



The Real Thing

Catherine Alliott

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‘What do you think I am, Laura? Some bored Putney housewife with seven-year itch who’s just ripe for bumping into her glamorous ex-boyfriend on holiday, ditching her nice, safe, comfortable husband and embarking on a steamy affair with him? This isn’t one of your Aga sagas, you know, this is me, Tessa Hamilton, happily married mother of two, and apart from anything else I went out with him years ago...’

Everyone’s got one – an old boyfriend with whom they never fell out of love, they simply parted because the time wasn’t right. And for thirty-year-old Tessa Hamilton it’s Patrick Cameron, the gorgeous, moody, rebellious boy she met at seventeen; the boy her vicar father thoroughly disapproved of; the boy who had left her to go to Italy to paint. And now he’s back.

The Real Thing Details

Date : Published May 8th 1997 by Headline Book Publishing (first published October 10th 1996)

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Author : Catherine Alliott

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From Reader Review The Real Thing for online ebook

Nancy says

I don't know what the author is thinking of but Tessa is a whiner and a bitch that treats her husband like sh#. And she thinks her dad is a bully! She should look in the mirror. On top of that, she lies to and cheats on her husband. Ugh...

Deb says

Some of Catherine Alliott's books I have really enjoyed, but this book was not one those. I really struggled with the characters, they just weren't very likable and then there was a really creepy element to the end.

Barbara Elsborg says

I know that this book will p*** off many readers - modern readers, that is. The main character is hard to like, "cheating" is sort of involved, everything is mad and chaotic and it's like being on a rollercoaster you can't get off.

BUT - reading it for what it is, I think it's full of charm, wit and sharply observed characters and situations. It's just that these days readers have a thing about heroines like Tessa and she's far less acceptable now than in 1996 when the book was written.

I really liked it. I did NOT like the end but even that is because the ending I wanted, is an ending appropriate to this day and not twenty years ago. Tessa is infuriating, crazy, opinionated, awkward, a bad and good person at the same time. All sorts of misunderstandings abound and having reread this book for the third time, I enjoyed it just as much as the first. BUT with the proviso that I think it's of its time and should be judged for that and not alongside more current offerings.

Nehal says

Great!

Lucy McLaurin says

I love these books - funny to the extent of laughing out loud. They also make me feel that I'm "normal"!!

Nicki says

Fizzles a little by the end, but mostly enjoyed this. Catherine Alliott has a very distinctive style for chick lit.

Her characters always seem to be a little "posh", and Tess here is no exception.

A married mother of two, she has always held a torch for her first boyfriend - the one her father did not approve of and tore her apart from.

Years later, on a family holiday, she is reunited with the ex and it seems he still has feelings for her also. Tess is honestly a bit of a twit. I can't say I could relate to her especially, but she is amusing in a Bridget Jones type of way.

I'm not sure how I feel about the ending of the book. I'd kind of twigged to Patrick's true personality from a previous comment he made to Tess, though it wasn't made very apparent until the very end. I did suspect David was having an affair. I'm glad I was wrong. Though honestly, it kind of would have served Tess right. I also could have done without the funeral and the father twists. Unnecessary.

I did enjoy this, but there were a few irritating little bits.

Fariha says

This was one of my light "summer reads". The writing style was witty/funny, atypical of the chick lit genre. It was smooth sailing until I reached the last few chapters where the ridiculous plot twists made me want to throw it out the window. Tessa, the protagonist is annoying at best, especially when she goes into her exaggerated, self obsessed and tedious thought processes. And is it really okay to use the word "Negro" anymore? It was a little detail in passing (the book was written in 1996 - less sensitive times I presume?), but it did leave me quite irritated.

Nina Draganova says

08.10.2016

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Nicole van der Elst says

Not the best Catherine Alliot book. The main storyline, reliving the moments with your first crush, keeps you truly occupied. She didn't need all the turns to the plot in the last hundred pages. The story could do without the is he really my father episode. Although all in all I would say it is an okay read

Susan says

I have enjoyed Catherine Alliott's books before - but not this one. It was meant to be a frothy chick lit, that provided laughs but I could not be bothered with most of the characters and the positions they found themselves in - notably Tessa. It was a stereotyped image of Londoners holidaying in the old ancestral home in the Scottish Highlands. It was hard to find credible artist Patrick's home, immaculately furnished inside and out, staffed with maids, yet only lived in part of the year. At over 500 pages long, the writing was

padded out e.g. Tessa's tedious thoughts, the funeral and its aftermath, and how did the farcical episode of the B & B in Yorkshire add to the storyline? I got bored with it and felt little sympathy with anyone, apart from possibly Tessa's husband, David.

Kelly says

Worst Catherine Alliott I've read. Main character, Tess, was so unlikeable. I was hoping for more from the storyline, but the plot took some weird turns and just became stupid. I really enjoyed the first few books I randomly picked up of Catherine Alliott's but unfortunately they've gotten worse and worse.

Robert says

Amusing tale of infidelity

Naz says

I don't know how to describe this book. I started off thinking it was going to go nowhere, but it does give you some surprises.

Marcia says

I gave it three stars but I think that I enjoyed it more than that. Plot a little rediculous and motivation not really convincing but some parts had me laughing out loud. Priceless. Theme is family dynamics and romantic choices. Tessa Hamilton is our anti-heroine. David, the barrister, and Patrick, the artist, are the love interest. Sister Laura, Reverand Ian Fergusson and his brother Robert, mother Rachel, cousin Penny and neighbor Madeleine provide the dynamics. Oh and there is also Willie. Tessa seems a little older than 30 and with perhaps more flaws than necessary but I had fun with her.

Paigepossum says

Even though I disagree with a solid amount of the subject matter (sorry but cheating is never okay) it was an enjoyable read
