



Mellington Hall

Meredith Resce

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When Sarah Montgomery finds a man lying half-dead in the snow, she doesn't stop to think of the consequences of trying to save his life.

But being a Good Samaritan to a stranger yields nothing but trouble. In her parents' absence, she struggles against a deadly fever and a vicious snow-storm, doing her best to save the life of a stranger.

But when her self-righteous neighbours eventually come to see how she fared during the storm, they draw a very different conclusion, and before she knows it, her reputation is in tatters, and she has been cast out of the church and her home.

Alone and destitute, Sarah is determined to seek work as a servant from the man whose life she has saved. But all is not well for the master of Mellington Hall. Someone wants Lord Alan Mellington dead, and he doesn't know who or why. The only person he seems to be able to trust is the gamekeeper's daughter, Sarah Montgomery, who has intervened to save his life not once but twice.

This story blending mystery, scandal, murder and romance comes from one of Australia's best-loved authors, Meredith Resce.

Mellington Hall Details

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Author : Meredith Resce

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From Reader Review Mellington Hall for online ebook

Michelle says

This story takes place in England in the 1800's (I believe). It's a time when rules in the church are rather harsh and unforgiving. Conclusions are drawn and never questioned. In this case, Sarah's parents go to see her mother's dying father and leaves her alone. She finds an injured man and brings him back to her home to care for him. Before all is said and done, she is accused of fornication and thrown out of the church.

I liked the book. A LOT. But I never could get over the father. I think he got off way too easily seeing as how he loved his daughter and didn't believe a word she said - took the word of a immoral man over his own daughter...that rubbed me the wrong way.

This book mixed suspense and romance together along with history of the church of England and other churches moving in that were more forgiving. I really enjoyed the mix.

I did think the story ended rather abruptly, though...

Sarah says

Someone attempted to kill Lord Alan and Sarah find him and nurses him back to health. During there time together they begin to fall in love, but nothing inappropriate happens. Because her parents are away a neighbor stops by her house and sees that Sarah and Alan are alone and assumes that they were sleeping together. Her neighbor doesn't wait to hear the real reason why he was there and begins to tell the entire town what a tramp Sarah is. She is thrown out of her house and goes to work as a maid for Alan. Another attempt on Alan's life is made and Sarah's too. Alan and Sarah realize everyone could be a suspect and they can only trust each other. In spite of the danger looming around them their love grows.

This was cute story with some mystery and danger.

Pat says

Good Christian fiction novel!

In a small village near the English/Welsh border in 1838, Somebody is after Lord Mellington's fortune, and they're willing to kill him for it. When their first attempt fails, he is found left for dead, and nursed back to health by a young woman - Sarah Montgomery. This book isn't so much a murder mystery, as it is an attempted-murder mystery (although murders do occur as the story goes on). In a sense I found that this raised the tension. We knew that the killer was still out there somewhere, and would be trying again. This also allowed Sarah and Mellington to develop a romantic relationship that grows over time. The threat of murder added underlying suspense to their relationship.

As compelling as the mystery and the romantic plot are, they are almost both sub-plots to the greater story, which is the journey Sarah must take. Having helped save Mellington's life at the beginning of the book, she finds her reputation ripped to shreds as her neighbors get completely the wrong idea and spread insidious

gossip that gets her thrown out of the church and shunned by the entire village. The book carries an eye-opening warning against jumping to conclusions, and acting in self-righteousness rather than grace.

Nola says

In the historical novel *Mellington Hall*, Australian author Meredith Resce has intertwined a compelling romance with an element of mystery. An attempt has been made on Lord Alan Mellington's life, but when the gamekeeper's daughter Sarah nurses him back to health unchaperoned while her parents are away, nosy neighbours wrongly assume the worst. With Sarah's reputation in tatters, she is thrown out of her home and church and forced to take a job at *Mellington Hall* where further attempts are made on her life and that of Lord Mellington. In this frightening and uncertain environment, love blossoms between Sarah and Alan, but will they find the would-be murderer in time and have their happy-ever-after ending?

Meredith Resce does a very good job of evoking the era. I really liked Sarah's voice and her spunk as she tried in vain to set the record straight regarding the circumstances of her relationship with Alan. I felt I cared about the characters and wanted them to be together. I also liked the way that faith issues were subtly woven into the story, highlighting the dangers of jumping to conclusions, malicious gossip, and religious legalism versus grace and forgiveness.

While the mystery was also interesting, I felt a few more clues and red herrings along the way would have helped. There was an interesting twist, but as the story was nearing the conclusion, the number of viable suspects had diminished so it wasn't too difficult to narrow it down to a couple of likely contenders. Having said that though, I did enjoy the story and felt it reached a satisfying conclusion. If you like historical romance with a touch of mystery, I would strongly recommend this novel as an enjoyable holiday read.

Adam Collings says

In a small village near the English/Welsh border in 1838, Somebody is after Lord Mellington's fortune, and they're willing to kill him for it. When their first attempt fails, he is found left for dead, and nursed back to health by a young woman - Sarah Montgomery. This book isn't so much a murder mystery, as it is an attempted-murder mystery (although murders do occur as the story goes on). In a sense I found that this raised the tension. We knew that the killer was still out there somewhere, and would be trying again. This also allowed Sarah and Mellington to develop a romantic relationship that grows over time. The threat of murder added underlying suspense to their relationship.

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This book was written in an omniscient point of view. Personally I am not a fan of this point of view, but it was used consistently through-out the book and did actually give the story a certain charm - making it feel like a classic mystery. Clearly this was a decision made very deliberately for stylistic reasons.

The mystery aspect was handled well, keeping the reader guessing, and ending with a logical and satisfying conclusion.

A great mixture of mystery and romance with a powerful theme.

Kathy Jo says

I really wanted to enjoy this book and I tried but unfortunately there were just too many things that bugged me.

The beginning of the story was a little too unbelievable to me. Sarah had found Lord Alan Mellington on the side of the road shot, bleeding and freezing. She is home alone because her parents are travelling to see her grandfather who is dying. She battles between saving his life and what is proper. She decides she is going to save his life and takes him back to her farmhouse to nurse him back to health. On the way back to her house a blizzard hits and pretty much Sarah and Alan end up getting stuck in her house alone. She runs out of firewood and to keep Alan alive ends up having to lay next to him and use her body heat to keep him warm. The nosy neighbors burst in the next morning, see her lying on the floor next to Alan and then run out and spread vicious rumors about the two of them. It doesn't bother Alan because he has money but Sarah is evicted from the church as well as her own house. Her father REFUSES to even listen to her and believes what he hears. SO frustrating! What parent would NOT listen to what their child has to say and instantly believe the words of the town gossip?! Seriously?! And then there is Alan who refuses to marry her because she is beneath him! She saves his life TWICE and still... she is beneath him. I think the only reason I even finished this book is because I was extremely frustrated and wanted to see Alan actually man up and do something for Sarah. Sarah was put through the ringer and then some! It wasn't until someone tried to kill her that Alan actually opened his eyes and knew what he needed to do.... marry her. In the end it all worked out of course after a couple more attempts were made on their lives. Alan pretty much called the town gossip and her husband out on the carpet in regards to what they started by not doing the right thing and listening in the beginning. The husband knew that he had been shot and knew that Sarah wouldn't do the things that she was accused of but he still didn't do anything to stop the rumors in the first place. It was all very frustrating!

The other thing that drove me nuts was the excessive use of exclamation points. They were everywhere and 80% of the time did not fit the sentence that it was attached to. I had to try extremely hard to overlook all of them but the harder I tried to ignore... the more they stood out. Lame... I know. But it was really annoying!

I am glad I got this as a free book from Amazon.

Vendethiel says

I wanted to like this book, because the plot sounded quite interesting. However, the many writing flaws made it difficult to finish and kept me from enjoying it.

The author has yet to master the art of showing not telling the reader. This is understandable, because it is difficult to show through words, instead of just telling. However, this problem was perpetuated by the author telling us everything. And I do mean everything. Every thought (if it entered their head, we knew about it), every non-thought (why something didn't enter their head, even if it never entered ours), every action (there

was a paragraph about how the heroine kindled the fire), every inaction (why they didn't do something, even we didn't think about them doing it), everything was detailed. This much detail is commendable, but it ultimately dragged the book down.

The plot was also lacking. Problems were dealt with, only to appear again, and be dealt with again or be replaced and then dealt with and then appear again, in a never ending cycle. It never felt like a solid plot threaded through the entire book, tying everything together. Rather it was a series of little episodes that just kept trying to keep the book flowing. I felt like it should have been a series of short stories, not a single novel.

The characters were difficult to relate to; oh, I can tell you all about them, because the author told us all about them. However, I never connected to them, they never felt real. I understood everything they did and didn't do and knew every thought they had and didn't have, because it was well explained, but this just seemed to distance them from me.

Finally, there was a lot of perspective shifting. In one paragraph the reader would be seeing from one character's perspective and in the next paragraph another character's perspective. It was difficult for me to keep up and, sometimes, I just didn't care about so many characters, especially the minor ones.

This book had good potential, it had a good message - the importance of seeking the truth and acting in love, not prejudice and self-righteousness - however, the writing flaws prevented me from enjoying it. But maybe you aren't like me and might enjoy it.

Omega Writers says

From our CALEB reviewers:

Young Sarah Montgomery is capable and trustworthy but when her parents leave her home alone to manage the property in their absence, her ability to cope is tried to the limits when she finds Lord Mellington shot and near death. She manages to get him to the shelter of her home just before they are completely snowed-in but she is unable to prevent the village gossips from spreading vicious tales.

Mellington Hall by Meredith Resce is a story of snobbery and self-righteousness among the English aristocracy - of self-sacrifice and shunning - of destitution and indulgence - of scandal and lies. And as in all good romance-cum-murder mysteries *Mellington Hall* is a book where love conquers all.

Megan-Elise says

This book was well written. The character certainly had spirit and it painted a brilliant in depth image of what life was like for the lower class women who were ruined by idle gossip. I gave it 3 stars out of 4 because I felt that towards the end the religion became heavy handed. In the beginning and middle it wasn't obtrusive because it was part of the characters' personality and the world they lived in. But towards the end I was brought abruptly out of the fictional world because the sermonizing didn't feel natural. It was too heavy handed.

Michelle says

I have now read a few of Meredith Resce's books and though there is something about her style of writing that frustrates me, her books grip me completely! She is great at drawing the reader in from very early in the book and doesn't let them go until the roller-coaster of a story has ended.

Mellington Hall takes a look at how gossip (and only one side of the story) can take on a life of its own and hurt many people.

Susan Barnes says

Mellington Hall is a murder mystery/romance novel by Meredith Resce. It is set in Wales in 1839. It begins when Sarah Montgomery finds the master of Mellington Hall, Lord Alan Mellington, lying near death after an apparent attempt on his life. She sets about saving his life at enormous personal cost to herself and her reputation.

The story exposes the self-righteous, legalistic attitude of many in the church of that day which is not pretty, but unfortunately realistic. Sarah's relationship with Alan Mellington faces many challenges ranging from further death threats, unhelpful neighbours, suspicious church members and dubious household servants.

This is a well told tale with the many twists you would expect in a murder mystery and ends completely satisfactory. The characters are well drawn and believable. Those who like Christian fiction but find it too convenience when the characters become Christian will enjoy this story as no one is converted! Though there is a clear message to avoid a judgmental attitude but act with grace.

An enjoyable story.

Janice Dick says

Lovely historical romance. The setting brought me in, the characters and plot kept me reading.

Denise says

Great story!

What a powerful message, and even in today's society, this still happens. Sarah is an extremely strong young woman of her time.

May Abbey says

A worthwhile tale. The writing is very good, which is a big deal for me. Resce is very talented! The characters are flawed but admirable. The hero, especially. Alan is obviously proud and rigid, but able to listen to his heart and find that the moral thing is not always so obvious. Sarah is dignified and does the right thing, even though it could hurt her. And it does. Her tale is very sad and the way the village, her parents, even the hero treats her (at times) is awful. The story was well constructed and progressed at a steady, realistic rate. I always love a good storyline. However, I wasn't emotionally pulled to the characters as much as I would like. I felt like they were actors in a play rather than people who were really afraid, brave, proud, and passionately in love. In fact, I would say there is no hint of passion. Don't get me wrong, I love a clean love story. But I like a story with heart, and I felt that this story was all about the mind. Which is okay, too, if that's what you like. Another thing, it seemed a more cautionary tale for Christian rather than a Christian book. Everyone was so judgmental and condemning, even at the end. There is no redemption for the village, no real happy ending.

Wendy Sparkes says

3.5* The plot was good - I was intrigued enough that I wanted to find out how it ended. The story did feel a bit disjointed at times, but that could be because this is Meredith's first attempt at a suspense story. I have enjoyed her historicals.

The main thing that irked me was the use of the titles for the characters. The aristocracy, in the UK anyway, has many different rules depending on which title it is. It can be complicated, & unfortunately, I don't think they were used correctly in this story. In particular where Lady Sarah is concerned.
