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The Visitor (English Garden, Book 3)



Synopsis

When Londoner Alexander Tate is thrown from his horse, his vision that suffers most. After placing patches over his eyes in hopes that rest will restore his sight, the doctor recommends that Tate leave the city to convalesce in the fresh air of the country. Tate's aunt Harriet offers to go with him to Collingbourne, where she meets the Steele family. Warm and caring, the Steele siblings are surprisingly generous to the newcomers. Tate doesn't need his vision to know that when this family reaches out, the unexpected is bound to happen. And happen it does when Tate finds himself falling in love. Just one question remains. Will one of the beautiful Steele sisters love him in return?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This novel was, unfortunately, the first and last book I read of the English Garden Series. I do not discourage against any of the other books, as I have not read them, nor do I discourage a reader from trying out Lori Wick. I am an avid reader of Christian fiction (perhaps TOO much!) and my rating is based off of similar books of Christian historical fiction. There were several things that encouraged me to give this novel a 1-star rating. First, there were a confusing abundance of secondary characters. One may argue that by reading the first two books, keeping track of the extra (often seemingly insignificant secondary characters) would have been easier. Of course, that is true, but Wick also never allowed a me to even get a glimpse of who these other people were. The book is noted by many reviewers as a "stand-alone" novel. It didn't feel like it, I felt like an outsider constantly looking in. The plot became fairly plodding and boring with little action beyond the

self-conscience struggles of the protagonist, Cassie. It's Cassie, I believe, that really failed this entire book for me. Wick fell into a trap that some authors (too often, Christian fiction authors) fall into - that being that their female characters are beautiful, pious, gentle and all-around perfect. Wick, though, gives Cassie one "fatal" flaw: she has red hair. Unfortunately, that is the main problem holding Cassie and Tate apart. Her hair. The novel is sweet, perhaps, and the idea of the plot (a young woman reading to a blind man and falling in love) is nice. But when one of the primary conflicts of the book arise from the color of Cassie's hair... well, I can admit that it doesn't make for the most thrilling or even self-reflecting read.

Once again, Lori Wick has provided a confusing story with many characters. Agreed, one "couple" can become tedious and a tad boring at times, but she shifts the action so many times in each chapter that I found myself turning to the front of the book to the cast of characters to confirm who they were! And I have read all of her books and am used to a big cast. The subplots were fine as subjects, but there were so many characters and so many story lines it was almost as if she couldn't come up with the main story and had to "fill" the gaps. In my opinion, her earlier work still outshines her more recent, more "mature" books with regards to plot development and execution, character development, character description, and just plain likability of the characters. I was soooo taken with the Donovan family in "The Californians" and the Cameron's in the "Fireside" series. I wanted their stories to go on! Even The Texas Trilogy left me wanting more of the life of the characters...but these "English Garden" characters leave me shrugging with indifference. Cassie and Tate are the main focus of the story (Cassie is the "Visitor") and they fall in love as she reads to him as he recuperates from an accident that has left him blind. Will he regain his sight? And if he does, will he still want Cassie, who doesn't see herself as beautiful as her sisters? Then there are Lizzie (Cassie's sister) and Moreland. Moreland is a friend of Lizzie's brother Edward, and she has loved him from afar. Moreland, blind to Lizzie's feelings, is certain she doesn't care for him! Once he finds out her true feelings, the gentle chase is on. I found Lizzie and Moreland to be more fun than Cassie and Tate.

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