



The Empty Jar

Michelle Leighton

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The Empty Jar

Michelle Leighton

The Empty Jar Michelle Leighton

Three months touring Europe.

Romantic. Dazzling. Unforgettable.

The trip of a lifetime.

But some lifetimes are shorter...

We couldn't have known it would work out this way.

No one could. No one could've guessed that something so beautiful could be so tragic.

But it is tragic.

Yet so, so beautiful.

That's what sacrifice is—beauty and tragedy.

It's pain and suffering for something or someone you love.

And this is the ultimate sacrifice.

One stunning act of true love.

This is our story.

Our true love story.

The Empty Jar Details

Date : Published May 8th 2016 by M. Leighton Books

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Author : Michelle Leighton

Format : Paperback 414 pages

Genre : Romance, Contemporary

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From Reader Review The Empty Jar for online ebook

Christy says

5 stars!!!

“Is it possible for a person’s biggest dream to come in the midst of their worst nightmare? Can life be so tragic and yet so beautiful, all at the same time?”

The Empty Jar is probably the most emotional and heartbreakingly beautiful book I’ve read this year. This love story was epic. It was a story of sacrifice, of loss, of friendship, and most importantly- of unconditional love.

I’m not going to talk about the story line, because I liked not knowing where the story was going. I didn’t even read the blurb before I read the book... just know going into this one, it will give you all the feels. And all the tears. I haven’t cried so much while reading in a long while. But you know what else this book will give you? It will give you hope. Hope that real, true love exists. A love so beautiful, so pure, and a love that can withstand anything. The love that Lena and Nate had was truly inspiring. They cherished each other. Nate revered Lena. He supported her through everything. For him, there was only her.

“I’ll love you. Every minute of every day of forever, I’ll love you. I’ll love you like I’m not afraid of losing you.”

The Empty Jar had an impact on me. It made me want to live life more fully, love more deeply, and to cherish everything and everyone in my life. This story hit me hard, and it’s one I know I won’t forget. This is by far my favorite book by this author, and it’s one I highly recommend when you’re in the mood for an emotional read/tear jerker!

Christie«SHBBblogger» says

[Yes (hide spoiler)]

FMABookReviews says

Cathartic. Beautiful. Poignant.

I knew before I read *The Empty Jar*, that it was going to be difficult to read. I knew it wasn't going to just cause tears, but it would cause ugly tears. What I didn't expect was the beauty within its pages, nor the

healing to be found, nor the laughter that would flow freely.

Knowing the circumstances driving the writing of this book, I was afraid it might be more than I could handle. You see, my father lived with Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia for 16 years, and died on July 13, 2013, six months after being diagnosed with lung, liver and stomach cancer. I usually avoid books which deal with cancer now. So, this book was a leap of faith for me. But, I had a feeling this one would be different. Because Leighton was coming at this from MY perspective. From someone who watched their loved one suffer. From someone who felt that ache, that pain, that anguish of not being able to do anything ... that helpless feeling.

The most beautiful thing happened. She put all of that love and all of those fears, and all of the “what ifs” and “what nows”, into the most amazing and beautiful love story. It will make you cry. It will make you smile. It will make you laugh. But above all, it will make you realize, that when you find true love, you have to cherish it, you have to cultivate it, you have to nurture it.

A "non-traditional HEA", *'The Empty Jar'* is a story that will remain with me for years to come. A story of sacrifice, and of true love, it is breathtakingly beautiful.

For more information about what the cover means to Michelle and why she chose it, click [here](#).

ARC graciously provided in exchange for honest review

Jenny - TotallybookedBlog says

Early Release. Live Now!

Amazon US

Amazon UK

5 powerful and perfect stars!

“I need to know how to make it through this, how to have hope. Because I’ve forgotten. I don’t know how to hope anymore.”

Well **wow**, what can we say about *The Empty Jar*? Not much really, as to do so would completely spoil one stunningly beautiful and inspirational story of love and sacrifice. We can tell you that this was one of the most **powerful** and gut wrenching books we’ve **ever** read. That, to read this book you must embrace the notion that **love** is the most precious gift with love ease our path in a life fraught with both tragedy and joy.

‘Is it possible for a person’s biggest dream to come in the midst of their worst nightmare? Can life be so tragic and yet so beautiful, all at the same time?’

Our hearts were involved every step of the way reading *The Empty Jar*. From a slow beginning which told us a story to almost halfway through **when we became a part of it** by experiencing every emotion M. Leighton's masterful, ingenious and truly heartfelt words brought. And truthfully; when we say we felt the emotions- we felt them to the point of starting off by being on the brink of emotional distress to then free-fall into the abyss of no return from overwhelming anguish, blanketed and comforted by sweet and inspirational touches of pure guiding light in the hours of darkness.

“Everywhere we’ve ever wanted to go, we’ll go.”

“What if the only place I’ve ever really wanted to be was in your arms?”

“That’s the one place that will always be available to you. They’re open twenty-four seven. Day or night. Rain or shine. As long as we both shall live.”

This is not a – drift gently into the heart of a true love romance – *no*, this is a throw you in, head first and see if you drown in a fierce and surging torrent of a powerful **once in a lifetime love** entwined with hope, anguish, passion and fighting strength.

‘I’d known the instant he’d fallen in love with me. It was there, on his face, plain for all the world to see. Just like it is now. If I could bottle that look, I would. I would eat it, drink it, bathe in it. I’d breathe it in through my pores, draw it into my cells. I’d soak it up until it became a part of me, an inextricable part of me. I’d drown in it until I could feel it with every breath I took. Until I couldn’t see or hear or feel anything else. That’s how much I love that look.’

We talk **epic love** stories and *The Empty Jar* by M Leighton is exactly that. Soulmate love -when found – does not break no matter how much wear and tear life brings. No matter the utter travesty and how many valleys of treacherous rocks and boulders you have to wade through or climb, past –present- future. Individually and together. We give and we receive, we treasure and we remember. We hold on and we let go. We question and we reason. We live and we move on, touching the hearts of others. M Leighton brought us **an unforgettable story that will live in our hearts as long as they beat.**

‘I find it odd how happiness and agony so often travel in tandem, almost as though the one is made stronger by the other.’

See review at [TotallybookedBlog](#)

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Karla says

Beautiful, touching, heart wrenching and so much more. The empty jar is just one of those books that will

stay with me for a long time. The love between Lena and Nate was so true and deep, they are the true definition of soulmates. What they went through, what they sacrificed but at same time bittersweet for at the end it was was the most wonderful reward. I have to mention that even though this book was so touching and choked me up, the authors note at the end had me crying like a baby. Thank you miss M for sharing this, with us.

"This book is not a romantic fairytale yet, is the most romantic story I've ever told"

Angela (Reading Frenzy Book Blog) says

I'm going to be honest with you. This is a difficult book to read, and it may not be for everyone. If you're looking for escapism, this is not the book for you. *The Empty Jar* is raw, it's real, it's agonizing, and it's absolutely beautiful.

Nate and Lena share a rare love of a lifetime. Theirs is a sacrificial love, nurtured for over a decade and a half by attention and faithfulness. They've dared to live life fully, always discerning and prioritizing the important things, and never taking each other for granted. Their foundation is so firm that when they come to a major crossroads, the challenges presented only deepen their commitment.

This is one of the most honest romances I've read. It doesn't have an ounce of fantasy. Lena and Nate are genuine characters—just an ordinary married couple in their 40s—who made me believe that love can truly grow stronger over time and remain just as passionate. Their love feels authentic and very tangible in the presence of amazing joy and in the face of true suffering. Yes, the exclamations of being each other's soul, breath, other half, love of their life, etc., are repetitive, but ultimately I was left with a profound longing to feel a connection that sure, that deep, and that selfless.

Nate is amazingly giving, and I defy you to not fall in love with him. The strength that he and Lena exude is remarkable. I wouldn't file this book in the Christian Romance section of a bookstore, but religion is featured prominently in the story as the characters grapple with questions of faith and the wisdom of hope. I found it to be especially touching.

I absolutely loved Nate and Lena's trip through Europe, as well as Lena's feisty best friend, Nissa. I only wish there were more moments of levity. The book vibrates with a poignancy that is so intense I had to stop reading occasionally and take a breather. It's an unquestionably moving story, but the pervasive heartache became a burden to me at times. That, along with the slow pace of the detailed story, made the book feel on the long side. In retrospect though, I couldn't give it anything less than five stars.

M. Leighton has made no secret that this book has a non-traditional HEA. Because of that, I was apprehensive about approaching the end. However, the ending was perhaps the most uplifting part of the story. I may have reached for my Kleenex at several points, but my heart felt incredibly light when I finished. There's an author's note included as a postscript, and it wasn't until I read it that I absorbed the full impact of the story. Strangely enough, that's what caused my tears to flow the heaviest, but in the most wonderful way.

The Empty Jar is astonishingly well written, awe-inspiring, and achingly gorgeous. Those who risk their heart to this authentic love story will be rewarded.

Recommended for fans of:

Tear jerkers

Mature romance

ARC received in exchange for an honest review.

Allison ♥?Will Never Conquer Her TBR♥? says

5 Gut-wrenching Stars!

Well, that wasn't an easy read. Originally, I posted my review unable to actually finish this book. I didn't think I could. I set it down, regrouped, donned my big girl panties, picked it back up, pushed through my fears and finished it. And for that, I'm thankful.

The Empty Jar is so beautiful. It's raw and so emotionally gripping, it hit entirely deep within my heart. It's also about profound love- a love for friends, family, and that one true love that stands the test of time- thru life and beyond.

M. Leighton wrote this on the heels of losing her father and for that reason, I feel her heart is truly poured out within this story and it's characters. It's so true to life, love and loss it'll grip you that much harder. Her writing is so poetic, beautiful and descriptive, I feel every ounce of pain in the dual POV between the two main characters, Nate and Lena.

M. Leighton deserves every ounce of my five stars. My heart bled thru the pages and I just needed to walk away a few times in emotional self-preservation. This book is THE MOST raw, gripping, emotional book I've read (and I've read over a thousand books). I crave deeply emotional reads, and I don't need a happily-ever-after, walking off into the sunset ending but something about **The Empty Jar** and the way she wrote it, hits hard in the feels. So just time this read when you're craving an immense tug-at-the-heartstrings story. Just stock up on wine and/or ice cream.

So, a gentle word of warning. I'll spoiler tag this but it's a trigger warning - (view spoiler)

My message to Michelle Leighton- I hope you've found peace within writing this story. I pray you're in a happy place now, your jar is full ~~and your feet are clean every night you go to bed.~~

I'll now move on to some easy on my heart RomCom...

◆*Arianna◆* says

5 Stars!!

Reading this book felt like someone ripped my heart out of my chest and smashed it in tiny little pieces. This book left me broken and uncontrollably crying, but I can honestly say I loved every minute of it. I didn't enjoy it, but I loved it with all my heart. *'The Empty Jar'* was one of the most beautiful love story I've ever read. From beginning until the end it was gut-wrenching, though-provoking and so emotionally gripping. Mrs. Leighton simply amazed me with this beautifully written story, a story that I'll never forget, a story that touched me to the core, a story that made me cry and smile, laugh and cry again. I devoured this book from cover to cover, I lived with these characters and I experienced every single one of their emotions. This book about love and sacrifice left me speechless and I honestly don't have enough words to tell how amazing it was. Lena and Nate's story will make you think and will definitely make you believe in true love.

*"A woman will do anything for the people she loves.
And as long as she has love, her jar will always be full."*

In some way Lena and Nate Grant's story was like nothing I've ever read. Their relationship was pure and simple genuine, a relationship every one of us dream to have, a relationship based on friendship, communication, faithfulness, sacrifices and love...Oh my Gawd, so much love. I felt their love for each other in every word and every gesture. Every single one of their actions told me how much they mean to each other. The devotion between them, the cherishing, their commitment melted my heart. My heart broke for them, I cried with and for them more times than I can want to admit and like them, I hoped until the last moment.

"I'll love you. Every minute of every day of forever, I'll love you. I'll love you like I'm not afraid of losing you."

There were times when I really struggled to accept some aspects of the story. I wanted with all my heart the story to progressed differently that it did, I wanted so badly to spare this couple their own reality and in some

way their grief. And there were also times when I could barely breathe because everything felt too much, everything was too intense.

Both Lena and Nate were portrayed in such a realistic way. The author did a remarkably job with these characters. Lena was a heroine I felt deeply for. Her voice was honest and I heard it loud and clear. The way she learns so much about herself, the way she learns how to believe and hope were fantastically done. The ultimate sacrifice she made was her biggest achievement in some way. I admit at times I was a little angry with her, but I admired her with all my heart. Her tenacity was exemplary. Nate was like Lena mentions at some point into the story a hero...a hero in every single way. I loved this man. Loved! With all my being! The way he loves his wife was...breathtaking. He was so caring, so patient, so wonderful and so supportive. I don't have enough words to tell you how much this man amazed me and how much his love moved me.

***“Is it possible for a person’s biggest dream to come in the midst of their worst nightmare?
Can life be so tragic and yet so beautiful, all at the same time?”***

M. Leighton has all my respect for putting her heart and soul into this book. I'm sure it wasn't easy for her since some aspects of the story are based on her own experiences, but she did it and she did it exceptionally and for that she has all my admiration.

All in all, *'The Empty Jar'* was one of the most poignant, beautifully written story I've ever read and if you are looking for a story of true love with a “non-traditional HEA” than I highly recommend it!

***“You never know when the angels will come to take you home. You just pray that you get in
as much living as you can before then.
We love.
We laugh.
We hope.
And we keep filling our jar.”***

1-Click Addict Support Group says

And the greatest of these is love.

—This is what has been running through my head all day. The feels, oh, the feels! I'm not going to flail about because I don't have the energy. I've used almost all the tissues in my house, and that says a lot since I'm recovering from a cold and I stocked up. Let me tell you, it will be years, if ever, before I forget about this book. And the way it made me feel... My heart beating out of my chest, the tears pouring down my face, the laughs, the love, and so much more.

What a beautifully perfect story of real love and living our vows. I've never been married. But today I find

myself in need of hope. Ms. Leighton, I found it in the words on the pages of your superbly written story, a journey that will help so many. This book is so much more than a story, it's an emotional journey that gives hope to those who need it and a light to guide the way.

Nate and Lena's story tells about truth and honor and communication. It's about unfailing love and the desire to take care of those in your life your heart cares for. Adventure and intimacy. It's about faith, hope and love.

I can't tell you more, because I don't want to spoil it. I want you to read it for yourself. Get lost in the words on the page. Let them settle into your heart and your soul. Be open to the change that will occur when you read *The Empty Jar*. Be honest with yourself. Believe in love. Trust the journey. Trust in your faith, whatever it is. Trust in love.

The Empty Jar is a beautiful and poignant love story that will transcend the ages. Fill your jar, never leave it empty! ~ Heather, 10 *Loving* stars

Aestas Book Blog says

::: FULL REVIEW NOW POSTED :::

"I will love you forever. Dead or alive, I will be yours, wherever I am."

I've loved M. Leighton's writing for a long time and as soon as I heard about this book I was intrigued. However, counter to my norm, I actually went into this book totally blind — which is really rare for me. The moment I saw it, I one-clicked and just dive right in. Based on the blurb, I could already tell that I was in for quite a heart-breaking ride, but knowing this author I trusted that she'd convey it beautifully. And she most certainly did.

The story was about Nate and Lena, a married couple who had been together for years, and whose love for each other was soul deep. They had the kind of love that lasted beyond a lifetime and one that no measure of time or pain could ever erase. In the beginning of the book, Lena is diagnosed with terminal cancer. In an effort to bring the most joy into her remaining time, Nate books them on a three month tour of Europe — true to his caring nature, this was his way of trying to make as many one of her dreams come true in the little time they had left together. But the most unexpected thing happened on their trip... one might even call it a surprising gift. Her life might be ending, but this gave her something to live for, and a way to leave the man she loved with a part of her after she'd gone. Theirs was a painful journey of love, sacrifice, and loss. But ultimately the fulfilling ending brought happy tears to my eyes.

The reason I was so open about this book's storyline in this review because for one thing, it's not really a surprise — you can guess right from the start and it's not long before it's confirmed as true. And second because I know this kind of story is one that many romance readers would need to be in the right mindset for before reading. Luckily, today I was exactly in the mood for a deep and emotional story and so this one came along at the perfect time.

Lena's strength and courage in the face of the most heart-breaking of circumstances was painful and yet admirable. And Nate's undying devotion to the one woman he loved more than anything in this world was

truly touching.

“My heart,” I murmur, rubbing the tip of my nose back and forth over hers, wishing I could make things right, make things better. Change them.

But knowing I can’t.

“For yours,” she replies, as she has since the night I promised to her just over sixteen years ago. One of the best nights of my life, and they’ve only gotten better with time.

I actually really loved that this story was not at all about finding new love after loss, but rather about conveying the kind of love that endured a lifetime, even after death. That kind of love is rare and pure and this story was simultaneously heart-warming and devastating. They had the kind of love that transcended everything else.

“Death might part our bodies, but it will never part our hearts, our souls. Our love. Love like ours doesn’t die. It will live long after Lena leaves me. I’ll never be free of it. And I don’t want to be.”

This is not a romance, but it is a heartbreakingly beautiful story of a love so strong, unbreakable, and irreplaceable that it truly lasts forever. If you find yourself in the mood for an emotionally charged story of love and sacrifice, give this one a try. I could really tell what an emotionally close story this was for the author. You can really feel it as you read this book and as such, I want to finish this review with a note included in the blurb by the author...

“This book is not a romantic fairy tale. Yet, it’s the most romantic story I’ve ever told. It’s a journey of pain and loss, of hope and happiness. It’s both achingly tragic and exquisitely beautiful. It’s a love story. A true love story about real love. The kind that sees you through the night and holds you when you cry. The kind that won’t give up and never lets go. The kind we all dream about and few find. But it’s real. I promise you, it’s real. I’ve seen this kind of love, and I’ve seen this kind of heartbreak. I got to see it up close and personal, and quite honestly, I will never be the same. I hope it changes you as much as it changed me.”

Rating: 4 stars. Standalone.

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warhawke says

Genre: Contemporary Fiction

Type: Standalone

POV: First Person - Dual

Rating:

Nate and Helena (Lena) Grant embarked on a three months European tour to strengthen their already unbreakable bond. They had been together for nineteen years and married for sixteen years, which seemed like a lifetime. However, time was no longer on their side. Amidst an impending tragedy, hope bloomed to soften the blow. But to keep the beauty, they had no choice but to face the ugly.

I am forever searching for an ugly crying book, but very few that actually made it into my personal criteria of ugly crying. This book effortlessly slipped into the list.

He's forgiving and tolerant. He's kind and thoughtful. He's the type of man who makes a woman better for just knowing him.

Out of all the book heroes I've read, Nate is among the very top that get my respect. His love and devotion for people around him was humbling. With all the sexy alpha heroes out there that every reader lusted after, well, they might sound good in books, but not in reality. All you need in real life is someone like Nate and you won't need anything else.

She's nurturing, loving, protective. This is her way of loving me the best way she can. The only way she knows how.

Lena was on par with Nate. She was a worthy character to be invested in. Her strength and determination was a sight to behold.

The most special thing about this book was their bond. Their love was undying and I could feel it with their every word and every action. I could tell even without author's note, how much heart and soul were put into the story.

I know I'd be perfectly content if I could be awakened in just such a way every day for the rest of my life. But some things just aren't meant to be.

I could easily put myself in their situation - and I did. It took me to a myriad of emotions, asking myself if I would do things differently. It is a very difficult question to answer and I hope I would never have to.

I'm not sure how smart that is, signing up for even more pain when there's plenty to go around already, but it's out of my control.

Very rarely I found books that can truly hurt me and leave a scar in my heart. This book is one of them. But the scar is not an ugly one. Instead, it's a reminder of what life is all about and how I should appreciate it every single day.

The Empty Jar is a story of love and how it can both hurt and heal. It is not an easy read, but a beautifully poignant one that will stay in the heart for a long time.

***Note:** Special thanks to my Twinsie CC for taking the whiplash of my emotions while reading this book when she's not even reading it lol!*

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SueBee★bring me an alpha!★ says

THIS LOOKS AMAZING!

Stand-alone.

Release: **May 8, 2016.**

Book Blurb:

Three months touring Europe.

Romantic. Dazzling. Unforgettable.

The trip of a lifetime.

But some lifetimes are shorter...

We couldn't have known it would work out this way.

No one could. No one could've guessed that something so beautiful could be so tragic.

But it is tragic.

Yet so, so beautiful.

That's what sacrifice is—beauty and tragedy.

It's pain and suffering for something or someone you love.

And this is the ultimate sacrifice.

One stunning act of true love.

This is our story.

Our true love story.

Claire Robinson says

5 - *Beauty and tragedy...* Stars.

ITs LIVE!

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Amazon UK - <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Empty-Jar-M-...>

B&N - <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-e...>

I am quite an emotional reader, a big softy if you will, and sometimes a story, its characters, or just the way something has been written leaves more of a mark than normal. Lena and Nate Grant's story did that, it left a mark, provoked a reaction, made me think.

I can honestly say there is only one other book that has had such an emotional impact on me, and that was *Me Before You* by Jojo Moyes. I am not in the habit of comparing books, and *The Empty Jar* is in a completely different stratosphere in relation to the storyline, but the reaction it brought out of me isn't.

We share the kind of love that picks you up when you stumble, the kind of love that catches you when you fall, the kind of love that rescues you when you need saving. The real kind of love.

Which to be blunt was a total emotional melt-down, I won't forget this story, because for all the upset I experienced in reading it, it is also one of the most positive books I have ever read as well. The knowledge that your death is imminent is something that a lot of us are going to struggle to ever understand until we actually go through it. But the knowledge that someone you love is facing the end is something that everyone is going to have some level of experience.

The end is still coming. It's always out there, hovering, like clouds on the horizon.

Whether it be a peaceful passing from old age and a life well lived, or from an abhorrent disease that burrows its way in, spreads its roots and refuses to let go, it's heart-breaking all the same. And the author encapsulated that from both sides, which means you are given the experience from both perspectives, the person still living, while watching the other one dying and vice-versa, and that in itself is why it is such an emotional read.

We've been together for what feels like a lifetime, but now it's beginning to seem like the blink of an eye.

I think *The Empty Jar* will touch everyone in some way, some more profoundly than others for certain. But the subject matter of the story is one that you cannot, not feel something for, but there is so much hope and positivity in running through it as well though.

"We have today. Now. Let's make this count. Let's love enough for the rest of my life..."

"No let's love enough for the rest of mine."

Lena and Nate make the most out of every opportunity, every experience, tomorrow is a day where they do more, never letting the grass grow under their feet, yesterday is a memory to be treasured, and catalogued. To be remembered when times are darker, and they do get darker, but you know that from the beginning, and although you think you have prepared yourself somewhat for it, when it comes, it still rips you to shreds anyway.

"My heart..."

"For yours."

Michelle Leighton has put her heart and soul into this book, and although a work of fiction a lot of the story is based on her own experiences, and you can tell, the writing is so vivid and descriptive, and if like me you are a bit of a softy, you are going to be an absolute wreck for most of it's reading.

I already had a huge amount of respect for this author, but for telling this story, and putting her heart and soul out there for everyone too see, I don't really have any words. It's beyond brave, but it is her best work to date, and I don't think I will ever forget reading it.

ARC generously provided but the author, and it was my absolute pleasure to provide the above honest review.

Megan♦*Steamy Reads Blog*♦ says

*******5 Stars*******

"We share the kind of love that picks you up when you stumble, the kind of love that catches you when you fall, the kind of love that rescues you when you need saving. The real kind of love."

I just wanted to start by saying how much I absolutely loved the front cover of this book. It is artistic and beautiful. I have a bit of an obsession with book covers with mason jars on them. It first started when I read "Beautiful Disaster" by Jamie McGuire back in 2013 and carried through to "A Thousand Boy Kisses" by Tillie Cole. I love the above mentioned covers so much and "The Empty Jar" is no different.

"As I stare out at the radiance, willing a dream to come for me, I'm reminded of the way I was ushered into dreams as a child – by a different kind of glimmer, one just as gentle, just as soothing. A jar full of lightening bugs."

The Empty Jar is not the first book I have read from M Leighton; I had previously read "The Bad Boys" series, which I did thoroughly enjoy, but "The Empty Jar" is completely different. I could tell while reading this that M Leighton wrote it from the heart and came from such a deep and profound place.

The Empty Jar feels like a real life love story. When I read the synopsis I knew this was going to be a journey I wanted to be a part of. I had high expectations with this book, because I had been advised on how amazing it is and all the previous reviews I had read have been really positive.

The story actually starts after Nate and Lena have been together for nineteen years. They met, fell in love and got married. After all this time they are still madly in love and are each other's world. They know life is about to get inconceivably worse. They are about to face some of life's most challenging moments, which will forever change their lives. These challenges are earth shattering and they're going to need each other more than ever.

Nate organises a trip of a lifetime for both himself and Lena. He quits his job and buys two first class plane tickets to spend three months in Europe. This is a time for the two of them to get away and to try to forget all their troubles, even if for just a short while.

In the face of gargantuan tragedy, something beautiful takes place. The readers are taken on this journey of something so incredible, but so heartbreaking. Even through all the suffering, their love for each other never fades. If possible it becomes even stronger.

"Nate reaches for my hand and laces his fingers through mine. Such a simple gesture, but such a profound one sometimes. It speaks volumes to me. It tells me of our inseparable bond, of Nate's compassion for my loss, of his appreciation for a man he never knew. It reminds me that he loves me so deeply that he often feels my pain as if it were his own."

This is not just any run of the mill romance; it is a true soul crushing love story. Hats off to M Leighton for writing something so beautiful. I felt like I was part of this story and felt I was witnessing every moment between these two main characters. All their love, all their heartbreak and all the suffering. I could not recommend this book highly enough, but be warned to read with a box of Kleenex.

Gitte TotallyBookedBlog says

5 powerful and perfect stars!

"I need to know how to make it through this, how to have hope. Because I've forgotten. I don't know how to hope anymore."

Well **wow**, what can we say about The Empty Jar? Not much really, as to do so would completely spoil one stunningly beautiful and inspirational story of love and sacrifice. We can tell you that *this* was one of the most **powerful** and gut wrenching books we've **ever** read. *That*, to read this book you must embrace the notion that **love** is the most precious gift that love gives us strength when all else fails. *That*, actions, behaviour and decisions made from love and **with** love ease our path in a life fraught with both tragedy and joy.

‘Is it possible for a person’s biggest dream to come in the midst of their worst nightmare? Can life be so tragic and yet so beautiful, all at the same time?’

Our hearts were involved every step of the way reading *The Empty Jar*. From a slow beginning which told us a story to almost halfway through **when we became a part of it** by experiencing every emotion M. Leighton’s masterful, ingenious and truly heartfelt words brought. And truthfully; when we say we felt the emotions- we felt them to the point of starting off by being on the brink of emotional distress to then free-fall into the abyss of no return from overwhelming anguish, blanketed and comforted by sweet and inspirational touches of pure guiding light in the hours of darkness.

“Everywhere we’ve ever wanted to go, we’ll go.”

“What if the only place I’ve ever really wanted to be was in your arms?”

“That’s the one place that will always be available to you. They’re open twenty-four seven. Day or night. Rain or shine. As long as we both shall live.”

This is not a – drift gently into the heart of a true love romance – *no*, this is a throw you in, head first and see if you drown in a fierce and surging torrent of a powerful **once in a lifetime love** entwined with hope, anguish, passion and fighting strength.

‘I’d known the instant he’d fallen in love with me. It was there, on his face, plain for all the world to see. Just like it is now. If I could bottle that look, I would. I would eat it, drink it, bathe in it. I’d breathe it in through my pores, draw it into my cells. I’d soak it up until it became a part of me, an inextricable part of me. I’d drown in it until I could feel it with every breath I took. Until I couldn’t see or hear or feel anything else. That’s how much I love that look.’

We talk **epic love** stories and *The Empty Jar* by M Leighton is exactly that. Soulmate love -when found – does not break no matter how much wear and tear life brings. No matter the utter travesty and how many valleys of treacherous rocks and boulders you have to wade through or climb, past –present- future. Individually and together. We give and we receive, we treasure and we remember. We hold on and we let go. We question and we reason. We live and we move on, touching the hearts of others. M Leighton brought us **an unforgettable story that will live in our hearts as long as they beat.**

‘I find it odd how happiness and agony so often travel in tandem, almost as though the one is made stronger by the other.’

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