

A Previous Engagement

A NOVEL



When friendship mixes with romance,
things can get weird...

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Tessa Monroe knows how to do exactly two things: climb her way up the corporate ladder and cheer up her best friend Christian Douglas, the main man in her life since paste was a snack. With the exception of a Ring Pop proposal and a pool-side kiss in college, not much has changed between them in 25 years. Now that they're all grown up, the two friends find themselves headed down two different paths: Tessa looking for her dream job and Christian looking for his dream girl.

Luckily for Christian, Tessa knows just the girl who'll mend his heart after a bad breakup. But when things between Christian and his new girl Savannah start to get serious, Tessa isn't feeling the pride and happiness she expected... In fact, there's something weird in her heart that she can't quite name.

With no plans for romance or marriage, Tessa isn't prepared to confront her true feelings for Christian. After all they've been through together, can she risk her heart, his happiness, and their friendship by telling him the truth? OR does she run away from the romance that began in the third grade?

Friendship and romance combine with messy results, but *A Previous Engagement* celebrates the humor of real-life love in a story that resonates as honest from beginning to end.

A Previous Engagement Details

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From Reader Review A Previous Engagement for online ebook

BookWorm 221 says

Book number 6 of the year. A previous engagement by Stephanie Haddad. I gotta be honest and say that the first thing that I noticed about this book was that it was for free on kindle, but what a great book, it's just fun and a good read really, there's a lot of romance and friendship all that things that make this book an excellent read for girls, I read it in about a day and a half and left me wanting to read other works by this author.

Nicole Hanson says

I was lucky and won this book as a giveaway here on goodreads. I'm so glad that I did cause I LOVED IT! After the first chapter I did not want to put it down! I loved all the characters and am sad that the book is over! I could have read on and on to find out what happens to them!

Kathleen Crowell says

Quick easy read. Fun--predictable, but worth the time if you enjoy these types of romances/chick lit. I could dissect it a bit, but it's not worth it--it was a fun read--don't think it was meant to be a literary character study...

Katelyn Tustin says

This book is awesome. Here is why: it is suppose to be a nice fun romance comedy. And that is exactly what you get. Are some of the plot obstacles typical to a romance comedy? Of course! There is a reason why they are typical, it is because they work. Tess is a flawed character which is exactly how I like them. Perfection is boring and I want nothing of it. The book is a perfect length. It gets you invested but does not drag on in mindless chatter just to please critics who want some deep meaning. Dear Stephanie, anyone who said negative nasty comments (I am not saying that people are not allowed to like this book, everyone is different and you can not please everyone; I am just talking to the really nasty people who write things just to be heard) can just go write their own book if they think they can do a better job than this delightful novel. Please ignore them and keep writing and keep publishing.

Natalia says

When i was reading this book it was like i was watching a romantic comedy type movie(which i personally loooove). It was so cute and made me want to keep reading all the time, wanting to know what was going to happen next. So if your into romantic books and even movies, this is definitely one you should read. =)

Jason Halstead says

Either because of my testicles or because I'm just that way, I avoid romances. They seem to only be possible when incredibly stupid people are the characters. The main character in *A Previous Engagement* (a clever title, by the way), fits the category perfectly. I thought the male paramour did as well until I was most of the way through the book. Then I realized he wasn't suffering from a series of major concussion, he was just overly sentimental and emotional for a man. Definitely not a man's man, but perhaps he fits with the modern metrosexual kind of guy that's become so popular. I prefer the 80's action movie hero kind of guy. Or *The Duke*.

One other thing bothered me - the book leaves the impression that it's unfavorable for a woman to have a successful career. The main character strives to do so, but she's not complete without a partner and family in her life. I find that a flawed lesson. Why should a person be required to have a family to be complete?

That's the bad, here comes the good.

The book was very well written. The main character amused me time and again (when she wasn't aggravating me by being oblivious), thanks to the author's skill with putting words together. I faintly remember one chapter starting with a sentence that was too long and made no sense, but I was able to move past it easily and find no other flaws. Coming from another writer, that's a major success.

I read the book in a matter of hours, another feather in Stephanie's hat. I abhor the genre yet she kept me reading. I wanted to reach in and strangle the characters because they seemed to be inexplicably stupid from the very beginning, but still I read on. I say 'inexplicably stupid' but that does not mean they are without precedent. Virtually any romance movie available or even some distant relatives of mine have displayed similar or near exact levels of ignorance and dumbassery. So yes, I thought they were dumb but it's a dumb that I've seen many times before in fiction and in fact.

For someone who enjoys the genre, I recommend the book highly.

Tina says

I think I ultimately enjoyed this book so much because I could relate to it.

My best friend growing up was a boy. No one could understand how we could be friends and nothing more. It caused issues in many of our relationships, often times requiring one of us to fade into the background for the other persons happiness.

We, however, remained only friends through the years and are now both happily married to other people. That doesn't stop me wondering what might have been. This book let me delve into the fantasy a bit, albeit in an over the top romantic way.

I enjoyed the fact that the book focused on these decisions, and sometimes sacrifices, we make in our lives. Tess, struggled with the decision of being a career woman or settling down. It took her a bit too long, in my opinion, to figure out that settling down wasn't the same as settling.

It was a cute story with a sweet love story. I read it in one day.

Jill says

This is one of several free or almost free books I downloaded to my Kindle. It was a fun quick read. Fairly predictable but still lots of fun.. Not generally a fiction reader so I was surprised.

Stephanie says

I absolutely loved this book!! It was such a nice light read and I really found myself sucked in. I loved how much the Tess and Christian showed their emotions and just how connected the two of them were. I found myself really feeling for the characters, more than I ever have before. I really want to check out more books from this author, I didn't want this one to end!

Huma Rashid says

Oh. My. God. This was terrible.

I had this book on my Kindle (Thanks, Pixel of Ink!) and wanted something to read to unwind before bed as I waited for my Tylenol PM to kick in. (Wasn't feeling well - I always want to read romance novels when I'm under the weather. It's a thing with me.)

It was absolutely terrible. The heroine was unlikeable. That's just the best way to put it. She was just unlikeable. Not a terrible person, but just someone I could never imagine myself rooting for. She was just unlikeable.

The supporting cast was lackluster at best and annoying at worst. And there were a lot of supporting characters - too many, in my opinion. There's a fine line between an appropriately sized supporting cast that mitigates the feeling of the hero and heroine existing in their own little bubble, and a supporting cast that is so large as to just be annoying and dilute the story.

The dialogue was ... cheesy and try-hard. The dialogue tried too hard to be cutesy and original, reminiscent of Juno. It was a wonder that I could even read it, given how hard I was rolling my eyes.

One of my favorite words to describe a well written romance novel is "tight." Not in the slang sense of the word, but in the sense of it being concise without being abrupt, of the story being contained and efficient without feeling rushed, and there not being even a sentence that feels ... unnecessary. Julia Quinn, a Regency romance writer, is a master at this. Almost all of her novels are incredibly tight. The story moves along smoothly and efficiently, without bogging the reader down in things (people, places, dialogue) that don't matter. (JQ doesn't always get it right, of course, but she usually does a fantastic job.)

I guess my main point is that a good romance novel doesn't make you want to skim through any scenes or passages. And with this book, pretty much ALL I did was skim. (Well, once I got a proper feel for it and realized that the dialogue came from a tin ear, the characters were totally meh, and the story wasn't much

better. THEN I skimmed, and I didn't miss a damn thing - I could tell you each and every little plot bunny in perfect sequence and explain the supposed ins and outs of the plot conflict.)

Do not waste your time.

Julia Hughes says

Goodbye Yellow Brick Road ... Like many of us who yearn for somewhere over the rainbow, Tess Monroe discovers that happiness and her heart's desire can be found in her own back yard.

This is a classic 'boy next door' story, romance in its purest form and I lapped it up unashamedly.

Although a tale as old as time itself, the author breathes life into her characters, and I practically experienced a New England Spring, and walked in the marbled halls of Prime Investments with Tess as she applied her talent for planning marketing strategies whilst learning how to deal with underlings in her new executive role.

Tess is determined to make a success of her career, especially as her romantic life is non-existent. Her best friends since schooldays Kendra (now a successful restaurant owner, wife and mother) and Christian (engaged, talented and sought after photographer) appear to be doing better in their personal life. So it is a shock when Marcy, Christian's wife-to-be breaks off their engagement. Even more so when she cites the reason: Christian is too close to his old school friends, particularly Tess.

Feeling guilty at being the catalyst, telling herself the affection between her and Christian is platonic, Tess is on a mission to find Christian the perfect girlfriend. In any case, she tells herself she is a career girl, and has already accepted an even more executive role in Chicago. The fact that she promised to marry Christian 'if no-one else came along' when they were kids in the school playground – well that was just a childish game. The reader can see what Tess cannot. In a hundred different ways Christian silently proclaims his love for her.

Tess is very likeable: Always willing to help, albeit with disastrous results sometimes, considerate and willing to mentor her staff, courageous when facing down sexual advances from her boss. Yet I found myself wanting to shout at her – tell her to open her eyes and let go her pride and preconceived ideas and just kiss the man. When she finally does, she discovers Christian has the power to make her pulses race and set her skin on fire. But has Tess waited too long?

I wanted to find out so badly I read this story in one sitting.

The story is told by Tess in first person pov, beautifully framed by prologue and afterward in omnipresent pov. I enjoyed this book – the author has a gift for description, a light sure touch when it comes to humour and the bedroom scenes were handled with just the right mixture of decorum and passion.

Jennifer says

A Previous Engagement is very typical, predictable chick lit. The reason that I can't give it more than two stars, is that there was really nothing at all unique or surprising in this story. In fact, the miscommunications

that occurred to keep the two main characters, Tessa & Christian, apart, were so predictable that it wasn't even interesting. In fact, if Tessa & Christian had actually ever talked or acted like the almost 30 year old adults they were supposed to be, there would have been no story at all.

The book also seemed to have a lot of filler that served no purpose except to make this story long enough to publish as a novel. For example, one of the reasons given for Tessa being so career focused, was that she didn't want to end up like her mother. Well her mother was a very minor character, and if she was supposed to have been a bad mother, I didn't see it except for some random references throughout.

Tessa's lesbian sister was also introduced and could have been interesting, but her role in the book was completely marginalized.

Overall, this is just generic chick lit with no unique storyline or characters to make it stand out.

Nicki says

I've won this through Goodreads' First Reads Program. I really loved this book; I couldn't put it down! It was a great romance novel. I didn't like the fact that Tess *needed* a man in her life to be happy, but I was willing to go with it because, hey, it's a romance novel and that's what happens. By the end, I was just *screaming* for her to get together with Christian already, because it was so obvious that he loved her. I'd recommend this book for anyone! :)

Constance Av says

This was a light and not so thrilling story. Our main protagonist, Tessa, is a workaholic and her life depends on her job and her career. She has two really close friends and one of them is Christian. While Tessa tries to show her talent and how much her job means to her, Christian breaks up with his fiancée and now he is searching for a new woman aka wife, as he is so determined to get married.

Firstly, the way the story begins is very pleasant and happy and cute, but I don't think 5 year old -there are supposed to be 5 right?- talk that way. It brought a smile on my face the way Christian tried to reveal his feelings but it really didn't feel that real for a 5 year old.

I love how their relationship and friendship managed to stay healthy all these years but seriously how could they not see that they liked each other earlier? I mean they had their moments in the past and they thought that there wasn't anything else there, just friendship. That was unrealistic as well.

Tessa was really hard on herself and i didn't like many of her decisions. I liked her but also i didn't. She was do caught up with work and her career, which is good , but she didn't allow herself to have fun and enjoy the things around her.

I didn't like Christian's character along the way. At first I felt sorry for him, for his break up, his struggle with his feelings but he was always pushing Tessa, especially in the end. The dude just wanted to get married and he didn't care who his wife would be. Thats the idea i got. He pretty much confirmed my statement at his birthday party.

And her friend, wasn't very likable either. If you know that your friends have feelings for each other you say or do something, and you can't possibly remain oblivious to your friends' obliviousness.

It was one of the books that I think that would look better in a movie concept. It would have been a good movie, with the romance and everything, because the story was movie material and it wasn't a good story for a book.

The only character I really liked was Finn the goldfish and Tessa managed to kill him. Thanks a lot Tessa!

Sewlyfluff says

A cute and fun read - I read it in about 1.5 days. It was a catching story - that I couldn't put down and wanted to know what would happen. It was a little frustrating the obviousness of their feelings and their utter unawares. But this is what made me not want to put it down because I just wanted them to figure it out! I know this frustration first hand - I've been in a VERY similar situation - and by the time we figured it out it was too late for us - but although you may think it's annoying and un-realistic - take it first hand from me - it happens - it is possible to be so wrapped up in other things that you don't understand your own feelings.
