



Axel

Grace Burrowes

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Axel Belmont, though a wealthy and much-respected botanist, occasionally takes a turn serving as magistrate in his rural corner of Oxfordshire. When the owner of a neighboring estate is the victim of a homicide, Axel initially suspects the man's much younger wife, Abigail Stoneleigh, of committing the crime.

But then Abby appears to be in harm's way, and Axel's investigation uncovers longstanding deceptions aimed at cheating her out of wealth and happiness. The solution to this deadly puzzle remains elusive, even as Axel captures Abby's heart and surrenders his own. Axel is a fine investigator, a devoted father, a brilliant scientist, (and an excellent kisser), but will he solve the mystery before the villain strikes again?

Axel Details

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Author : Grace Burrowes

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From Reader Review Axel for online ebook

Susan Gorman says

The first chapter of Axel outlines the story and provides insight into the main characters of Axel Beaumont and Abigail Stoneleigh. Grace Burrowes does a fabulous job of weaving murder, mystery and romance in this novel. There are several concurrent minor plot threads in the novel which are effortlessly intertwined with the main characters actions. Axel has a different feel than the other books in the Jaded Gentlemen series because the element of suspense is felt throughout the entire book. As a reader, I needed to focus on each word in each scene so I would not miss a nuance or clue. Axel approached solving the murder using his observation skills and scientific knowledge. His expertise helped Axel sort out which clues would lead to the identity of Sir Gregory's murderer.

There are several villains in this suspenseful drama. Sir Gregory's true nature is disclosed as Axel investigates his murder. The author does a fabulous job revealing Sir Gregory's character and motivation as the investigation unfolds. Enjoyed the conversations between Nicholas, Matthew, Abigail and Axel which take place at the breakfast table and in the study. Matthew provides Axel with advice on how to approach interviewing the Stoneleigh servants. The discussions between Matthew and Axel provide the reader with insight into Axel's first marriage, the importance of Axel's work in his greenhouse and Axel's desire for the Oxford fellowship. Nicholas (my favorite Grace Burrowes hero) flirts with Abigail. The banter between the two motivate Axel to come to terms with his feelings towards Abigail and allows the author to add the element of romance to the story.

The romance between the characters evolves as the murder investigation continues. Axel is one of the author's longer novels. The length of the novel enabled the author to provide a novel which perfectly blends the elements of romance, mystery and suspense. I enjoyed this book very much and am hoping the author will write another romantic suspense novel very soon!

WhiskeyintheJar/Kyraryker says

3.5 stars

To blazing hell with what ladies did and did not do. With Axel Belmont, at least, Abby need not be a lady. She need only, finally, be herself.

This was a babbling brook read, the term I use to describe a slower moving or paced story with trying to leave out any negative connotations associated with "slow". Since I more often than not like to write up little reviews for books I read, I find it better to read one book at a time so I don't mix up characters or plots. I think this book would work better in a stop and revisit capacity, instead of the storm through method I have. Burrowes excels in emotions, subtle, blatant, fast, and slow, her words and phrases are able to reach my feels in ways other authors often try and fail at. The emotion between our hero Axel and heroine Abigail, feels so incredibly real; I was swept away into their lives and relationship. One way Burrowes accomplishes this is her talent for writing the minutiae of everyday life, it brings a legitimacy and palpable feel to her characters and stories but it also creates that slow or babbling brook feel. It was hard for me to stay with the pace if I read too many chapters in a row but taking longer breaks or reading a different story in-between I think would have helped with this.

I would almost call this a mixture of a cozy mystery and romance, Axel and Abigail are investigating characters and her late husband's life in hopes of discovering who killed him. The villain was not blatantly clear and Abigail's husband's life became quite the onion for them to peel. It was just a good solid story, characters and plot points made sense and were believable.

Burrowes books can get very over populated for me, but here, the focus is firmly on Axel and Abigail. Secondary characters from the previous books in the series and other series by Burrowes make appearances but they knew their role and only improved the story instead of overwhelming it; Burrowes amazing emotional writing was able to take center stage. Not to pigeon hole ages but I can see older, more mature readers really liking this, as it deals with two widowers and trials of life that only comes with experience. I can see the scenes and dialogue about when, how, and trying to move on in life after losing a significant other, really reaching some.

If you're looking for a story to really sink into with cozy mystery elements and deep emotions, then this would be a great pick. Axel and Abigail's relationship from budding to longing to inseparable will warm the coldest hearts.

Kat says

Normally I would find roses, glass houses and botanists boring, but not in the hands of Grace Burrowes. I was thrilled to have Matthew and Wee Nick make an appearance in this book, too. Axel and Abigail both deserved a second chance at love (especially since Abigail never had a first chance!). They were neighbors before the murder of Abigail's husband but didn't really know each other. Axel's job as magistrate brought them together. It was lovely seeing Abigail come into her own after her disastrous first marriage. As with Matthew's story, the "whodunit" of Axel's story was a surprise to me. This book was a lovely blend of romance and mystery.

Jen (That's What I'm Talking About) says

Axel opens with Axel recently returning home from the holidays at his brother's home (Matthew, previous book). He is called to his closest neighbor's home in the middle of the night because Mrs. Stoneleigh found her elderly husband shot dead in his study. Presuming it was suicide, she's a bit shocked when Axel, the neighbor and Magistrate, tells her it was murder.

To keep her safe from potential threats, Axel invites Abby to stay at his home while he solves her late husband's murder. Soon the pair strike up a genuine friendship and uncover several crimes committed by the late Stoneleigh himself. With propriety saying they should stay apart, can Abby and Axel accept their love and move forward?

Axel is the third book in the Jaded Gentleman series, but the fourth I've read. I don't know if the formula of the books (unconventional woman, jaded gentleman) started to wear on me or if it was just this story, but I didn't find Axel to be as engaging as the other three books. I did enjoy that the mystery opens this one. And what a mystery it is - murder! It lended a bit of urgency to the storyline. However, things really slowed down shortly after the start. While normally I enjoy the slower pace of the series, I got a bit frustrated with this one. At only a third of the way into the story, I was able to see the foul play afoot, and I just want the story to move forward. Unfortunately, Axel has a way of giving extra insight and taking a meandering path to make his points. Additionally, the climax of the mystery was overly complicated and unnecessarily drawn-out.

Mr. Langton's performance was once again perfect in tempo and cadence for the story at hand. However, I noticed a distinct change in the voices of both Matthew and Sir Nick, and although those characters are found only in supporting roles, I was annoyed every time their parts came up in the story.

Overall, Axel is a good story, albeit a bit long and drawn-out. After listening to four books, the series has run its course for now. (I started with book 4 of 4). Although each had a unique story, the formula was very much the same. The long, drawn out pace of this one got to me at times. But I genuinely enjoyed both Axel and Abby. I loved their dialogue and joint discovery of love and pleasure. The mystery of who killed her husband and why was a little too convoluted and led to some of my bother.

My Rating: B/B-

Narration: B/B-

Stephanie says

A Rose by Any Other Name: Axel by Grace Burrowes

?<http://fangswandsandfairydust.com/201...>

It's weird how some books can bug me and others delight and satisfy these past few weeks I had one that really bugged me and one I loved: AXEL, by Grace Burrowes, was marvelous. I kept thinking I was listening to a book by Georgette Heyer whose work I really love. While this has the feel of Heyer in many respects it is somewhat steamier. Burrowes writes some explicit sex scenes but they aren't vulgar at all. At no point did I feel I would be embarrassed if someone else saw what I was reading.

James Langton's narration certainly added to the pleasure of reading the story, it's a nice speaking voice and very genteel. I have heard his work several times and get a distinct feeling for each character. For a secondary character, I have an idea of Axel's friend, Nick, I have a definite image in my head of a lassitudinous actor from my younger days: devastatingly handsome, and leonine wearing a Byronesque shirt and long flowing hair, not Fabio, If only I could remember who.

I enjoyed the mystery too, and I was only a little ahead of the sleuths in discovering "who" killed the victim, but not at all for the "why." The real mystery was that no one had killed the creepy criminal sooner.

Even with the mystery there's a real romance here, with real "swoon-worthy" actions that would make it almost impossible for anyone to not feel all "the feels." The characters come together nicely and seemingly over time. The timeline develops a fluid nature here as the weeks mentioned by the writer in discussing the couple seem like months. Axel's career as a botanist working to create a thorn free rose that smells and looks good is a metaphor for seeking romance all on its own. He brings Abigail roses all the time. See? Swoony!

While the research seems good, I found Axel's liberality in allowing Abigail latitude to find herself a trifle too modern. Of course, we only hear, usually, about the restrictions on women, but we know that is a generalization and there must have been some men with more enlightened minds.

My point is that it is a rare book that sets me up with such a clear image of the characters, good relationship development, and with a plot and narrator I enjoy. If you're a fan of Heyer, or just want a splendid Regency Romance AXEL is the one at the top of my recommended list.

Mel says

I really dislike the slap dash way Grace Burrowes puts together her series. I read this because I enjoyed Mr. Belmont and his boys in an earlier book, Virtuoso. The romance in #3 was lovely, but I hated the murder mystery. It was a nasty journey that almost ruined my pleasure reading Abigail and Axel's love story. I also missed the boys and god I'm tired of Wee Nick. Also what is it about American authors who use the name Abigail for their heroine? English Georgian and Regency era used that term for a ladies maid and would not have named a daughter Abigail. Drives me crazy, but they all do it.

Jan says

Yesssssssssss. Another winner by Grace Burrowes. I love her writing. I don't know how to describe her voice, except that I'm sure I'd recognize it if I read one hundred 'anonymous' books! It's unique and original and -well, one of a kind. Did I just repeat myself? Yep, but that's how much I adore her work.

Now, to wait for the next book in the series....sigh.

P.S. And I love the nod to Nick Haddonfield with Neils Haddonfield's appearance in 'Kiss Me Hello', her contemporary romance set in Maryland.

Caz says

Review to follow.

Christine says

An interesting change in direction for Burrowes.

I'm a long time fan Burrowes fan, but "Axel" was a little different from her usual...in a good way.

Widower Axel Belmont is content with his life -- he has his botanical studies and his sons, and his duties as magistrate aren't a hardship. Until Gregory Stoneleigh, the owner of a neighboring estate, is shot dead in his study...and it falls to Axel to try and identify the murderer. There are a few suspects, among them Abby, Gregory's widow. As Axel learns more about the dead man's unsavory behavior, he wonders if his instincts are correct; and as he and Abby grow closer, he's convinced that Abby's innocent. But if she didn't kill Gregory...then who did? As Axel attempts to unravel the mystery, he must also confront some unresolved feelings of his own. He loved his wife, but as his relationship with Abby deepens, Axel's ambivalence about his first marriage makes him reluctant to embrace his increasingly serious feelings for Abby.

It's really a nice mystery, along with a very sweet romance. It's the first time that Burrowes has done a real 'who done it' and it turns out very well. She keeps you guessing about the villain until the very end....and while the Big Reveal is a surprise, it's very much in keeping with the story, and doesn't disappoint.

So 4 stars for a nice love story that's seamlessly woven around a good old-fashioned mystery.

Wollstonecraft homegirl says

Read this ages ago, forgot to review it. The end of the year is getting frighteningly close and I promised myself I would review everything and yet there's a bunch of stuff I haven't. So I'll start here.

This felt a bit Burrowes by numbers, which is perhaps why I didn't put my thoughts on paper straight away. All the classic GB markers are here. Great language. Fantastic sense of time and place. Reluctant heroine. Too good to be true hero. Lovely, warm, pleasant romance. It was all a bit too easy for the two to overcome their animosity and fall for one another. It was sudden and as a consequence I wasn't as invested.

GB's focus in this book was more on the mystery element. It wasn't badly done, it just wasn't for me. I will chose the romance over that dramaz flim-flam any day of the week. I thought in this book, the former had been sacrificed a bit for the latter in terms of the artifice that went into them.

Still, Burrowes by numbers is still better than a lot of what's out there and this is 3.5 stars all day long.

Lu says

3,5 stars rounded to 4.

I've enjoyed this book very much, but I felt the end dragged on a little bit (or a lot).

I like Grace Burrowes , and I enjoyed to learn more about Matthew's brother Axel and his academic aspirations. Abigail was also an interesting heroine, betrayed and exploited by her older husband in a most dishonorable fashion.

Good story, could be a few pages shorter though ?.

Blodeuedd Finland says

When it comes to Burrowes books I do believe them when they fall in love. Because they fall slowly, and they fall for real. These are books where people talk, and hey, talk some more. No unnecessary silly drama either.

Axel is 40ish?, a widower, has 2 sons in school, loves his roses and his academic pursuits. He is also the magistrate. And really sweet too!

Abby is now a widow and well she blossoms during this book. I can not say more. I really grew to like her.

Her husband is murdered and Axel most solve the case. And it takes time. This is not a fast solving riddle. He puts in the legwork and grows to care for the young widow (and trust me you will be toootally fine with this, damn that husband of hers.)

There is also a lot of food eaten, sandwiches, scones, teacakes, I got all hungry when reading.

It really is a pleasant tale. That is the perfect word, a pleasant tale that I enjoyed.

Keri says

This was Grace's first attempt to make the mystery the focus of the story versus the romance. Overall she did a good job, although I did figure out who done it before the reveal. :-) The romance was also good and I just don't think Grace can write a bad book. Although don't try and figure out the timeline of her mens...you will get a headache. ;-)

Cherie says

June 2016:

Another great hero and this one grows roses! I loved every word. The timing was right, the romance was right, the emotions were right. Sigh.

September 2016: I'm reading all of Grace Burrowes in chronological order so have read this one twice this year.

August 2018: A little tough going while Abigail works through where she stands after she realizes her dead spouse bullied her and took options, friends and family away.

Glen says

[Why did the villain marry the heroine initially, and why did he attempt to murder her later? Why did he keep her in isolation in between? He apparently had no need for the money either time, and had no interest in her. (hide spoiler)]
