



The Love of a Bad Man

Laura Elizabeth Woollett

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A schoolgirl catches the eye of the future leader of Nazi Germany. An aspiring playwright writes to a convicted serial killer, seeking inspiration. A pair of childhood sweethearts reunite to commit rape and murder. A devoted Mormon wife follows her husband into the wilderness after he declares himself a prophet.

The twelve stories in 'The Love of a Bad Man' imagine the lives of real women, all of whom were the lovers, wives, or mistresses of various 'bad' men in history. Beautifully observed, fascinating, and at times horrifying, the stories interrogate power, the nature of obsession, and the lengths some women will go to for the men they love.

The Love of a Bad Man Details

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Author : Laura Elizabeth Woollett

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From Reader Review The Love of a Bad Man for online ebook

Suzanne says

Thank you to Goodreads, the author and Scribe for my physical copy. I was a tad torn about what to rate this book, but I landed on 3. This story was unusual - a fictional account of a handful of 'bad' men from history. The author acknowledges in her notes that she has a fondness for the dark side. This was very dark in its themes, but very, very well written. I was cursing my pretty poor general knowledge as I could not link the real life stories as I was reading along, but low and behold, an appendix and bibliography were popped in, right at the end. I added an extra star for this, and it was the redemption that improved this read for me.

I googled Jonestown. What a messy messy thing that was!

I enjoyed this in the end, the Goodreads win pushed my boundaries again to try new genres.

Will be very interested to see what *Laura Elizabeth Woollett* comes up with next.

Sharah McConville says

I won Laura Elizabethe Woollett's book The Love of a Bad Man through Goodreads Giveaways. These 12 short stories are based on true events featuring evil men such as Hitler and Charles Manson and their wives/girlfriends. Some of the stories were very disturbing such as the one about Myra Hindley and Ian Brady. It's hard to rate this book because it is so well written but gave me nightmares!!

Giselle A Nguyen says

Skillfully written and deeply disturbing, this collection of short stories is fascinating, gruesome and utterly compelling. It's an exploration of the blindness of love as well as power imbalances within relationships, and had me gripped the whole way through. Big trigger warning for sexual violence.

Georgia Hill says

These short stories are completely bonkers, very dark, so fascinating and incredibly well written. Each imagines the life of a woman in a relationship (marriage, de facto, mistress) with a revolting, evil man. So creepy, so good.

Jaclyn Crupi says

I'm completely obsessed with this short story collection: twelve stories fictionalising the lives of real historical women who were the lovers/wives/mistresses/penpals of 'bad' men (serial killers, criminals, cult

leaders, Hitler etc.). It shows the (often violent) lengths these women would go to for their love of a bad man. It's clever and badass and chilling and I can't pick my favourite I loved each story so much.

Laura says

Ooh that was really good -- but creepy and disturbing too

Amy Polyreader says

This is a collection of historical fiction short-stories by the local (Melbourne) female writer Laura Elizabeth Woollett. I have to say, this is a truly brilliant concept for a book, and I've not read anything like it. Woollett has the ability to take the horrific stories that people have heard over and over before, and rewrite them from a fresh angle.

Clearly this is fiction, but whilst there are painful truths to these stories which make them incredibly difficult to read, there is a lot to gain from the imagination of Woollett herself. I've read a few reviews from people who were uncomfortable with the presumptiveness that the women in the stories were less guilty than the 'bad' men around them. My take on this is that it is simply fiction, and it was an interesting perspective to tackle.

After finishing each short story, I found myself immediately Google-ing the characters to educate myself. Woollett did an incredible job of stepping into each character and writing from such varied perspectives. Much like with acting, I always admire a writer who has the ability to make me completely forget their existence as they become the voice of their characters – and Woollett has achieved just that.

I hired this book from the library, but it's one of those books I've become so fascinated by that I'll be searching out a copy for my own shelves as soon as possible. I'm truly anticipating Woollett's next book, whatever that may be.

- from [polreaderblog\[dot\]wordpress\[dot\]com](http://polreaderblog.wordpress.com)

Karen says

It's a question that has preyed on a lot of people's minds over the years - why do women fall for, and stay with, the worst possible men? What author Laura Elizabeth Woollett has done is imagine her author's pen into the minds and lives of some of these women in her series of short stories - **THE LOVE OF A BAD MAN**. Which ends up presenting the reader with an interesting series of fictional looks inside real women's minds that feel very real.

The range of women is historically and geographically varied, and the style of storytelling beguiling enough to have reader's guessing some identities to start. For something with such a dark subject at heart, it's an interesting style, almost light at points. Which makes the idea that you're inside the minds of women like Eva Braun, a disciple of Charles Manson, Myra Hindley and Marceline Jones (wife of Jim Jones of Jonestown massacre infamy), for example, particularly chilling.

Chilling is the word for this entire collection. It's not a heavy-handed message, it's more subtle than that. It's in the way that this author has rendered these women so real, so believable, sympathetic and even likeable in some cases, despite the dreadful things they condone or participate in. All in the name of love.

There are twelve stories in total in **THE LOVE OF A BAD MAN**, and whilst each one can be read reasonably quickly, you will undoubtedly find yourself going back to re-read. Which is well worth the effort as each re-read reveals different layers and even more questions than you might have started out with.

<https://www.austcrimefiction.org/reviews/the-love-of-a-bad-man>...

Jaclyn (sixminutesforme) says

This is a short story collection like no other. It is hauntingly dark, twisted, and macabre, but so beautifully written you can't help but feel entranced by Woollett's writing.

This collection of short stories traces snapshots of the lives of women connected to some of the most heinous criminals in history (think Hitler, Charles Manson, Jim Jones, etc!). She shares their perspectives as participants in the crimes (complete with gory details, so not for the faint of heart!) and also the hypnotic effect that their love for these "bad men" had on their life.

I'd definitely recommend checking out the Appendix which contains a little excerpt about each of the women (I couldn't always pick who they were from the name and story alone admittedly!) - it added helpful context and also shared what ended up happening to each woman, which unsurprisingly was usually death in some form!

This was a unique collection and I appreciated the creative approach to documenting the often overlooked women in notorious (I really hesitate to use the word "famous") true crimes. Definitely also check out **Beautiful Revolutionary**, particularly if you enjoyed the story 'Marceline' in this collection.

Michael Livingston says

I really don't know how to rate this collection - Woollett is an incredibly skilled writer, drawing you into the fucked up relationships between her women characters and their dreadful men. The stories are all based in reality, so you get Eva Braun, Myra Hyndley as narrators, and the overall feeling is a kind of woozily sick horror.

I found the damaged people and the horrible things they did a bit much to deal with at times - probably because these weren't characters, but real people made messy and human by Woollett's writing. So it's a very impressive collection, but not one I'd readily recommend - I definitely wouldn't say that I 'enjoyed' it.

KtotheC says

These were mainly great stories. Some creepy crawlly under your skin disturbing, others went somewhere deeper than that.

Arani Satgunaseelan says

I'm definitely a scaredy cat but this book terrified me but also was gripping. Such an interesting retelling of gruesome stories. Was constantly wiki-ing what actually happened. Loved the changing tone in writing too!

Dasha M says

Loved it.

There is no other way to say it: Laura Elizabeth Woollett's writing is striking, precise and deftly crafted. Enviable so.

The visceral quality of the prose is not so much in its gory detail but in subtle evocative touches. The twelve women who form the framework of *The Love of a Bad Man* diverge in setting and history. They are not all killers, but they are bound to figures eternally tied to devastation, violence and horror.

Full review here: <https://dashamaiorova.wordpress.com/2...>

Carol - Reading Writing and Riesling says

My View:

This is a very very dark read. The premise is tantalising – who doesn't wonder about the partners of some of the most diabolical murderous and sadistic killers in history - how they got together, why they stayed together, how the relationship worked, how much were they involved with the crimes? Who lead who on? Who was the mastermind? These mesmerising short stories are compelling and fascinating, yet simultaneously repulsive – magnetic in effect, tempting the voyeur hidden deep in all of us yet making us shudder as we read on. What powerful reads! The short story has been reborn! Fascinating scenarios and great writing – how did this author develop such a powerful and wicked voice?

This is an author to watch out for! Read if you dare!

Theresa says

The fact that I laughed while reading 'Veronica' probably means I am a serial killer. I am as surprised as you. I was always so quiet and kept to myself. Maybe I should spend less time talking with my dog.
