistic in places but I loved it !! A great easy read with characters I cared about

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