



Once an Innocent

Elizabeth Boyce

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"*Once an Innocent* by Elizabeth Boyce is a fantastic espionage romance that has some surprising action and gripping drama. If you are a 007 fan, you will be entertained by this novel." --*The Romance Reviews*

Jordan Atherton, Viscount Freese, returned from the Peninsular War scarred and ready to live as a dissolute bachelor. Society knows nothing of his secret occupation or of the obligation binding him to Lintern Abbey, the estate he loathes. When his Foreign Office superiors discover a network of French agents near his country home, Jordan quickly devises a house party scheme to cover the influx of his men hunting the enemy. With no time to lose and political stability hanging in the balance, Jordan turns to his friend, the Duke of Monthwaite, for help. Would the duke be so kind as to loan Jordan some ladies to populate his party?

When the women arrive at Lintern Abbey, it's the Duke's own sister, Naomi, who catches Jordan's eye. Despite her pleas to stay home, Naomi soon finds herself intrigued by the handsome and enigmatic viscount. But she quickly realizes this house party is not all it seems. The estate itself is neglected by its master, as is Jordan's ward, a mysterious Spanish orphan. When Naomi demands answers, Jordan distracts her by indulging their mutual attraction. With danger drawing closer, Naomi must uncover the truth and protect the home and people she's coming to love--including the maddening Lord Freese.

Once an Innocent Details

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From Reader Review Once an Innocent for online ebook

Sarah says

This is the sexiest of Boyce's first series, and its characters the most endearing. Naomi is all at once sweetly naive, impressively brainy, and surprisingly open to life's possibilities. Aunt Jeanine is the most fabulous supporting character I've encountered in a long time, and in this third book of the series, she gets the attention she has been demanding. Jordan, no doubt, is full of flaws, yet the reader is right there with Naomi giving in to his charms. Fans of Boyce and first-time readers alike will not be disappointed by this hot romance, full of Ms. Boyce's usual wit, wisdom, and fantastic wordsmithing.

Nessa says

DNF

THIS BOOK TRULY IS INNOCENT. IT WAS BORING AND I AM DISAPPOINTED.
I HAVE READ THE FIRST TWO BOOKS IN THIS SERIES AND THEY WERE ENJOYABLE.
THIS ONE LACKED CHEMISTRY BETWEEN THE CHARACTERS.
I ADMIT I WAS TAKEN BY THE BLURB, IT'S KIND OF LIKE TORTURED BEAST MEETS ICE
COLD BEAUTY. SO MUCH POTENTIAL.
BUT HALFWAY THROUGH THE BOOK, AND STILL NO EMOTIONS OR ENOUGH INTERACTION
TO INSTIGATE PASSION....GAH SAY NO MORE.

Julie says

My least fav of the 3 books but still a great series

Lady Day says

Those who enjoy HR with an associated suspense twist will like this book. Hats off to Elizabeth Boyce, she's an exceptional romance suspense writer.

Although, every story within the "Once an" series is entertaining, this character/plot driven novel is pulse pounding. I recommend reading the series in sequence. I feel, you might want to know about significant events the heroine previously suffered. In addition it will help with all the many characters that are introduced into this story. Prewarning: tons of secondary characters (approx. 50).

This story is well paced, it starts off slow, but interesting and then it becomes action packed with brawls, murders, and kidnappings. Guess again, when you think you have figured out the villain. IMO, because the story is more plot driven, the implementation of a mildly graphic love scene made better creative drafting. It solidified a gentlemen's honor of marriage.

For me, the memorable scenes came at the end of the novel. The Hero's proses of confessions and vows of commitments are eloquently written. All I thought was, I AM JEALOUS because my husband is not peotic.

C'est la vie!

If you like this series, I truly feel you will enjoy her new series, The Honorable. The first book, 'Honor among thieves' starts off with a serious thriller. I suspect, characters from the 'Once an' series will make cameo appearances.

Purple Iris says

I really enjoyed this book. I loved reading about Naomi and Aunt Janine. In fact, Aunt Janine's story might have been my favorite part of the book. It was incredibly sweet, yet the way it was portrayed seemed very true and not overly done. I also loved the development of various female characters: Naomi and Aunt Janine, but also the Viscount's stepmother and younger sister. I loved watching those relationships develop and the interactions between them. The scenes when they go into the village reminded me of Downton Abbey and that can only be a good thing.

I was not crazy about the hero though. It's not that I disliked Jordan. I just never felt like I knew him as much as the heroes of Once a Duchess and Once an Heiress. I also found the story about his young protégé distracting. That probably is more my failing than the author's. As I reading, I kept wanting to research the period since it's not one I know well, to find out what was going on in France at the time. So, I guess the story made me think too much and I was unable to completely escape in the romance. Not a bad "defect" for a book to have, I guess!

I did enjoy the story, and especially the characters I've gotten to know over the course of the trilogy. I'd definitely read another book where I got to see them again.

Debbie Hastings says

Liked it part of a series I am reading

Laura J Liberio says

Surprising

This story had some complexity to the characters and just enough romance to keep me interested. Naomi is no sappy, lovesick girl! She's smart, and has both emotional and mental energy. Jordan was a less predictable hero. I liked this couple, age difference didn't matter. Very entertaining!

Delabe says

Excellent conclusion to this wonderful series! Smart, creative, historically insightful, just as with the earlier books in the series, but also intriguing with suspense woven into the love and romance. A wonderful historically detailed story and rich, full characters throughout. I am only saddened by the thought that this is the last in the series! Here is to hoping we see more of Boyce's rich Regency world!

TJ says

After reading the first two in this trilogy, I had high hopes for Naomi's book. I absolutely adored her in those earlier books. Unfortunately this story didn't do it. I found myself bored and had to make myself keep reading through most of the book.

Near the end there is a sudden bit of action which finally picked up the pace and led to the final romantic conflict. Still, we never got to know enough of Jordan to actually make him real and Naomi, as well as Jordan, acted so out of character for the kind, proper, honorable people they were written to be that it all just left a bad taste. Overall the story was sadly predictable and very disappointing.

Katy says

I received this book as part of a Goodreads Giveaway.

I had never read any of Elizabeth Boyce's books before and this was the 3rd in a series. Once I went back and read the first two, the third made a lot more sense. Aunt Jeanine was finally given more time in the spotlight and while I originally didn't care much for Naomi or Jordan (who makes a totally out-of-left-field assumption about a girl he barely knows and lets this assumption color how he deals with Naomi), I grew to like them more. They had their typical couple conflicts that most books have, and Jordan is the king of dumb assumptions and miscommunication. Naomi's brothers were overprotective but in the end everything ended well.

Overall I enjoyed it, it was a light fun book.

Anne says

Lady Naomi is the younger sister of Marshall, the Duke who remarried Isabelle in book one of this trilogy. She is whip smart and has had a crush on her brother's friend, Jordan, Lord Freese since she was eleven. He has always treated her as a little sister to her chagrin, but when she is grown, she is sent to his estate, Lintern Abbey at her brother's request. She does not realize that Jordan is also intrigued by her, but he is embroiled in secret work for the government to keep Napoleon on his island and out of England's hair. This book had intrigue and mystery and a surprising twist at the end. Recommended.

Jonel Boyko says

Boyce returns to this brilliant series with yet another tale you won't be able to put down. She mixes suspense with romance, and some rakish actions to create the ultimate story of love against the odds. Her seamless storytelling with wrap you up in a world so unlike anything that we live today. The picturesque scenery in this novel allows you to travel across England alongside the characters.

The main couple in this novel may just be my favourite in this series yet. Combining a loyal yet headstrong heroine with an honest to goodness secret hero gives her readers a couple that will stand the test of time. Each is quite well developed individually, allowing you to understand where they are coming from. At the

same time, you can see them coming together, becoming a unit that works well together. Boyce also backs this up with a very memorable supporting cast, drawing you in and allowing you to feel like part of this large, extended family.

Boyce has definitely outdone herself here. This novel is the perfect escape from the everyday, complete with a love that will span the ages.

Please note that I received a complimentary copy of this work in exchange for an honest review.

Nat says

I started reading Historical Romance since I were a young teen and lately there's been an influx of disappointing stories or repeated ones where it flow into superficial and cliché, frankly I was becoming bore of this genre. So I was quit taken back by Boyce's "Once an Innocent", it was refreshing, witty and captivating. Writing style reminds me of reading some of my favorite HR authors like Kleypas, Garwood and McNaught whom many of you HR fans know have stopped writing books in particular genre so it was a joy to discover a new author who could bring me back to being 13 and day dreaming about life in the 1800's.

Tina says

Solid 4 Stars!!

I really liked this book. The plot was intriguing and I found myself unable to put it down especially the last 40%. I loved that we get a little bit of everything with this one... Suspense, action, romance, steam, angst and visits from past characters!!

I loved both Jordan (our hero) and Naomi (our heroine) they were awesome together! I've never read the historical version of the girl falling for the big brothers best friend. I really liked it.

My only wish is that there was more! The lack of an epilogue to see how all the couples from the three books end up later would have been the icing on a very yummy cake!!

Claire says

I received Once an Innocent as part of a Goodreads giveaway.

Jordan, Viscount Freese, is a secret agent forced to return to his ancestral estate as part of a covert mission. Under the guise of a house party, Naomi, younger sister of Julian's good friend, arrives somewhat against her will. Upon reacquainting herself with Jordan, who she last knew as a young girl, she finds herself drawn to him, and he to her. But as danger circles and Naomi's suspicion of Julian grows along with her attraction, matters come to a climax that leaves' the lovers' lives and relationship in danger.

Fun story, with mysterious, gothic elements. A shade darker than most romance novels, which I liked--sort of a cross between Jane Eyre and the Scarlet Pimpernel. Jordan and Naomi were both fine characters, and the sex was...hot. Really no other word for it. Worth a read--I know I'm interested to read the other (past and

future) books in this series in the future.
