



## The Italian's Rags-to-Riches Wife

*Julia James*

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Allesandro di Vincenzo is a perfect male specimen. There's no woman he can't have--until Laura Stowe crosses his path.

Laura is plain, poor and hides behind her homely appearance to avoid getting close to people.

But Allesandro needs her family connections to open the door to ultimate corporate power. So he must woo the ugly duckling into his bed--where she will learn what it is to be a beautiful, desired swan.

## **The Italian's Rags-to-Riches Wife Details**

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## **From Reader Review The Italian's Rags-to-Riches Wife for online ebook**

### **Cecelia says**

So Adorable but a little redundant at times

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### **Bookivore says**

♥????

I really didn't like this book. Alessandro was self-centered, mean-spirited and shallow. He didn't like Laura only because she seemed ugly to him. Some might say it was because she was harsh with him but, in fact, she only responded to his rudeness. He was focused solely on her appearances. The minute she was revealed as a beautiful woman, she became interesting to him and he slept with her that same night. A real gentleman !!!

As for Laura, she was no better than him. She was so passive and naive that I wanted to shake her or worse. And she had that bullshit theory she built her whole vision of life on. According to her, beautiful people are nicer than ugly ones because life was sweeter to them. It's a lot of crap and so simplistic that the book became ridiculous. She was so stupid that she felt grateful to Alessandro after their first night together, even after he abandoned her while she was sleeping.

This book really pissed me off.

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### **Fanny says**

Tipica historia harlequin, pero la razon de que le de tan poca puntuacion es porque me molesto mucho la actitud del protagonista y que fuera tan superficial.

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### **Becky says**

I'm having serious trouble getting through this. So many awful depictions of how ugly and repellent the heroine is, really she is described as some sort of freak. Ok so her hair is pulled back, she has thick eyebrows and wears loose clothes over her "sturdy" body. But a day in a spa and she's stunning? Not sure even major plastic surgery could do it but some lotion and makeup? Ok, a good tweeze and makeover lworks wonders, maybe you can go from a 4 to a 7, but from a 1 to a 9???

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### **Hollie says**

repeated a lot.

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### **Nishtha says**

Sigh...

Wow...from the start till the end, this book was heaven.

Where both the leads, Laura and Allesandro was equally independent, stubborn and easy to fall in love with.

The story starts in Italy, where Tomaso comes to know about his granddaughter after his Son's death. He asks Allesandro to get her. Here, the story starts. The heroine is not the usual shy beauty but adamant not really beautiful British girl who is broke. The bills and taxes are piling up and she has no one to turn to. Just then Allesandro comes at her doorstep with a news.

Laura has nothing to do with her grandfather, her father never cared for her and her feelings for her father's side of family are none. But Allesandro brings her to Italy with a bribe. Allesandro is doing it to get the resignation letter from Tomaso so that he can finally be the CEO of the company. Tomaso is not a lost player, he knows how to turn the game in his favour. He also wants what is best for Laura, thus he makes a bargain with Alessandro...

Five stars!

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### **Brenda says**

It's the ugly duckling turns into a beautiful swan sort of story. I liked it especially the end where our hero is just in love with our heroine. It was cute.

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### **StMargarets says**

I liked this much better on a re-read. It's an ugly duckling, enemies-to-lovers story that has something to say about identity as well.

The heroine is an ugly duckling who was rejected before birth by her father and raised by her maternal grandparents who did everything in their power to keep the heroine away from the “bright lights” or more frivolous aspects of life (such as plucking one’s eyebrows).

When the heroine’s father dies, her paternal grandfather becomes aware of her existence and wishes to meet her. He sends the Italian god hero to bring her back to Italy.

It doesn’t go well.

Heroine is struggling to keep the family home going after her grandparents deaths and is worried about paying the tax bill. The hero thinks she is unattractive and rude and lacking in personality.

Which she is.

I’m cutting out lots of plot, but the upshot is that the heroine goes to Italy and gets a makeover and doesn’t recognize herself in the mirror. Neither does the hero, but he recovers quickly and takes her to a party where she basks in male attention. Then they have a magical night out in Rome with some travelogue thrown in.

They become lovers.

You know where this is going, right? Eventually, the heroine finds out the grandfather wanted the H to marry her and his reward would be control of the company. So she throws away her tweezers and returns to England.

The hero is hurt that she walked out on him without an explanation and only tracks her down when he finds out new info about the heroine’s father. (view spoiler)

So the H/h have a discussion about identity and living your truth and the hero convinces her that her truth is that she is beautiful – her grandparents had been lying to her to keep her unattractive. He loves her and thinks her beautiful. Now they will condition their hair together and live in England in the summer at the renovated house. HEA.

I’m usually not too keen on makeover stories but I thought JJ tried to show that the h’s lack of interest in her appearance was from self-esteem issues and that by changing her appearance she was doing something for herself. She had to catch a man for this to be a romance – but the H was already attracted to her body before the makeover so there’s that.

Woman, appearances, the male gaze, the beauty industry - all discussions of these issues are fraught with problems and pitfalls. And it’s intensely personal for every woman. Let’s face it, we live in a culture that elevates physical perfection in women to a crazy degree. I salute Julia James for going there with this topic - even though it may bother many readers.

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### **Mary says**

I really loathed this! Laura equated beauty with kindness (ie beautiful people were kind because they were surrounded by beauty) and nothing in the book refuted this totally unrealistic world view. Allesandro was a total jerk from beginning to end, seeing her only after she underwent a forced make-over.

*Allesandro let his eyes rest on her a moment, taking in the full extent of her unprepossessingness. The girl wasn't just plain—she was ugly. Unkind it might be, but there was no other word for her appearance.*

The ending was so preposterous (view spoiler) that it was almost as if the author just \*had\* to throw in something over-the-top.

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### **Tonya Warner says**

Allesandro helps to bring about the transformation that turns plain, ugly Laura in to a beautiful woman. The realization that she was always beautiful, just hidden escapes Laura, until finally, Allesandro shows her what love can bring about.

A very sweet and endearing story.

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### **Sharn Gill says**

it was an okay read, I really didn't warm up to Laura until the transformation, i mean her philosophy that more attractive people are nicer then ugly people is messed up and you see it in her behaviour as well. She was also too much of a screaming shrew for me like would it kill you to be nice to someone?!,

SPOILER

and in the beginning when she gives a poor old man a heart attack and goes back to thinking about herself rather then feeling sorry for almost killing an old man just really didnt warm her up to me

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### **Melody Cox says**

This was a pretty good book. The story itself is good but the story dragged in many places causing me to fight to remain interested.

Allesandro di Vincenzo can have any woman he wants, and believe me he does...repeatedly! (Although no sex with another during this book.) This story is about Laura, the poor, homely, overweight, and just plain ugly grand-daughter of the man who holds Vincenzo's career in his hands. He is sent to retrieve her and take her to the grandfather she has never met. Allesandro was so embarrassed to be seen with her and dropped her off at a spa for a makeover he is sure will not help. He was taking her out (at the grandfather's request) that evening and he had no hope she would look anything but mud ugly.

Wow, was he ever wrong! She was in front of a mirror and kept looking behind her to see who the men were staring at having no idea it was her. The men went gaga over her but she hears really bad things about Allesandro and decided to go back to her old life.

Will our hero go after her or go back to his man-whoring ways?

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### **Jacqueline says**

This was a three star read with moments that stretched to 4 stars for me. It was sort of different in that the heroine was not attractive. The hero didn't fall for her until she'd had a makeover which is fairly typical in HP land. Still he tried not to hurt her feelings. And one of the elements that worked for me was that her makeover was very much a makeover of her self confidence and I really think that the hero was responding to her new feelings about herself more than to her new looks. And I watched enough episodes of *What Not to Wear* back in the day to realize that a spa type makeover can really change a person's appearance.

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### **Ruka says**

From ugly duckling to super beautiful. Lame storyline.

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### **Debbie DiFiore says**

Okay I wrote a scathingly brilliant review and it just disappeared. My brilliance was fleeting and therefore this review is going to be shorter and less fabulous.

I loved the story. I like Cinderella and makeover stories and this was perfect. I took one star away because of the terrible thoughts of the hero for 30% of the book thinking about how ugly and disgusting the heroine was. He took her to get a makeover and he was thinking you can't put lipstick on a pig! I hated him at this point and deducted a star simply for that. I loved the scene where she saw this beautiful woman in the mirror and didn't know it was her. She almost fainted. She couldn't believe it. That whole section from when he dropped her off at the spa until she saw herself in the mirror was my favorite part. As she was leaving the spa, she apologized to the staff because they were looking at her funny and she thought it was because they were disappointed that they couldn't 'fix' her. She was programmed as a young girl to think she was unattractive and therefore she never tried, except for once and everyone laughed at her. Her Grandparents raised her after her Mom died young. She had met a playboy and got pregnant and they were ashamed of her. They didn't want the granddaughter to do the same. And the reason the Father wouldn't acknowledge her or even respond to the Mother's pleas was quite a stunner for me. Very different. I really loved the story for some reason and I will re-read it again. The hero did redeem himself at the end. I loved the epilogue.

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