



## **The Once And Future Prince (Castaldini Crown #1)**

*Olivia Gates*

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## **The Once And Future Prince (Castaldini Crown #1) Olivia Gates**

He would have been king of Castaldini...until scandal sent Prince Leandro D'Agostino into exile. Now Phoebe Alexander, his secret lover who'd refused to leave with him, had come to convince him to accept his rightful crown. But the pain of betrayal still coursed through Leandro's veins. He would rule only if Phoebe bowed to his wishes.

Scorched from the decisions of her past, Phoebe was willing to do Leandro's royal bidding. She knew she could never be his queen, but she would freely become the prince's lover. Then an unexpected pregnancy changed everything.

## **The Once And Future Prince (Castaldini Crown #1) Details**

Date : Published (first published 2009)

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Author : Olivia Gates

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## From Reader Review The Once And Future Prince (Castaldini Crown #1) for online ebook

Ashley F says

Review posted @ <http://tsukibooks.blogspot.com>

This was another book I got as part of a library bundle for my kindle. I started out reading the bundle just for the one Maya Banks book in the Anetakis series but I read a few of the other ones too. This was my favorite of the bundle and I've been playing with just buying the kindle edition so I can reread it at my leisure.

This one had all the elements I love in a Harlequin book.

1. Take an alpha male.
2. Take a female with backbone
3. Mix in some complicated royal family decree
4. Add some angst and self-doubt.
5. Bake in a desert nation and allow to rise.

\*\*Allergy notice: Contains angst, misunderstandings, and personal servant who explains everything to the dumbass hero.

I love a good dumbass hero. Leandro is an idiot for most of the book. He thinks only of himself in the beginning and cannot seem to understand why Phoebe is not more accommodating. Once Phoebe and Leandro meet up again after nearly a decade, he begins to realize he never should have let her go.

The basic premise revolves around a small kingdom whose king is dying. He needs one of three men to take the throne but unfortunately all three were deemed unable to rule due to illegitimacy, liberal politics, etc. Leandro was deemed the least offensive and Phoebe, a negotiator, was dispatched to convince him to return. Of course both are still in love with the other and sparks fly immediately.

I loved the way Leandro and Phoebe danced around each other. The point-of-view switched constantly allowing me to enjoy the scene from Leandro's POV and then it switched to Phoebe's. What was fascinating was the differences between them. Leandro saw Phoebe as cool and detached while Phoebe thought she was being reckless, foolish, and was too affected.

Phoebe was willing to sell herself for the good of the country but she made it clear she was well aware it was to be a short-lived affair. Honestly she never had to give herself to Leandro. The kingdom had options and she knew it. It was more a matter of wanting to be with Leandro again.

The sex was explosive. I really want a copy of this for my kindle just so I can reread the sex scenes. The scenes in the harem were so spicy-hot I enjoyed them a few times before returning them. I love amazing sex scenes. Most romance readers say the epitome of the courtship is the sex. With the advent of erotic romance in the mainstream romances, I think the amazing sex scene or the flawless quality of one is really an amazing thing. So much is repetitive and boring but this one was spectacular.

I would highly, highly, highly recommend this book.

Published by Harlequin

192 Pages

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### **Angela says**

I can't recommend "The Once And Future Prince" (Castaldini Crown #1) by Olivia Gates highly enough.

I mean the intense, passionate way Olivia Gates writes is just freakin' awesome!! I don't know of anyone else who writes like that! I know it sounds corny but her unique style of writing just touches your heart and soul.

Please treat yourself to a rare reading experience that you can relate to, whoever you are. Seriously, aren't we all just trying to find that special someone "who was born to love us"?

:)

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### **Maire says**

The Once and Future King by Olivia Gates

(Leandro D'Agostino & Phoebe Alexander)

This was the first book in the trilogy. Leandro & Phoebe are two people hurting from the anguish and deception of the past. Leandro comes across in the beginning of the book as an unforgiving man who doesn't need anyone in his life. Phoebe is the one person that can help Leandro if he'll let her. Phoebe is his past, a past that he wants to forget. The real star of this series will not be uncovered until you read the epilogue of The Illegitimate King.

Read this series in the correct order, each marvelous story will tear your heart. Each couple will make you cry and rejoice.

This book is a five star read. A MUST read.

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### **Marie Andersson says**

Loved!!!

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### **Tanya Mayes says**

This is a must read book. This is the story of lust, betrayal, unrequited love, renewed love, and learning of trust. Leondro and Phoebe is a passionate couple because of a misunderstanding spent 8 years apart only to come back together and find out that the fire still burns between them but both are very cautious to let go again.

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### **Tia says**

I really love the emotional depths this author went in this book. It was great to read and feel everything the hero and heroine were. Also the fact that the hero owned up to his mistakes and actually begged, that was totally epic! The hero was a good quality hero all around once he shaped up and the heroine was a complete and utter goddess to put up with everything she went through, including the emotional tear down from the hero. Totally worth the read!

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### **Stella Rhys says**

I have to start this review with a declaration. Olivia Gates' status as a USA Today Bestselling Author, while deserved, is not enough. She is a master at description. This romance novel tells a passion-filled tale of lust, love and betrayal. A slew of emotions are drawn from you with just a few of Ms Gates' artful words.

Here are some of my favourite lines from the prologue alone:

"He prowled toward her, his shirt phosphorescent in the dimness, unbuttoned to the waist, revealing chiseled power that bunched and gleamed with every step." - Page 10

"He reached out to her, warm, large hands singeing her, steadyng her body, shaking everything else." - Page 10

"The moment her tremors hit him, his pupils obliterated his irises, black holes that sucked coherence from her mind, wrenched hunger from her depths." - Page 11

"It was like a dam had burst. Violent. Deluging. Their mouths collided, merged, flooding her with what she'd never thought to find until him. Oneness. Need that sliced her open." - Page 11

Rest fully assured that the novel only gets better as it progresses. My mouth watered for more within the opening pages, the prologue plunging me into the allure of a story like perhaps only one book I have ever read before. And, it isn't just about love and the betrayal of a lover. The plot is as intriguing. It is all so personal to the characters and readers are allowed unguarded access to their every thought and motivation. You're right there with them, cheering their wins and booing their mistakes.

Want a little more?

"He snatched her scream of release into his ravaging mouth, roared his own, jetting into her depths to the rhythm of her convulsions until she lay beneath him, boneless. Devoured. Replete. Leandro. Her lion man." - Page 11

The novel is a work of perfection, right down to the names of each character. As someone who puts a lot of thought into names, I sincerely appreciated Olivia Gates' characters. With a male protagonist like Leandro D'Agostino, our lion man, packing as much dominant, powerful ferocity as the animal, and a female protagonist like Phoebe Alexander, the compassionate, radiant and bright negotiator of Castaldini, as alluring

as the moon, every detail evokes a response that keeps you turning pages long after your bedtime.

Olivia Gates' supporting cast of characters are amazing as well. Each with a clearly defined personality, affording readers instant understanding of what to expect from them and what their roles in all the drama will be. Clarity of this sort can be lost so easily.

The pacing of her story is fantastic and her prose flows with lyrical grace. I may be waxing it on thick with this review, not that it makes any of my words less true, but Olivia Gates is the romance novelist whose talent I aspire towards.

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### **Jenn - WebbWeaver Reviews says**

The Once & Future Prince is a story set in a fictional kingdom in the midst of upheaval. Castaldini needs a new king and Leandro is the best choice. That's the background.

The real story is about two people rebuilding a relationship that once fractured and tore both of them apart. Coming together again to save the kingdom, these two people Leandro and Phoebe, learn to trust both each other and themselves and learn how to live with openness and maturity.

The secondary characters in this story are great, especially Ernesto, the man who has looked after Leandro since he was orphaned.

An extremely intense and tender read as always with Olivia Gates.

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### **Jennifer Mcpherson says**

Awesome!!! I'm never disappointed when I'm reading an Olivia Gates book...well done .. Thanks your gift is magnificent...

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### **Joy says**

I want to go to Castaldini, even live there. Olivia Gates brings this fictional Mediterranean kingdom to such vivid life, I felt I was there, breathing its air and having its sun on my skin. Leandro and Phoebe have a tormented past together, and they'd both been exiled, one from his kingdom and everything he's loved, starting by her, while she was exiled from her very heart and any hope of happiness when she lost him. Finding their way back to each other was wonderful and when it all goes wrong again, terribly painful. A fantastic start to the Castaldini Crown series and worthy of many rereads!

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### **Maria Lina says**

I just finished reading The Once and Future Prince. I only hope that this review expresses my appreciation and admiration for Olivia Gates' writing and story telling talent and how beautifully she uses words to paint pictures and to bring to the mind's eye so many wonderful metaphors that at times it seemed poetic. I found the imagery that she's created, and has woven through the entire book, to be captivating and sensual. Let me elaborate.

We'll start with Leandro and Phoebe's relationship at the beginning of the story (a flashback, eight years prior). She created a young relationship that began with an all consuming desire. They were both so insecure: he for the crown, and she for her standing in his world, that they allowed those insecurities to tear them apart. Their growth could have ended there, and they could have remained static characters, but then this book wouldn't have been nearly as fantastic as it is.

I might seem sappy, but the part that made me cry the most was when they were flying over Castaldini after eight years of exile. It was so apparent that he loved his country, and coming back was emotional for him. Phoebe had the correct instinct to give him space, and to allow him to experience that while staying close enough if he wanted to borrow some of her strength. The depth of his pain was so subtly written that it took by surprise and I wept while visualizing him looking out of the plane window. Brilliantly done, especially since I never expected that scene to touch me the most.

Ms. Gates' exercised patience and restraint in getting them back together in a fully physical way. This book is rare in the sense that she allowed us to live in their world while they nurtured and grew their relationship. So often in romance, the real relationship doesn't begin until the book is almost over. In this book, you allowed us to savor the build up of their love for a great portion. I love that!

Another thing I noticed and really enjoyed about this relationship was the laughter, and the light hearted banter that was present and incorporated into their dynamic. Often times, especially in 'Royal' literature, the interactions are so formal, almost stuffy. In this case the author has infused a breath of fresh air into their otherwise ancient world. This made it much easier to believe their love, and gave us a reprieve from the intensity of their passion.

When they finally did consummate their relationship, this is where my vocabulary eludes me and I sound like an embarrassed teenager. In a word, wow! That was hot! That was deep (uh, pun only partially intended) and that was naughty! Uh, I'm impressed! I had no idea Desire could get so hot! Leandro certainly is an alpha, in every sense of the word.

This was beautifully written. Once again, Olivia Gates has taken us into an imaginary world that takes our breath away. Read it!

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### **Mariah says**

The Once and Future Prince was a wonderful start to the Castaldini Crown trilogy. Leandro and Phoebe burned the pages with their passion and broke my heart with their insecurities and heartaches. Loved it!!

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### **Lena Kyrollos says**

Passionate, erotic, heart-wrenching and more. A wonderfully lush tale that engages all your senses and emotions from the first line to the last and a wonderful beginning to the Castaldini Crown trilogy!

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### **Linda says**

Read another book in this series first, then this one. Didn't really effect my enjoyment of the story though. A little far fetched, he breaks her heart twice, and she still takes him back, but I was still rooting for him in the end. The book makes me want to visit this make believe place, to see how beautiful it really is in person.

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### **Tara says**

The CAstaldini Crown is very different from Throne of Judar, the first series I read for Olivia Gates, but it's just as fantastic. This first book in the series is so lush and heart-wrenching I adored it. I still prefer Throne of Judar but this is head and shoulders above most books I read anyway.

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