



When You Were Mine

Elizabeth Noble

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IS A SECOND CHANCE AT HAPPINESS WORTH RISKING EVERYTHING? EVEN A BEST FRIEND?

Susannah has been living with Doug for eight years, acting as stepmother to his three unappreciative children and wondering why she doesn't mind much when he sometimes sleeps in his study. She's known her best friend Amelia since they were teenagers. Amelia never minces words, and Susannah doesn't like hearing what Amelia has to say about her noncommittal relationship.

At her brother's wedding, Susannah runs into Rob—her first love, the love of her life. There's no band on his ring finger, and Susannah begins to fantasize. Her fantasies turn to reality when Rob gives her a call. Susannah's world is rocked by her rekindled feelings for Rob, then totally turned upside down by a revelation from Amelia. Just when Susannah and Amelia need each other the most, they are facing a crisis that threatens to tear their friendship apart. Without her familiar guiding star, Susannah must finally make some hard choices in order to grow up for good, no matter who or what she has to leave behind.

Heartwarming, wise, and sophisticated, *When You Were Mine* is a story about first loves, best friends, and choices that will resonate with readers everywhere.

When You Were Mine Details

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Beth says

I'm not sure how to rate this book -- I was going to give it a 3, but then the ending sucked, so it went down to a 2.

I usually love Noble's books, and I do think her writing is great. I always love the way she develops her characters, and her storylines are usually poignant, fun, easy to relate to, or otherwise created in a way that hooks me and keeps me interested.

This one, though, was a bit slow and boring. I really just wanted to read about the Rob and Susannah storyline, and didn't give a hoot about Doug and his bratty kids, or all the other characters. Ok, maybe Amelia. I was super annoyed that every time it seemed like Rob and Susannah were going to get their happiness, something got thrown in their way. I suppose that's the lesson here -- but that lesson sucks. I wanted a happy ending, and I didn't get it. That's a sure way for me to hate a book and never recommend it to anyone.

Oh, and it was also really annoying that the chapters kept skipping from past to present, and from alternating character viewpoints, without any real rhyme or reason, and without good markings on the chapters (and some places didn't even have any real chapter breaks, which irritates me).

All in all, it just wasn't that great of a book. It was okay, but not great.

Carla Ford says

There are so many facets to this book, and the thing I liked the most is that it was messy and muddled and there were no clear answers. I absolutely loved and envied Susannah's years long friendship with Amelia, they knew each other so well and those are the kind of friendships that are more valuable than anything else. Susannah is facing so many hard decisions and disappointments as she is nearing her fortieth birthday, and realizing that it is time for her to take stock of her life, and decide how she wants to continue. Running into her first love at her brothers wedding only makes these decisions even harder, and this novel doesn't candy coat any of it, or wrap it up neatly with a bow. If you are looking for life in a neat package, this book won't be for you. If you like some realism mixed in, you will enjoy this novel as much as I did.

Aileen says

Susannah and Rob were teenage childhood sweethearts they broke up 20 years ago and moved on; they have both been unlucky in love since. Susannah's partner is older than her grumpy, controlling and won't visit her family, he has 2 children from his previous relationship and Susannah is left to care for them while he is in work. Susannah and Rob meet at a wedding Susannah starts to think back the happy memories, she visits Rob's parents and out of the blue Rob rings her one day, they meet up, all her old feelings come back, they both start to meet regularly, Rob is married now, but are they just old friends? Do Susannah and Rob take their second chance to be together and be happy? Or will she get engaged to Doug?

I really enjoyed this book it was very easy to read and follow, I couldn't put it down and read it in a few hours I would definitely recommend.

Sam says

3.5 stars

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This book took a while to really get going, or at least it took me a while to really get into it. I probably wasn't fully committed to the story until about halfway through. After the halfway mark, things started to pick up more and I found the story got more interesting. I have read a lot of Young Adult books, which tend not to be as descriptive and are more to the point and faster paced, so often when I read Adult books I tend to get a bit bored with all the filler. However, I do appreciate the development these Adult books provide to the story and the characters; it's all about what you're used to.

The main character, Suzanna, is a likable character with flaws. If you read this book, you will be so mad at her at one point and completely hate what she does, but then you will find yourself still rooting for her. Even though she did this awful thing, I found it impossible not to sympathize for her and hope she gets what she wants in the end.

Oh and poor Rob. Though, he makes his fair share of mistakes too. But poor him anyway.

This book is kind of a tragic love story and it will make you swoon and make you cry. Noble sure puts her characters through the ringer. All the characters are flawed (well, maybe not Jonathan) and yet you will root for them all.

Overall, I liked this book. I wish it would have captivated me from the beginning, but it turned out okay in the end. Not sure if I would read more from this author. Her writing is good, but the storytelling wasn't all that captivating. I love when a book can hook me from the very first page, which I know is asking a lot, but there are some authors who never fail me in this area (ahem – Wendy Higgins).

Mainon says

My FirstReads ARC just arrived in the mail. Love the cover, hope to get to it soon!

So I started this last night. Truthfully I wasn't expecting much -- though there are only four reviews so far, the average is a sliver over two stars. I told myself I didn't even have to finish it if I hated it after an hour or so.

But I ran a hot bath... and two hours later I was still reading. I really, really like this book so far (I'm now about halfway through it). Noble manages to walk a fine line perfectly: this book is neither "silly" chick lit

(that's fun, but secretly you feel a little guilty for reading something so shallow), nor is it the kind of book that takes itself too seriously. So far, I feel like someone who just found out that the cubic zirconia earrings she bought at the flea market are actually real diamonds... I intend to savor the rest of this book.

Finished this last night... it was perfect. I wouldn't have changed the ending or, looking back, much of ANYTHING about the book, which is a fairly rare thing for me to say about any book that even comes close to being called "chick lit." I loved every single one of the characters -- they were all flawed, but they were yet sympathetic, and I'd love to have a dinner party and invite them all. The story was complex because of the well-developed and intricate relationships between the characters, not because of not-quite-believable plot twists that are all too common in the genre.

One word to describe my reaction to this book: impressed.

Bev Taylor says

would u give first love a second chance?

susannah is living with a divorced man who has 3 children. she is also divorced but realises that the situation she is in is not what she wants. simply, she does not love douglas

her best friend amelia is always on hand and they out pour all their feelings to one and another and try and keep themselves on the straight and narrow

amelia is also divorced with 3 children and has just been diagnosed with cancer

then at her brother's wedding susannah meets her childhood sweetheart, rob. a union that was never consummated. the memories come flooding back as she feels that initial attraction come flooding back

h/e on visiting his mother later, an old friend, she learns that he has just got married

what can she and he do? should they just walk away from one another again or grab this opportunity and to hell with the consequences

a well told novel with great characterization but would have been nice to have had the off 'baddie' everyone was too perfect

yes douglas was the perfect example of the downtrodden husband with an overpowering wife, now ex. obviously very insecure, why else did he propose marriage after 10 years at a party in front of everyone?

also i personally found that susannah and rob's relationship was a but too holier then thou

finally, her father obviously had had relationship difficulties of his own and with their closeness and acute perception i am surprised that she did not pick up on this u

bev

Elnabeth Elvia says

I was hoping that there would be more details and stories about Susannah and Rob. I just couldn't get enough of the two. What happened to them once they decided to live their own lives after the second break-up? What if they accidentally meet up again in the future? Will Susannah finally meet someone that truly loves her and make her happy?

This story is painfully true, that love doesn't always happen the way you planned it. That trust and promises are broken. How do you make yourself happy without hurting the one closest to you?

And Susannah, I just couldn't believe she stayed with Douglas for almost a decade! She wasted her life with him. She should have left him earlier. Maybe things would go differently. Maybe she would meet Rob earlier.

Kate says

Non formulaic and messy - I like that.

This was not one of those four star stellar reads that takes your breath away and has you pondering for days after. Nor was it a good old gritty pull apart the fabric of society and provide commentary on current issues type. Rather it was a dependable British family saga which centered around unrequited love and the folly of waiting for the stars to align before we act. It was a story focusing on the importance of connection, honesty and the need to say the hard stuff because otherwise you spend a life time missing out.

The essential prudishness of both Rob and Susannah to refrain from sex given the time it was set challenged my perception on this. At times this aspect of the story annoyed me yet in hindsight was a good thing as who wants to be spoon fed and who says what is right? The characters were all well developed and not saccharine or forced unlike in the first Elizabeth Noble I read, I felt things were a lot tighter and a far more enjoyable read for it. There was real skin left on the ground between Susannah and her close friend Amelia which was refreshing as was the relationship with her parents.

I finished feeling satiated and ready to embrace my life which is pretty much why I read and why this gets the four star treatment.

Virginia Markhart says

Different type of book for me. I always like the happy ending where the girl and the guy get together and live happily ever after. Not happening in this one. This story is rather sad. Suzannah falls hard for Rob during high school. He goes off to war and she goes to college, get drunk and loses her virginity to a nobody. Tells Rob. End of that relationship. She then marries Seth, which lasts for less than a year. Next up is Douglas who she lives with for ten years. The passion and love dies after the first few years. She has an undefined role with his three children. Near the end of the relationship, Rob contacts her. He is married and his wife is off at war. They fall back in love. Susannah leaves Douglas. Rob is torn with guilt about breaking his marriage vows. Then his wife is injured at war. She loses a leg. He tells the wife about Suzannah. He decides to stay with wife. Leaving Suzannah akimbo. Awww. Best part of the story is the long term friendship of Suzannah

and Melissa.

Not going to rush out and find another book by this author, but if one is loaned to me I won't pass it up.

Stasha says

I immensely loved the story "The Way We Were". I liked that it was honest and real. The writing was simple, its supporting plots and characters were moving at a good pace. I really enjoyed the technique of using flashbacks from the past and tying them in with the present day. It was a nice way of relating the past and its relation to what was happening within the current circumstances.

I must say, I was expecting the typical happy ending but by the time I finished reading it, I was glad that things had not ended that way. Instead, it was a lesson that both parties, Susannah Hammond and Rob Rossi, had to learn from and also to move on from. I was rooting for these characters all throughout. I would love to have a follow-up to this story, as I'm curious to know how Susannah has progressed and grown.

Elusive says

'The Way We Were' revolves around childhood sweethearts, Susannah and Rob who have always failed to be together time and time again due to unforgiving circumstances. When they finally reunite after many years, they realize that they still love each other but once more, things are complicated as Susannah is in a stale yet almost decade-long relationship while Rob is married.

This story was extremely melancholic and depressing. It was painfully realistic and although I usually like unexpected or tragic endings, the way this book ended was unsatisfying. It was an amazing, engrossing tale hence the ending had a strong impact on me. Too bad it wasn't the one that I was envisioning. Anyhow there were many heartwrenching moments throughout the story and I'm saying this as someone who's not the emotional type. Their continuous separation coupled with how much they missed each other yet constantly had the bad luck of wrong timing when they got the chance to meet again was just too much to handle.

Their love was incredibly convincing and that's what made this book so captivating. It didn't even feel like I was reading a story – it seemed to be more fact than fiction. They had fantastic chemistry right from the moment they met and everything else onwards came across as completely natural and believable. Despite the harsh circumstances they faced, I think that they could have actually been together (probably with some long-distance involved though) if they had communicated more openly and honestly. For instance, when Susannah tearfully confessed (via a letter) that she'd (view spoiler) he could have talked to her about it instead of bottling up his feelings.

Even though Susannah wasted so much time and energy on men who weren't worthy of her, I liked her because she truly gave each relationship her all. I especially felt that she deserved a salute or an award for being with Douglas (who has three children from a previous marriage) for almost ten years! He was unappreciative of her and refused to let her behave like a mother or a friend towards them, hence leaving her to wonder what exactly her role was. Plus, he was grumpy and uninterested most of the time while his ex was cold towards Susannah who still cared for the kids the best she could.

I found myself rooting for Susannah to be with Rob as she was certainly happiest and at her best when she was with him. This was conveyed effortlessly. I could feel her happiness radiating off the pages. Yes, seriously. At the same time I longed for her to stop torturing herself by staying in a relationship with a man who clearly wasn't right for her. She was way too good for Douglas who didn't understand her. I was glad that she had a nice little support system in the form of her family and her best friend, Amelia. Amelia is the sort of friend you'd want – she's honest even if it means disagreeing with Susannah.

Initially I liked Rob. He was attractive, charming and sweet. Most importantly, he loved Susannah and he never pressured her into doing more than what she was comfortable with. He also showed maturity from a young age. However, once they reunited when he was married and she was technically unavailable, his ultimate decision made me dislike him. It showed that he was considerate of everyone in his life except for Susannah. He didn't consider how much agony she'd been in and how his irregular appearances gave her a spark of hope only for him to snatch it away. I didn't agree with his reason (view spoiler).

The ending was bittersweet and as much as I didn't like it, I enjoyed this book tremendously. It was realistic, thought-provoking, emotional, engaging and memorable. Highly recommended.

Alice says

I won this book in Goodreads' First Reads giveaway. The copy I was reading was an ARC, and therefore not the finished version.

I really enjoyed this book. It did a very good job of putting me, emotionally, into the same place as the main character, Susannah. Unfortunately, she's sad, frustrated and lonely for much of the book. As unpleasant as it can be to experience those feelings, the ending left me with a feeling of catharsis.

The story follows Susannah for a year of her life. In that time, she turns 40, realizes she hasn't been in love with her long-term boyfriend of 9 years for a long time, and helps her best friend through cancer treatments. Most significantly, she runs into her high school boyfriend, who, it turns out, she still has feelings for.

The only other book of Elizabeth Noble's I've read before is *Alphabet Weekends*, which was far fluffier than this one. I couldn't help but mentally compare the two books. In the end, I enjoy them both equally, but for very different reasons.

I was worried, while reading this book, that it was going to go for the happier ending. That would probably make it more commercially appealing, but I felt that would've taken something away from Susannah. She needed to figure out who she was, instead of hopping from one relationship to another, trying to mold herself around her partner.

My biggest complaint about the book is that it wasn't always masterful with the omniscient perspective. I thought, for the first several paragraphs, that it was third person-limited to Susannah's perspective, until it suddenly shifted to her mother's perspective, without any warning. It took me a moment to realize the perspective had shifted. Later, perspective shifts involve a header with the person's name, and I felt those sections were very necessary. The random shifts, though, were disorienting.

Not disorienting enough, though, to make me reconsider my high rating. I really, really liked this book, and I would recommend it to anyone looking to graduate from chick lit into something a little deeper.

Linda says

A romance novel that is not what it seems.

Susannah is almost forty, divorced after a short marriage, and now living with Douglas (also divorced with three children). She is educated, good looking, and a successful lawyer, but the life she really wants is just out of her reach. Her best friend forever, Amelia, also has issues, and the author combines all the issues of these two friends to tell her story. Love, longing, disease, despair, complacency...just like life...is rolled into a well written story that is hard to put down and heartbreaking to read.

Cindy123 says

My feelings were alternating between hating and liking susannah an Rob. Their actions were just aggravating!! ><', however, I felt sorry for them... Susannah, who from the beginning to end, was considerably unfortunate. Her chances come and go and she has no fix shelter. The fact that she had no-one at the end made me feel even more pitiful toward her. As for Rob, Ahh!!! he just, I don't know... He could have had her, though unfortunately, married to another girl.

When I was reading this book, I always have wished that the two end up together because I felt they should.

Despite the fact that the ending was sad, I quite like it. I thought it was different compared to other books. And to be honest, if you keep reading books that have happy endings 'ALWAYS'. It would just be nothing interesting really. Sometimes, you have to have a depressing ending to make it memorable and bothersome. :// (my opinion)

Kelly Rae says

This book made me ache, which normally might not sound like the best thing. However, in this instance to feel as much as I did throughout the 4 hours I read this book is a high compliment to Miss Noble. I am sure for me it touched something so personal that emotional overload was bound to happen. I cried and laughed and was touched by the beauty of the characters, the honesty of their flaws and their understanding of right and wrong and then LOVE! I get it, I get it!

Such an amazng book, thank you for sharing this beautiful story. Wow, if this is my new standar for writing excellence I have a lot to live up to in my own work.
