



Wer Liebe verspricht

Rebecca Ryman , Manfred Ohl (Translator) , Hans Sartorius (Translator)

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Indien 1848: Die 22-jährige Amerikanerin Olivia trifft auf Einladung ihrer Tante in Kalkutta ein. Lady Bridget sucht für ihre Nichte einen Ehemann, doch Olivia sträubt sich verbissen gegen die Heirat mit einem dieser langweiligen englischen Kolonialherren. Sie sehnt sich schmerzlich nach der Freiheit ihrer Heimat. Da begegnet sie Jai Raventhorne, dem illegitimen Sohn eines Engländers und einer Inderin aus ärmlichen Verhältnissen. Jai ist ein Ausgestoßener in der von Vorurteilen bestimmten Welt der britischen Kolonie – und er erobert Olivia im Sturm. Doch Jai kann es nicht zulassen, dass Olivia ihm so nahe kommt, und verlässt sie ...

Wer Liebe verspricht Details

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From Reader Review Wer Liebe verspricht for online ebook

Dorcas says

[

"What I will not accept, Jai, is the dev

Mitzi says

Book 1 of 2. Great Book & Great love story. Ends with a cliffhanger not knowing if the Hero survives. I wish this author had done a series type book like Diana Gabaldon did with Outlander series. So many possibilities.....but unfortunately, she doesn't and the next book is so depressing and sad that I can't recommend this book to anyone.

Anna says

Rating: 4.5 stars

Screwed-up brooding badboys make my heart and loins a-flutter, and Jai is one hell of a tortured soul. Born in 19th century India to an Indian serving girl and an unknown Englishman, he belongs to neither community and has spent his life enraged and embittered. He's ruthlessly built up his business empire, and just as ruthlessly has built a barrier around himself. He cares for nothing or no-one, his black heart angry and alone. Yum.

Olivia is a feisty young American, sent to live with her English aunt and uncle in India who share a mutual hatred with Jai. Olivia's first encounter with him brings instant chemistry, and after many secret meetings, unheeded warnings and a whole army of inner demons for Jai to battle, she finally tames her man. So a HEA, right?

Wrong.

Something happens - something big - and Olivia and Jai are blown to smithereens. They say hell hath no fury like a woman scorned, and Olivia's obsessional love for Jai turns into obsessional hatred; she'll stop at nothing till her revenge is complete.

The first half of this book is fabulous, full of tortured minds and simmering passions, ending with an absolute jaw-dropper of plot twist. The second half couldn't quite match it's pace and intensity though. A old dark secret and it's new repercussions are blatantly clear long before their reveals, and I grew increasingly annoyed by Olivia's pig-headed pride that blinded her to the bleedin' obvious. Slap that woman now.

Despite my niggles, I still couldn't put this book down, and it's my favourite read of the year so far.

Marquise says

I have a big problem with novels set in colonial India: they all have to measure up, whether I will it or no, to the arch-famous “The Far Pavilions,” that by virtue of reading it first as much as its author’s craftiness, is the golden standard for me personally. That has resulted in my experience reading all the other books with the same setting less enjoyable in some way. Novel X is inferior even if by the same author, Novel Y is too much of a wannabe and a poorer copy at that, Novel Z has a character that smells of rip-off...

I have two other smaller problems as well: they all seem to focus way too much on the buildup towards the Sepoy Rebellion, often devoting dozens of pages to dialogue in which the enlightened and pro-native character lays out his wise political advice that contrasts with the narrow-minded stupidity of the rest of his caste. And then, often the heroine is pretty unlikable because... because, that’s why. They start sympathetic enough, and at some point, they just lose it.

None of which really informed my picking of this book; zero expectations and an “Oh, en fin” probably have to do with the fact that, in the end, I liked this novel.

The first half is simply engrossing; we have young and naïve Olivia O’Rourke navigating the local social circles with her snobbish aunt and her reckless cousin, attracting the eye of two men that will be meaningful in her future and in her erring. And we have Jai Raventhorne, not as mysterious as the author tried to present him since it’s easy to guess his hot buttons from the first appearance. In my case, it’s not the mystery that had me interested, because there was none: I knew who his parents were and from that I had a surprisingly accurate guess of what his life story was like, down to how he was born and his mother’s demise. The hints were pretty obvious, to me, and I’d have appreciated a bit more careful handling of them to keep me in the dark and make the impact of the revelations later real “revelations,” not “confirmations” as it turned out. The interest lay in his mind’s workings, because everything in him is excessive, because despite all, he’s not completely messed-up in the head; he is resilient. It’s always fascinated me to see, and read about, people coming out of dire pasts with so different outcomes.

The love story follows a straightforward angsty romance arc till the middle; they can’t be together but they can’t be separate either, so they carry on with a back-and-forth furtive liaison with more anger and sexual tension than political and social critique on India—thank the old gods!—and finally they both snap in a scene that is bound to be questioned by many a reader, and that to me brought forth another of my favourite love scenes in literature, so that may account for my reaction. Politically incorrect love scenes are, if well-written, ranked highly in the Hotness Scale, and this one was. Hot and full of those life-changing moves that will push the plot till the end.

But then, the second half isn’t quite the same. Jai is mostly absent, having proceeded with that plan that would affect his and Olivia’s lives so negatively; and Olivia foolishly and in a panic takes two, no, three decisions in a row that will condemn her to a longish period of living with lies, regrets, hypocrisy, a sourness in the heart that will turn her over-the-top love for Jai into over-the-top hate, kicking off a business and personal war with him at his return with innocent victims on both sides. One is hard pushed to sympathise with her, her pride, her self-castigation, her blind spots, her resentment and the weakness in tolerating abject abuse, her thoughts that she (view spoiler), and especially her willingness to use Jai’s secrets to win the unscrupulous war of revenge is unpalatable. Jai is no less ruthless and hits as hard in his retaliation. The war continues to the very end, with Olivia as the winner. Or so it appears, because of the last minute twist in the last chapter that changes everything for them. I wasn’t fond of the suddenness, but it was something that brings closure of a sort to the storyline whilst leaving it open for continuation.

So... This isn't "The Far Pavilions," nor pretends to be. It's not as grand, as epic, and as well-written; nor does it aim to be. And I am glad for that, so glad. Because finally a novel has broken to shards the constrictive mould set up by that classic, and be judged by its own merits, criticised by its own flaws, instead of having to be rated high or low by comparison. "Olivia and Jai" can stand on its own feet, and it's a pretty fine novel that can do that in my book.

Misfit says

A fabulous tale of star crossed lovers in 19C India. The story begins in Calcutta in 1848 as Olivia O'Rourke arrives from California to spend time with her mother's sister, Lady Bridget Templewood. Used to the freer life she shared with her father, Olivia chafes under the rigid morals of British Society, but then she accidentally meets a man reviled by her family, Jai Ravenstone. Jai is a Eurasian with a mysterious past who against all odds built up a successful shipping empire.

Despite her family's hatred of Jai and his attempts at destroying her uncle's competing shipping business, Olivia cannot overcome her overwhelming attraction to Jai and sees him at every opportunity, even though Jai himself warns her of the dangers of involvement with him. Just when it seems Olivia and Jai may be able to surmount the problems of his past and find love, Jai's obsession with destroying the Templeton's takes him on a path that utterly destroys Olivia's love for him and sends her on a path of building her own business ventures to enact her revenge against Jai.

This was a wonderful tale of love and revenge that will have you reading well into the wee hours of the morning, by page 250 or so I literally didn't come up for air until I finished it. There are many twists and turns and quite shocking surprises that will have you guessing and turning the pages until the very end. It's not quite up to the standards of *The Far Pavilions*, but for those seeking a well spun yarn set in 19C India during the British Raj this is one worth checking out. Five Stars.

Laura says

How to describe such magnificent book except by saying that : it **MUST** be read. It is not a love story in the strictu sensu, on the contrary, it shows how love is close to hate. The plot engages us into the story of India still under British rule where a lot of social conventions and prejudice among other factors. The end still brings big and unexpected surprises, I won't spoil this fabulous end. There is sequel to this book, *The Veil of Illusion*.

Dinjolina says

Weird, horrible, dark...but also thrilling.
Lies, deceit, but also love. And forgiveness.
Whole lifetimes of unhappiness, but a bitter sweet hope that last.

It hurt me, it draigned me, but I still loved it!

Linda says

Rebecca Ryman, or Asha Bhanjdeo as her real name was, was brilliant at describing emotions, and people's reactions and behavior, and was very convincing in her writing.

I like these kind of books, where the present can only be described by the past, where people are products of a dark society and how they finally break through this barrier of hate they have developed. I have seen them before, Heathcliff, Mr De Winter, Jean Valjean are examples, and they are very well crafted. So are Jai Raventhorne.

Jai is such a product of society. He is so driven by hate and revenge that he punishes people all around him, even people he cares about. Nothing is as important as his crusade and it consumes him entirely. The relentless, cold, ruthless character seems to be damaged beyond repair. What is the reason for his evil, criminal deeds? What will happen when the young, openminded woman, so different from the english judgmental society, enters his life? I understand he feels trapped when he is no longer able to control his emotions with hate, and it's really interesting to see Jai struggling with his new feelings and refusing to capitulate. Their meeting means problems, and Olivia is soon in the middle of a terrible crossfire between Jai and the people he has sworn to destroy.

Olivia is an interesting character, as well, and I was really fascinated how cruel she can be when pushed to the test. I was afraid she and Jai would literally kill each other. They have everything against them, and nothing in their favour. It is always heart-breaking to see people wrongly treated become destructive, and self-destructive even, but at the same time, it's fascinating, because somewhere deep within, they're desperate for approval more than anything and when they come into contact with love they are so confused and fragile. Jai is a layered character and Ryman was successful at provoking the reader in the same way as Olivia was provoked. I totally understand her love, hate and sorrow as well as I understand her own actions, even though I think they are very cruel.

Those who like Wuthering heights, Gone with the wind and Rebecca will definitely like this one.

Historical Tapestry says

Olivia & Jai is one of those books with a slight old fashioned feeling that left a wonderful impression the first time I read it a couple years ago. After writing my Why I Love...Historical Fiction set in India, I wanted to reread it and see if the magic still worked.

We first meet Olivia O'Rourke, a 23 years old American with an unusual education and lots of character, during her stay in India where she spends a year with her maternal aunt, Lady Bridget Templewood, and her family. The young woman is completely in love for this new land and its culture. Every opportunity she gets, to great despair of her snobbish aunt, she's out exploring Calcutta and doing the best she can to get to meet the locals.

One evening, during a ball, she meets a mysterious man, Jai Raventhorne. They are both curious about each

other, but when Olivia mentions his name to her family, they are all shocked and immediately warn her to keep her distances from him. Clearly there's something going on between Raventhorne and the Templewoods and nobody seems interested to talk about it or explain the reasons of the quarrel to the young American. This situation only provokes Olivia's curiosity about Jai...

Not long after, Olivia and Jai start to meet in secret, both unable to stop the growing attraction between them. If the young woman accepts her feelings more easily, Jai tries to keep his distances at first and warns her often that despite his love, he cannot give her what she wants. Olivia is in love and she never imagined Jai's revenge towards her family or the unbearable pain caused by his treason...

Olivia is a charming mix of wisdom and innocence. Raised by her free thinking father in the States, she was always encouraged to give her opinion and be an independent woman. Her English aunt is completely appealed by this upbringing! She is decided to transform the young woman into a lady and find her an English husband.

If I couldn't sometimes suspend my disbelief when I read about Olivia leaving the house all alone and spend hours in the local markets or riding, I did enjoy her curiosity about the Indian culture and the fact that she tried to break free from the quite strict British society rules and seek for something else.

Her love for Jai might seem sometimes a bit naïve and suddenly excessive, but it's her first love and she was completely swept away by the dark and mysterious young man. His happiness is her happiness. She gave herself completely to Jai without any constraints.

Jai is Eurasian and his illegitimacy is often the center of all gossip among the local British society. He is arrogant, conceited, obnoxious and sometimes, a real pain. He is also a self made man. Nobody knows who his parents were, but he made his way into the world and built an empire. He does some terrible things, but here remains the talent of Rebecca Ryman, even during the worst moments I could never really hate Jai. He never became an unsympathetic character and I would imagine it was a hard task for the author to keep him going as a real person with its faults and qualities.

There are some small aspects that kept me from giving this book 5 stars. The language was a little too modernized sometimes, but it won't spoil any enjoyment.

This is a story of love and revenge with some twists and turns but everything works almost perfectly for me. The character development, especially Olivia who changes so much all along the story, is quite remarkable. Also the descriptions of 19th century India are enthralling. I remember especially Olivia's visit to the market and it was so vivid I could almost taste the pastry she was eating.

Rebecca Ryman is the pen name of an Indian writer, Asha Bhanjdeo, who only wrote three books under this name: *Olivia & Jai*, *The Veil of Illusions* (the sequel of *Olivia & Jai*) and *Shalimar*. Unfortunately, she died in 2003.

Joanne says

Proudly added to my "favorites" shelf! Move over, *Trade Wind* and *Zemindar*, and make room for *Olivia and Jai*!

Oriana says

Olivia & Jai is one of those books with a slight old fashioned feeling that left a wonderful impression the first time I read it a couple years ago. I wanted to reread it and see if the magic still worked.

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Sherron says

Loved Loved Loved it!! Why can't all books be this good. My only complaint is I wish it had an epilogue. I read some mixed reviews on the sequel and I'm not sure that I should read it.

Patty says

Tendré cuidado de no destripar demasiado, ya que lo que vale la pena son los giros, sorpresas de la trama y las sensaciones que deja atrás, esta historia debo aceptar en un principio no me cautivaba demasiado (en las primeras páginas) pero rápidamente me sumergí en la India colonial, para ser más precisos, en Calcuta a mitad del siglo XIX, donde los ingleses eran los amos y señores de aquellas tierras bastas y exóticas, donde como grandes conquistadores intentaban imponer su hegemonía sobre el país, donde su “aparente superioridad” obligaba a los nativos a vivir bajo su yugo, su escala de valores y de moral, convirtiéndose ellos en sirvientes y seres indeseados por aquellos que llegaron a invadir su tierra, haciéndolos sentir como parias, en Calcuta los ingleses que la habitaban eran aun de mente más cerrada y menos permisiva que los que vivían en Inglaterra, por supuesto mas mojigatos.

A esta Calcuta llevo Olivia, una americana que fue criada por su padre, una chica de 23 años acostumbrada a decir lo que piensa, en temas que generalmente las inglesitas “decentes” no dicen ni “pio” y menos las que viven en la India, por consejo de su padre fue a visitar a su tía, Lady Bridget (hermana de su difunta madre), viviría con ella, su tío y su prima Estelle, una chica de 18 años, chismosa y consentida pero que idolatra a Olivia, estaría con ellos durante 12 meses, para descansar del ajetreo de la fiebre del oro de su vida en California y para crear lazos con su familia materna en aquella colonia británica, donde podría desenvolverse entre las más respetadas familias inglesas.

Es así que vemos desde los ojos de Olivia la vida colonial, los paisajes, las costumbres, la comida, el clima en esa lejana tierra, desde el principio ella quedo cautivada por todo eso, aunque la rutina de las chicas de su edad la hastiaba al igual que el afán de su tía por casarla y llevarla a reuniones sociales, caminatas, donde ella tenía que plantarse cerrar la boca y sonreír y soportar las chachara de las damas, cuando lo que ella quería es participar en los debates de los hombres, de temas como comercio, política, ganado y todo lo que había aprendido con su padre, en ocasiones su tío le permitía expresarse en esos temas, ella quería mucho a su tío, ambos tocaban temas que la apasionaban e interesaban y aprendía de todo eso.

En una de las reuniones ocasionales a las que acudió, Olivia sintiéndose frustrada y extrañando su vida en América tomo camino hacia un malecón junto al río, donde desahogándose dio rienda suelta a las lagrimas, en esa intimidad saco todo lo que llevaba dentro, hasta que sintió una extraña presencia que la observaba, en ese instante es cuando conoce a JAI Raventhorne, con el cual mantuvo una conversación, en ese momento no pudo distinguir sus rasgos ya que él se mantenía a la sombra, solo capto un atisbo de su increíble mirada de ojos grises, pero quedo muy intrigada por ese hombre, con sus palabras y con su voz, al parecer el sabia todo

sobre ella y su familia, era educado, pero jamás lo había visto en alguna otra reunión. Pero lo que más le impresionó es la reacción de sus tíos al extenderles los saludos que aquel extraño les había mandado, la conmoción fue tal que hasta su tía cae desmayada.

A partir de ahí nos iremos sumergiendo en la red de intrigas, venganzas, misterios familiares que rodean a Olivia y Jai, nadie lo quiere en Calcuta, es un mestizo, su nombre es pronunciado con recelo, eso hace crecer aun más la curiosidad hacia Jai, empiezan a encontrarse en secreto y ella cae irremediabilmente enamorada de él, se ven a escondidas, pero no puede penetrar su coraza, presiente que él no le conviene, que la lastimaría, hasta el mismo hace lo imposible para alejarla de él, le advierte que él no es bueno, que nunca ha querido a nadie, no le cuenta nada de él mismo, ella lo ama a tal grado que no le importa nada, su amor es puro, me pareció a veces excesivo, él siempre misterioso, jamás sabemos lo que piensa, trata constantemente de alejarse de Olivia, pero ella no lo permite.

Un día ocurre un suceso que es donde la trama del libro da un giro brutal, da pie a que aquella Olivia que conocimos cambie por completo, que sus sentimientos hacia Jai cambien de intención pero no de intensidad, el odio, el amor, la traición, el dolor, dan rienda a suelta a una serie de decisiones que Olivia tomara y que cambiaran su vida.

Se sufre bastante, todo en esta historia es intenso, el amor, el odio, el rencor, en momentos tenía que dejar de leer para respirar, mi corazón estaba encogido, este libro TRANSMITE, aunque no estuviera contenta con algunas situaciones, me hacía sentir en verdad amor, odio, dolor o cual sentimiento que Olivia experimentara, ambos personajes son vengativos, de los más que he conocido, así que a las que les gustan este tipo de historias amor-odio la disfrutaran bastante.

Los personajes no tienen demasiadas apariciones juntos, ni escenas con alto contenido erótico, pero no hacen falta ambas cosas, para hacer de esta historia de amor tan conmovedora.

Shameeka Alexis says

After I read the synopsis, I had high hopes for the book. It is, of course, set in colonial India. And as an Indian, I wanted the book to do justice to it.

And my, *oh my*, it did!

Olivia And Jai was twisted, dark, and I must say, I really enjoyed some bits. But then again, there were many bits I absolutely hated.

I will first start off by talking about the stuff I liked:

* The setting, as I had mentioned earlier, was close to perfection. Ryman had portrayed Colonial India beautifully and did a wonderful job with the characters too.

* I loved some traits of Olivia.. In a way, I felt like Ryman had done some justice to her character. She is strong, kinda independent (in the second half of the book), bold and had a good head on her shoulders. She doesn't wallow in self-pity and shakes off her mistakes and flaws. Amazing.

* I liked how even though Jai was this brooding, screwed-up, arrogant bad guy and fell in love with Olivia, he didn't magically get refined into a perfect guy. It was a refreshing change from the usual *bad-guy-good-girl* romance

- * The characters just... *Came alive*. Ryman's character development is just impeccable.
- * Her writing.. Well, frankly, I was in heaven. Perfection.

I'm going to talk about the things I hated now. This is going to be more of a rant, actually.

- * In the first half, Olivia literally has no brains. She seems just like one of those light-headed, perfect, good heroines at the beginning. It was really irritating.
- * The book was just too long. I mean, for what the plot was worth, the book dragged on and on and on. It *almost* ended in my DNF list.
- * This scene, haha. Oh my God. This one really cracked me up.

"If you do not wish to use my evidence, I accept that. If you do not wish to see me or speak to me again, I accept that too, however wounding. What I will not accept, Jai, is the devaluation, the denial, of your feelings for me. You lie to hide your own delusions, not mine. You fabricate a hate that does not exist. You do love me, Jai..." A split second of anguish came and went. "As sure as the wind blows and I breathe, you love me, and before the sun rises tomorrow I will make you eat your words, Jai, every damned, lying one of them, I promise you that!"

"Get out!" His voice, tight in his throat, was strangled.

"I will, but not before you admit you have lied!"

The final thread of his control snapped. With a snarl he sprang at her and two enormous, powerful hands circled her neck. Distorted into a mask of virulence, his features turned maniacal, barely human. Thumbs pressed against her windpipe, he shook her with the fury of a mastiff gripping a rat between its teeth, all reason gone. Olivia battled to breathe, gasping for air but neither struggling nor feeling the faintest twinge of fear.

Haha. This is probably one of the most fucked up characters I've ever come across.

Yup. So, if you're in a relationship and your partner hasn't strangled the shit out of you yet, well, you're in trouble. 'Cause they don't love you!

It's funny.. The kind of stuff I'm coming across recently.

- * A lot of main characters just started disappearing real fast in the second half of the book and were not heard of after that. It was like.. BAM! And they're out of the book. The book ends before their chapters are completed. That sucked big time for me.

Overall, the book wasn't bad. I guess I liked it.

Review also posted at:

www.shameekalovesreading.wordpress.com

Susanne says

I like a good romance from time to time and a romance set in an exotic locale is an added plus -- but I expect the setting and time-frame to feel authentic. I object **STRONGLY** to 600 plus pages of overblown melodrama supposedly set in the 1840s in British India with characters that speak and act as if it were 1950. How in the world can a character like Estelle, cosseted young miss from a prominent British family exclaim: "I say, wasn't old Lady B an absolute scream this afternoon? As for your face, darling Coz, well I thought I'd die, just die, trying to stifle my giggles. . . I'd give anything, anything to be in London in thirty days! Marie says she changed her hair colour twice in three months and nobody in London batted an eyelash." This same young woman wears "cosmetics" at her coming-out ball, and the heroine, her American cousin, rides her horse (astride!), unaccompanied, across the countryside when she's not out shopping for new sandals. What a disappointment.

Thalassa Ali's "A Singular Hostage" is set in 1830's British India and feels SO much more real. THAT was a book I'll return to again and again.
