



An Absent Wife

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The desertion of Lord Lysander Burton's wife had come as a complete surprise, even though he readily admitted that he'd never excelled as a husband. The death of the wife he'd ignored for close to a decade was a downright nuisance, making him further fodder for the gossips, and now a target for every designing matron in London.

In line with her consistent talent for being disagreeable, Lady Adele Warburton had run off with a lowly lieutenant, leaving safety and respectability behind, then died in a cholera epidemic in a far flung country.

In a last show of husbandly duty, Lysander decides to recover her effects, and grudgingly those of her lover, retracing the steps of the wife he'd barely known across half the world. But arriving in the mayhem of India, he finds that all is not as it should be.

An Absent Wife Details

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Ira says

I like this one too ♥?

And, another slow burn romance.

The heroine's tongue not as sharp as the heroine's from The Discarded Wife but she certainly is not a spineless girl! ?

The story started with the hero got a letter/information that his estranged wife and her lover, who left to India two years ago has died.

With a need for a closure, he was going there to retrieve her body. But, when he arrived there, he found out that she actually still alive and has gone somewhere! It took him almost a year to find out where she had been. The cheating wife has gone to Australia because she didn't want to return to England and see him again! Hah! ?

Oh, don't feel sorry for the hero, the bastard just deserves to get everything what was happening to him, he was a cruel man! ?

Okay, that's all, you should enjoy more without knowing much, what was going on:)
Read on! ?

♥?♥?♥?

LuvGirl says

3.5 stars

This was an interesting read. A Very unique book with a heroine that cheated after years of neglect from her husband. This is a trope I would not have read even five years ago but, I'm glad that I've broadened my horizons and opened my mind to reading this book. Not a bad read at all.

Writer says

Touching...

This is everything I could ever want in a book and so much more, it literally blew me away with it's mysterious, heart-wrenching, evocative and stunning story. I haven't read a book in a long time that surprised me as much as this did; usually you get an inkling of what to expect but the path this took was totally unexpected. Experiencing the emotions of the characters throughout the different events that took place felt completely real, I was drawn in from the very first page to the very end.

This is a story of forgiving, healing, love and there'll be like nothing you can compare it to. It started with feelings of regret and betrayal that surprisingly turned into a love story that is poignant and romantic. As in most romances, there is certainly no lack of misunderstandings between these two, Lord warburton and Lady

Adele, after years of separation, they unite together to overcome an event that has the potential to be life-altering. There is a small part that is suspense, but it is minute compared to the romance and the falling in love, I recommend this book highly, it is one of the most touching and beautiful tale that somehow leaves you feeling hopeful, that somewhere out there is a great man with a big heart and love to give, waiting just for you.... you just have to find your way to each other.

Darbella says

Just barely a 3 star for me. Well written, hero is just a jerk at the beginning. Heroine first encounter with sex is with her lover that she runs away with. Hero cheats so far all through their marriage, but for some reason once she "dies" feels the need to go collect her body and things . Weirdness.

However, by the end I have to reward the author for how hard he fought for his marriage. I wish the author could have explained better to me why the Heroine was in love for all these years with her husband who shelved her in the country and then spent most of his time in London with all that entailed. My understanding of her love is she fell in love when she met him because he was handsome. What I can not understand is why she really never fell out of love with him for awhile. However, well written with a very lovey epilogue plus the awakening by the hero kept this in my 3 star range.

Vellini says

It was refreshing to read a book where a cheater get a taste of his own medicine.

Julz says

This one needed a bit more love, so I decided to embellish my review a tad.

Ballsy story where the heroine ran off with another man...and actually had sex with him! The hero was the rich and powerful but neglectful husband who deservingly got publically humiliated when the unjustly scorned wifey took off with some lowly soldier, preferring to live in sin in another country than to remain in her lonely gilded cage.

Mrs. Ho' and her toy soldier supposedly die in a cholera outbreak (He really does croak. Poor dude got the shaft!) Putting the past behind him, our ahole hero went to get their effects but started playing the detective when her hairbrush was missing from her things (damn his intuition!) and the local funeral pyre boy related seeing a English women *alive* at the lieutenant's service. As it is in the way of fiction, he ended up finding the needle in the haystack halfway across the world and dragged said needle back for retribution.

However, on the way he got to know the special snowflake he tossed aside for the prize that she was and had to eat it at the thoughts of "his" woman making nasty with some other guy. Can I just say *ahhhh*? It was highly fulfilling to have the manwhore get a good dose of his own medicine. You just don't see that near enough. It made up for the little quirks that could be on the irritating side.

Downside was that this read like a self-published title that needed an editor but was otherwise quite good. *I*

liked it, anyway. Different spin on the modern historical romance.

Preeti ♥? (Romance She Reads) says

What a beautifully written book.

And I totally loved the story!

The author has a very simple understated style but she makes you experience all the hidden churning emotions so well.

A moc between a snobbish Lord and a trader's daughter. He ignores her (completely) for 6 years while going about his life as usual, mistresses included.

The h is a quiet and dignified woman who reacts as no other h has (and I applaud her for it!). She leaves him (without divorce) for a man who adores her and respects her. She moves with her Lieutenant to India, moving down considerably - both socially and financially. But she finds herself appreciated and loved for the first time.

All this happens in the past. The book opens when the H receives news that his runaway wife and her lover had died of cholera in India. Uncharacteristically he decides to go and collect her remains, and so travels to India but he's shocked to learn that his wife *may not* be exactly dead...

And so when he does find her, she has no intentions of returning to England.

He 'collects' her and gets on a ship back to England.

The story shows how they perceive their past and how a future together seems impossible. The mcs barely interact or converse but you can sense their strong subterranean emotions so well. He never got over his resentment at having to marry beneath him and also for having to give up the girl he wanted to marry. He finds his wife dull and unexciting unlike the gay and witty women he prefers. While he may be charming and courteous to others, he is dour and resentful in her presence.

The return to England was a journey in more ways than one!

Problems/Comments

*His grouse that a noble marrying into trade (like he had to) is looked down upon is never quite borne out in the book. He seemed to enjoy a normal social life.

Also when the said trader's daughter is introduced into society by him in the present (after acquiring further notoriety as a runaway wife), she is quite normally accepted by the ton!

In fact I'd have found few whispers and cut directs more plausible.

*I'm still a bit unsure whom the h lost her v card to? The husband or the lover? First we are told that the only touches she has had from her husband were when he handed her in carriages, and then she also says that she got tired of keeping her chastity and finally found a man for herself. Later during a bedroom scene, the H thinks he's never seen her in a state of undress except on the wedding night when he had been too drunk to notice. The later 'thoughts' are more settling but still it's never explained clearly.

*When at the opera, they meet a woman and the h realizes that this was the woman her husband had loved and lost, she (the h) starts crying silently while watching the opera. He asks if they should leave and they do. I wanted a scene/conversation between them about this later but doesn't happen.

*Much as I enjoyed the infrequently dialogued writing for most parts, I wished for more interaction between the two at times - especially later.

Also the author explains the situations rather than running us through them. Many times one feels left hanging and wondering.

But in all a simple yet fulfilling story!

Tanja says

Reread. 3 stars this time bc horrid, horrid hero. Just why was she in love with him for years before the drama and thus book started?

Lyuda says

A very powerful story of regrets and second chances reminding me of another great read "Ravishing the Heiress" by Sherry Thomas. The story starts as Lord Lysander receives a letter that his estranged wife and her lover died from cholera in India. He is relived but also wanted a closure. Lysander decided to travel to India to retrieve his wife belongings even though her body was cremated. When he gets there, a certain sequence of events lead him to suspicion that his wife is not dead. Throughout the story we get flashbacks to his unhappy marriage. Lysander, reluctantly entered the marriage as it was either MOC or disinheritance. It is not clear to me (that is why 4 starts) why the heroine, Adele, agreed to marry obviously unpleasant hero who had no regard for her and only distaste. Yes, she was in love with his looks and title was not to be amiss but she didn't appear to be shallow .

Yvette says

The hero, is forced to marry a woman who he thinks is beneath him. She comes from money but she has no title so that makes her unfit in his eyes. His father tells him he has no choice, he needs to marry in order to save their family and way of life, since they are pretty much broke. Heroine's father wants a title to go with his money, so he tells heroine she has to marry hero, she accepts with no argument because she always thought they could make it work if they both tried.

Thing is though, the hero was in love with another woman when he is forced to marry the heroine, so he resents the heroine from the moment he finds out he is to marry her. He leaves her on their wedding night (i'm assuming since it never actually says that they didn't consummate their marriage).

For 6 years the hero pretty much ignores her. She's stashed away in the country house while he's out whoring around in the city, acting as if he has no wife. Until he receives a letter notifying him that his wife has died in India due to a cholera epidemic, (her lover who she ran off with, has also died). The hero is upset because her dying has ruined his plans to avoid the other matron's who will now be holding out hope he will marry again. (He's just a gem, huh?) So, he comes to the decision to go to India and to gather her possessions and of those of her lover as well. He feels it's the least he can do since she was technically his wife. (he's so romantic ::eye roll::)

Long story short, his wife faked her death to put them both out of their misery. She doesn't want to go back to being an ignored wife and he never wanted her to begin with, so hey! let me fake my death. She would have gotten away with it too if he hadn't have guessed to where she would have run off, to after correctly

assuming he was being lied to about his wife's death.

Hero rapes heroine. He sees her after 6 years of ignoring her as his wife, and all he can see when he looks at her is her sleeping with another man, her cuckolding him for someone else and making him the laughing stock among his peers/friends. So without further ado, he chokes her and rapes her.

I didn't understand why the hero finally realized he loved her, (towards the end of the book no less). There wasn't much dialogue between them, and it just didn't feel so natural to me. It was a good premise but not well executed. I felt like some parts were missing. The author is a good writer so that's why I feel it could have been better. I'd like to read more from this author and see how her other books turn out.

Cheesecake says

the first 10% you will hate Lysander for his callous disregard of his wife. He has just received news of her death at the start of the book and all he can think is how it will put a crimp in his lifestyle.

Lysander the callous fool and Adele who is no longer his doormat.

Lysander had ignored Adele for almost the entirety of their 6 year marriage, because he was pissed that he had been forced to marry her for money. Adele had hopes of them learning to care for each other but they died a long painful death in the wake of his willful ignorance. So after 5 years she meets an army man who cares for her and they run off to India together. It opens her eyes to life and all the things she has been missing. Because back then, a wife was severely limited on what she could do for entertainment without a proper male chaperone (husband or relative).

Lysander feels it his duty to go retrieve his wife's affects after he was told that she died of Cholera. But once he gets to India he begins to suspect that she isn't actually dead.

When he catches up with her in Australia, he is so livid that the first thing he does is rape her on the desk in the schoolroom where she teaches.

He does manage to apologize half-heartedly. By now I am a quarter into the story and feeling pretty sorry for Adele but also wishing she would stand up to him more.

It takes time over their travels back to England for them to finally (after 6+ wasted years) to get to know each other a bit better. Lysander starts to notice things about her almost against his will. He begins to see her from the perspective of others and realizes he never actually knew her. And yes he does begin to admit that most of the reason she ran off with another, was his fault.

At the same time, Adele starts to stand up for herself.

SOooo for the first 3rd of the book the well written characters and settings kept the book interesting and then the growing tension and intimacy between the MCs pulled me in. Lysander is reticent to tell Adele what will become of their marriage, so she asks him for a baby. That if she has a child she will be content whatever the future brings.

Does he redeem his sorry ass? I think so, although I wish I'd seen it tested under difficult circumstances. He will never be a favourite H of mine. Still, *the epilogue was wonderful*.

Adele does a fine job standing up for herself in the last 3rd of the book.

My fave quote from the end taht shows how much he has changed/grown/fallen in love;
"Are we ready to start making our way back to England?"

"I don't know," Lysander said, looking away. "I want us to be thoroughly bonded before we go back." Adele smiled and stroked the side of his head with her palm. "I don't think that is an issue." Lysander, "I just want your memories of us being together to be stronger than the memories from before."

safety is questionable but not bad (view spoiler)

AN angsty read and I did feel a bit weepy here and there. It took Lysander forever to stand up for his wife against Evie and his friend's cattiness towards her.

MissKitty says

This was an easy book to rate, it was well written and very compelling so it deserves my 4-start. However, it is a hard story to review. It deals with cheating on both sides, but we know this from the blurb so it's not a spoiler.

What really compelled me to read this (I was very intrigued) was that, how often had I read a romance book where I wished a cheating a**hat of a Hero gets his comeuppance and here it finally happens!

The aristocratic Hero had been compelled by his father to marry the heroine who is from a very wealthy but merchant class background. The family is in financial straits and needs the cash infusion. Since this prevents him from being with the girl he loves, he resents the marriage from the start. However, he does his duty, leaves his wife to rusticate in the country and continues his bachelor existence (with mistresses and all) for the next 6 years! It's understood that he isn't particularly mean or cruel to her, he just completely ignores her existence (which is bad enough).

He gets the shock of his life when his circumspect, quiet, and as he thought, boring wife runs off with a lover, a lowly lieutenant, giving up social position and a life of luxury to live with him in India! Well yeah!!! Hurray for her!

The story actually starts when the husband gets word about the death of his errant wife and her lover, and some delayed sense of duty compels him to go and retrieve her personal effects. In the course of doing this he finds out that, it seems only the lover passed away and his wife may probably still be alive. So he goes searching to solve the mystery.

SPOILERS:

Obviously she is not dead and actually tried to hide from him, but he finds her and brings her back. The rest of the story is how they must now deal with each other. It's a new experience for them, since they've never spent time together and are finally obliged to do so on the voyage home by sea. The husband is forced to change his impression of his wife, and to see her as other men do. It's quite amusing how he finally acknowledges her attractiveness to the opposite sex and how he even worries that, though she looks respectable, she's actually capable of looking out for another lover. (OMG, I loved it)

The bulk of story is told from the husband's point of view so it's interesting and amusing to see how his perception of his wife changes and how surprised and intrigued he is by her. The husband is not a very charming character. I got the impression that he is basically non-confrontational so he puts off decisions that he finds unpleasant. His wife thinks he is punishing her by not telling her his intentions as to her fate when

they get home, but really it just because he doesn't know what to do.

Although the cheating aspect is a catalyst that drives the book in the start, it isn't actually the central theme. The historical time period contributed a lot to our understanding of the main characters and it made the circumstance acceptable. This was a time when husbands were dominant and wives had to obey. Though both characters conform to these traditional roles, it's not overdone and is able to drive the story, through the actions of the characters. The husband has to answer for a lot of neglect and he slowly comes to this realisation. It also makes it easier to accept since any relationship between the couple only really starts after the husband finds his wife and they start their journey home.

I won't belabour the review with more details since the other reviewers have already done an excellent job. This is a slow burn romance and a second chance for a couple that almost didn't find each other.

Dyndyn says

This is a poignant story about missed opportunities, regrets, loss, forgiveness, acceptance & love.

This was an unusual historical romance. It opens with Lord Lysander leaving for India to collect his deceased wife's belongings. She ran off with her lover & died of cholera there. It turned out she did not die after all. She made it seem that way to escape the empty life she led with her husband. Lysander found out & dragged her all the way back to London. On the return trip, he discovered that Adele, the wife he ignored for nearly a decade was vibrant, beautiful & very different from how he perceived her.

I draw the line on adultery & cheating but I might just make an exception with this book. Shocker, I know!!!

Theirs was a marriage in name only. Right from the start, Lysander was prepared to hate & ignore Adele since he was 'forced' to marry her. He married her & abandoned her right after their wedding. They never had a marriage. It was all a cruel & painful pretense. He carried on with his mistress & forgot about Adele.

Adele, on the other hand, fell in love with her husband. She tried everything she could to make him notice her, to be the perfect wife but he doesn't see her. She led a sad & empty life hidden in the country house. She hoped & hoped for years for him to love her in return but it never happened. Eventually, she came to terms with her lonely existence. She met & fell in love with Samson, a lowly lieutenant, who loved her & gave her his all. Gave her what she deserved to have. However, it was short-lived because he died while taking care of her when they both contracted cholera.

Lysander got to know Adele on their way from Adelaide to London. He slowly realised how blind he was all those years.

He couldn't figure her out_ too innocent for a villain, too guilty for an innocent.

"I'm sorry it took me so long, but I'm not letting you go now. You're my wife, Adele, and you belong with me."

"I am asking you to give this everything. I'm asking you to trust me, and I fully acknowledge the past and all the mistakes I made. But I want us to be together properly. Please be my wife, Adele."

So, why not a 5? I, personally, like more interaction & conversation. I like to be in the situation with the characters. This was more narrative than I prefer. I'd like to experience things rather than read about it after it has happened. Plus, I didn't fall in love with Lysander. I just couldn't connect with him fully.

Despite that, this was a really good read. It was moving with solid, if not flawed characters.

*** Thanks, Mila, for this book!***

Gena says

[rapes her and she's fine with it (only thought was well, he's her husband and she was surprised it happened as he always seemed indifferent to her, wtf?? (view spoiler) then they sail back to England with very little dialogue and decide to live happily ever after. (h

Jultri says

4.25/5. This book is reminiscent of *The Marriage Bed*, *A Duchess in Name* and *Unforgivable* in terms of the angst-driven plot based on an estranged married couple. In this one, the titled impoverished groom was also forced to marry a heiress in order to save his family from ruin. Lysander, Lord Warburton, left his young bride at his country estate pretty much soon after their vows and did not really spare her much thought for the next 6 years as he cavorted around London with friends and various mistresses. It isn't until the scandalous news of her running off with a lieutenant to some far away place that he is most unpleasantly reminded of her existence in the most insulting way. To make matters worse, within months of her shameful disappearance she and her lover have the temerity to succumb to cholera in India, necessitating him to do the proper husbandly duty of travelling there to bring back her remains and effects. (Yes, he did have excessively uptight notions of expected gentlemanly behaviour, which did not include fidelity to his wife) He is thus most put out to realise upon his arrival there, that although her lover is confirmed dead and cremated, his wife apparently is very much alive and boarded a ship bound for Australia.

Adele has spent too many years withering away in the country while infatuated with her indifferent husband. Heartbroken when she finally realised that he was never going to come for her, her lonely spirit responded when another man finally gave her the care and affection she had been craving for. Now that she is on her own again, she is determined to never be engaged again in her gilded prison at her husband's estate. She moved to Australia to get as far away from there as possible, never expecting her reluctant husband to track her down and coerce her back to England. During their journey back, they are forced to interact for the first time in their marriage and when the initial blazing anger cools down, they slowly open their eyes and truly start seeing one another. As the attraction grows between them, so does the confusion and uncertainty regarding the fate of their marriage in light of such an open scandal and all the hurt and embarrassment they have wrought upon one another. Complicate that with Adele's quiet last and only request of Lysander - a baby.

Oh, the emotions, the tears! Yes, it's not perfect. There are some editing errors and a few anachronistic word choices. The dialogue can be a bit over-dramatic. Lysander was a pompous arse for much of the book, and then there was their brutal first confrontation in Adelaide (Aus), when he nearly forced himself on her in

rage. He did apologise immediately and was genuinely contrite. Their first intimate time together was not his finest moment either. *wince*

It had all happened so quickly; he felt that he hadn't even started accomplishing the things he wanted to—like a secret garden had been opened to him and he'd just rushed through it.

On the other hand, kudos to Lysander because despite his jealousy, he did not dwell on her affair but understood that his neglect and failures as a husband drove her to such actions. The author depicted his turbulent mind well.

He couldn't quite figure her out—too innocent for a villain, too guilty for an innocent.

Overall, this was a quick but emotionally intense book. There might be some triggers for people, and I can understand that it is not for everyone's taste. My first by this author and I'll be checking her out again for sure.

Lysander envied women's ability to claim headaches anytime they wanted, and were excused. Men couldn't claim a headache even if they were dying of typhoid. Because of this, he had to go back and sit through the torture of Mrs. Fulfer's recital until the bitter end.
