



Never the Time and the Place (The Best of Betty Neels)

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How could he be so handsome...and yet so cold?

Ward Sister Josephine Dowling was heartbroken over the end of her engagement, but how could she marry a man she didn't really love? What she didn't expect, though, was to have to cope with her tears and the arrogant attitude of the brilliant Dr. Julius van Tacx.

He seemed to make a habit of finding her just when she was feeling—and looking—her worst. And when he was at his most handsome....

Never the Time and the Place (The Best of Betty Neels) Details

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From Reader Review Never the Time and the Place (The Best of Betty Neels) for online ebook

Leona says

This was a cute and enjoyable read.

It's slightly different in that the heroine is tall, gorgeous and curvy instead of the typical "mousy" one that Betty uses a lot in her stories. The heroine happens to be engaged to another man and only two months away from the wedding when she meets the good RDD. (Rich Dutch Doctor) They meet quite accidentally when he is visiting friends who happen to live in the same village where she is from. They end up working together when he back-ups another surgeon that has to take an extended leave.

These two had quite the sparks between them and it was apparent to everyone (except the heroine) that the doctor had fallen hard.

Though I enjoyed this one, it wasn't one of my favorites by Betty. There wasn't any tension in the story other than the heroine's insecurities and lack of common sense when it came to Julius. I so much prefer it when there are credible outside forces jeopardizing the relationship. Even the OW, was very tame considering she was thrown in at the very last minute without any rhyme or reason.

If you are on a quest to read all of Betty's books, I don't think this will disappoint. But if you are just starting out on your Betty Neel voyage, there are other more popular ones that I would recommend: Henrietta's Own Castle, Caroline's Waterloo, Tabitha in the Moonlight, Matilda's Wedding (White Weddings), Winter Wedding

Robin says

3 1/2 STARS

Mudpie says

3.75* upgraded to 4*

Accidentally read this 1985 book when I should have been reading Once For All Time, 1984. Unfortunately my library didn't have this book in the catalogue!

A really delightful story and Julius was a great Betty Neels hero! I like Josephine too! She's a magnificently built size 14 woohoo! Gorgeous and lovely personality to boot! And a capable ward sister! Julius was a gynaecologist though...not sure I like my man to be looking at women parts all day for a living though:p

Jo was engaged to miserly Malcolm, but she's sensible enough to end the engagement, even though it was three months away from the big day! Why did everyone think she was jilted if she's such a catch and Malcolm unlikeable? Anyway I think Josephine felt so guilty she never explained to outsiders that she had

ended things, not him.

Julius was a fast worker! He met Josephine in October, and before Christmas he'd married her, FINALLY made his love at first sight declaration and HEA. Phew! A very fast paced story and thoroughly enjoyable! Loved how he wooed her relentlessly, and got into her parents' good books charming them hehe!

A huge clue he was not as cold as his first encounter with Josephine was how right after reaching his destination, he wasted no time in identifying Josephine... As luck would have it, he'd be locum at Jo's hospital in the coming month. I knew he was in love with Jo from the beginning because he gave her a big white (cream satin) wedding with the full works! A romantic and beautiful church which he loved, bridesmaids, whole family flown over from Holland, the whole village invited and a working holiday-cum-mini honeymoon! His jealous rage during the honeymoon was very telling but Jo was just not very perceptive.

Oh interestingly, Josephine had asked Julius to put the pink diamond engagement ring on her himself! Love a heroine who asked for what she wanted! Plus she got the fur coat and house tour of love!

I really hated how each time our hero or heroine wanted to have The Talk and they got interrupted. This is the basis of the book, see the title? It's derived from a quote!

‘At last—the time and the place, but only you can tell me if I have the loved one, Josephine, my darling.’

I loved that he kept trying to make his love declaration, as usually it's the heroine given the runaround!

Euphemia and Tane from An Apple from Eve make cameo appearance here. They have two children, a boy and a girl, just three months old now!

PS. We have a missing dog mystery...Julius was supposed to have two dogs, the second which his father was supposed to bring back during their dinner party. But we never saw or read about it afterwards till the end of the book!

Pamela Shropshire says

3 3/4 stars. Josephine Dowling is “a strapping creature with a lovely face and enormous grey eyes;” she also has bright chestnut hair and is Ward Sister on the “gyny” ward. She is engaged to marry Malcom and a date has been set in 3 month’s time; she is having last minute thoughts. She is taking a walk with Cuthbert, the family dog, in the rain near her Wiltshire village home (her father is the local GP), and discussing the matter with him when she meets a handsome man in a Bentley. She chews him out for nearly running her over (slight exaggeration); they have a short conversation; he asks if she is married and when she tells him no, he remarks (rather ungrammatically), “Something for a man to be thankful for.”

The man is staying with a local family, the Forsyths, from whom he finds out her occupation, workplace and the fact that he will be seeing her soon. And indeed he does, when he arrives to take over for the senior consultant, Mr. Bull. Naturally, all the nurses are twitterpated over Julius van Tacx, but not Josephine. She has too much on her mind, like crying off on her upcoming nuptials. Unlike both Eugenia Smith (Heidelberg Wedding) and Julia Mitchell (At the End of the Day), she wastes no time in getting rid of the unloved and unwanted Malcom. However, her pride is hurt when Malcom shrugs off the broken engagement and she

mourns what might have been.

Julius urges her to take some time off, not that Josephine needs much urging. Autumn in the country is her favourite time of year. They see each other quite a lot since he is still staying with the Forsyths. He takes her to Stourton where they have tea and walk around the lake. He eats supper with the family and when he kisses her goodbye in front of her family, Mrs. Dowling immediately knows which way the wind is blowing.

Julius wastes no time in courting Josephine, even though she is unaware of his intentions. She knows that she feels comfortable with him and is vaguely unhappy when he is away. She thinks he has gone back to Holland but when she arrives at her home and finds him there, she is surprised and excited. They go for a long walk together then return home for tea when word comes of an accident at a nearby farm; Mr. Dowling, Julius and Josephine go along to help out.

After church on Sunday, Julius invites Josephine to go back to Stourton to look around the church. It is there that he proposes a MOC, telling her that he wants to be married there, to her, of course. He has told her that he was recently engaged to Magda that she left him for someone else (someone richer). He gives her the usual spiel about getting to know one another before living as man and wife. He tells her to think about it.

Of course, she decides to accept and they get married in 3 week's time. She wears cream satin and her bridesmaids (sister Natalie and Staff Nurse Joan) were claret-colored velvet. Julius has to go to Leeds for work and she goes along, which accounts for the "honeymoon." Josephine is left on her own a lot and does a lot of shopping (Julius gives her a wad of cash and she learns he is very rich).

On the last evening there, she has dressed (in a fabulous new old rose dress, with the fur coat he bought her) and is waiting in the hotel lounge for him to return and take her to a party. She attracts a lot of looks from men and one offers to buy her a drink but she has politely turned him down. Julius comes in and tells her, "I expected you to be in your room, not down here waiting to be picked up." Josephine is understandably furious and when he begs her pardon, she forgives him but tells him, "Next time I shall slap your face." He assures her there won't be a next time. Later that evening when they return from the party, she has her DR.

The next day they go back to her parents' home and have an early Christmas dinner, pick up and drop off presents and say goodbye before going to Holland. They are left alone for a bit and Julius starts to tell her something, but gets interrupted. Again, in the car, he begins, "Josephine, I must talk to you. . ." and then sees that she is asleep. In London at their pied-a-terre flat, for the third time he says, "We have to talk," but the housekeeper comes in to consult with Josephine about food to stock while they are over in Holland.

They go over to Holland where she settles into his stately home and meets the staff. Julius's family is coming over to meet Josephine. While they are waiting, Julius gives her pearl earrings (to go with his mother's pearl necklace that she wore at their wedding) and says, "Josephine, I have wanted to say something to you and each time I was prevented; once you were asleep . . . I think that I should have said it long ago, but perhaps it is not too late, I believe not. . ." when their guests begin to arrive. Julius says, "I have a strong feeling of sympathy for your Mr. Browning; did he not complain 'Never the time and the place and the loved one altogether'?"

Poor Julius! The fates have conspired against him. The family loves Josephine; she meets his best friend Tane and wife Euphemia (An Apple for Eve). She is introduced to the village and all is going well, except he just can't find time to make his Declaration. Fate has another nasty trick up her sleeve – Magda shows up. There is nothing subtle about this Veronica; she makes it clear that she is going to make a play for Julius. Which makes it doubly unfortunate that Julius is delayed that evening with a medical emergency – of course

Josephine thinks he is wining and dining Magda.

The next day is the school party, sponsored by Julius. He has asked Josephine to stand in for him. This is a truly delightful scene – I laughed out loud several times, especially when Jo pulls the teachers into the conga line. “The assistant was enjoying herself, Juffrouw Smit wore the resigned look of someone who has just discovered that nothing will ever be the same again.” Haha!

Julius arrives then and wraps things up quickly and takes Jo home, tells Borren to hold all calls and make sure they aren’t disturbed.

Finally! He tells her that he fell in love with her at first sight – kissing follows (but not too much because tea is coming in 30 minutes).

I have mixed feelings about this book. A lot of it is somewhat forgettable, but there are some really delightful bits, which I have mentioned – where she tells him she will slap him the next time; the scene in the church where he proposes; and of course the school party. I really, really like that he tried several times to make his Declaration. I don’t really think the appearance of Magda was necessary. Not my favorite, but certainly not the worst, either.

Drebbles says

In this charming romance by Betty Neels, Josephine Dowling is working as a ward sister at a London hospital and engaged to be married when she meets Julius van Tacx. But she's not really sure she loves Malcolm, her fiancé, and is having doubts about marrying him, and especially living so close to his family, so she breaks off her engagement. As if having to deal with a broken engagement wasn't enough, she has to deal with Julius who always seems to turn up at the worst possible time. When he asks her to marry him, she finds herself agreeing although she's not in love with him. But her feelings soon change to love. How can she stay married to a man who doesn't return her feelings?

I love reading Betty Neels when I need to escape from the real world. There's nothing surprising in her books, you know that the couple will meet, clash, have a misunderstanding or two, maybe be involved in a crisis where the heroine will shine (in this book it's a car accident) and eventually will live happily ever after. And, some days, that's just the kind of book I need to read!

Tonya Warner says

Very sweet. A wonderful tale.

Andrea Guy says

This is a small departure from Betty's usual books. For one, the heroine has a bit of a backbone and she's not poor nor is she plain. She does however fall in love with the arrogant surgeon, who is assisting at her hospital.

The become fast friends and when Josephine's engagement to another doctor ends, Julius, jumps in and offers her an unconventional proposal, even though its apparent to everyone but her that they are already in love.

Sure its cheesy but its the kind of book you read and think, "why can't this happen to me!"

Heather says

I'm quite fond of this one also. It's a little different. The hero is positively edgy for a Betty Neels hero which, admittedly, isn't saying much. I think he might sneer. But only once.

Michelle says

Lovely

If you enjoy your romances clean, light, fluffy and vintage then you will enjoy the wonderful work of Betty Neels

Allison says

A good book, the usual betty neels. The only thing is, the second dog never showed up at home.
