



Love & Misadventure

Lang Leav

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Lang Leav is a poet and internationally exhibiting artist. Awarded a coveted Churchill Fellowship, her work expresses the intricacies of love and loss.

Beautifully illustrated and thoughtfully conceived, Love and Misadventure will take you on a rollercoaster ride through an ill-fated love affair- from the initial butterflies to the soaring heights- through to the devastating plunge. Lang Leav has an unnerving ability to see inside the hearts and minds of her readers. Her talent for translating complex emotions with astonishing simplicity has won her a cult following of devoted fans from all over the world.

Love & Misadventure Details

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From Reader Review Love & Misadventure for online ebook

Jason says

I don't normally review books of poetry because, if I'm going to be honest, poetry has never been something I've traditionally gotten very excited about. However, that doesn't mean that I haven't bumped into poems here or there that have affected me somehow, and it is usually (which is the thing about poetry, I think) not *what the poem is about* per se so much as it is about how it makes you feel. Which then circles back to my point about not being overwhelmed by it in general because that part of me that is supposed to be susceptible to the *feeeeeling* of poetry is, clinically speaking, 90% necrotic.

But as I said there are exceptions. One of my favorite poems, for example, is T. S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" which even to this day I quote sections of to myself from time to time because it really is just that awesome. Of course, admitting that may out me as a mere commoner—"Prufrock" is a highly popular poem, after all. So next I'll mention a more obscure poem, something I read once in high school and I loved it so much (for whatever reason) that I memorized it, which maybe isn't that big of a deal because it's a short poem, but it was a big deal to me because, remember? Necrosis.

*The threefold terror of love; a fallen flare
Through the hollow of an ear;
Wings beating about the room;
The terror of all terrors that I bore
The Heavens in my womb.
Had I not found content among the shows
Every common woman knows,
Chimney corner, garden walk,
Or rocky cistern where we tread the clothes
And gather all the talk?
What is this flesh I purchased with my pains,
This fallen star my milk sustains,
This love that makes my heart's blood stop
Or strikes a Sudden chill into my bones
And bids my hair stand up?*
—W. B. Yeats, "The Mother of God"

I actually read a lot of Yeats poetry during that time of my life and I even went to check out his grave in Sligo when I lived in Ireland, which I realize sounds rather morbid but I swear it's a thing and people really do it.

Sorry for that long intro, but the reason I'm writing this review is because *Love & Misadventure*, a book of poetry by someone named Lang Leav, has been popping up on my feed a lot lately. It is one of the highest user-rated books of poetry on all of Goodreads, right up there alongside Emily Dickinson and William Shakespeare (whose poems I've also enjoyed, by the way) and so I thought maybe I should check it out.

I played it smart, though, by searching online for her material which, thank god I did because I would have been massively irritated if I had wasted \$7.69 on this crap (the price of a Kindle edition), let alone on one of the first-edition signed copies which are going for over \$300 on Amazon.

So here's some Lang Leav for ya...decide for yourself if you think I'm being unfair:

*There is a love I reminisce,
like a seed
I've never sown.
Of lips that I am yet to kiss,
and eyes not met
my own.
Hands that wrap around my wrists,
and arms
that feel like home.
I wonder how it is I miss
these things
I've never known.*
—Lang Leav, “A Stranger”

Ack! But oh good lord there's more:

*Before I fell
in love with words;
with setting skies
and singing birds—
it was you I fell
in love with first.*
—Lang Leav, “First Love”

If I wasn't necrotic before, somebody please begin the amputation before I so septic on your asses. Here's another:

*There was a time I told you,
of all that ached inside;
the things I held so sacred,
to all the world I'd hide.
But they became your weapons,
and slowly I have learnt,
the less that is said the better,
the lesser I'll be hurt.
Of all you've used against me,
the worse has been my words.
There are things I'll never tell you,
and it is sad to think it so;
the more you come to know me—
the lesser you will know.*
—Lang Leav, “Poker Face”

I feel like she spends more time working on her margins and tabs than she does on the poetry. Didn't Lady Gaga do a way better job with this material?

So then I was wondering how something that to me seems so transparently saccharine could be so highly regarded. And that is when I came across this:

That is a screenshot of Lang Leav's personal tumblr blog, and if you have trouble reading the text there, this is what it says: "Competition time! **WIN a Kindle and First Edition hand signed copy of Love & Misadventure!** To enter, simply click a like on this lovely Goodreads review by Lara ♥ Winner will be drawn randomly from the list of likes and announced this Wednesday. **So hurry and get liking. :)**"

Wow. So not only do we have a woman who struggles to write decent poetry but she actually has to fiscally reward readers for promoting her work which, while perhaps not being an illegal practice, certainly raises ethical concerns given the nature of a website whose ratings system is supposed to be based on the opinion of actual, unbiased readers. Given these alarming shenanigans, in addition to the quality of the writing itself, I'd steer clear of this one.

Milena Wo says

i enjoyed every poem from this book. actually, this is a great example and a reminder for me of what my life is composed of, of random miracles in a form of sentences or people that i have encountered on my way quite accidentally. without a thought or a bigger plan. in this way i am lucky, i need to admit. lucky to hit against things and images, people and twin souls that change and mark my life, make it somehow better, richer.

this book was and still is my friend.a collection of emotions in a form of words which are with me, always. it speaks my language, the kind of language which i understand and adore. i loved it, but then, my blood is of the colour of the book, the thoughts in my head are as beautiful and as ornamental as the letters on the front side of the book. nothing in me is real or life-like, nothing serves its functions. everything serves beauty and love and emotions. just like this collection of poems.

Miriam says

This poetry is so terrible that at first I thought it was a joke, but apparently that is not the case.

Florencia says

[

Heart on the Line

Love is good,
it is never bad -
but i

Jason says

I wanted to like this poetry collection because a dear former student let me borrow it. I am dreading the talk

we will have when I hand it back to her. Maybe I'll just say, "Thank you for sharing this book with me. That was very thoughtful of you." If the student asks me what I thought of the poems, I will shoot straight with her. I will tell her that I was mainly reminded of greeting cards when I read this collection. For example, take this poem "Always":

You were you, and I was I; we were two before our time.
I was yours before I knew, and you have always been mine too.

Gag me. One of the best collections of love poetry I've recently read is Carol Ann Duffy's RAPTURE. Her poems put these to shame, although sometimes they were kind of cute. Here's "Xs and Os":

Love is a game of tic-tac-toe,
constantly waiting, for the next x or o.

See? Greeting card. Lines of verse like that belong inside a Valentine's Day card. The overwhelming majority of these poems seem like they are first drafts scrawled in a notebook by a middle school girl who dots her i's with hearts. Here's "Closure":

Like time suspended, a wound unmended--you and I.
We had no ending, no said good-bye.
For all my life, I'll wonder why.

These bite-size poems feel incomplete, like they were just Jackson-Pollocked onto the page and because they're lovey-dovey, we as readers are supposed to like them. Perhaps I am not the target audience for this collection. I was shocked to see it had such a high rating. This is just an instance of my being an English snob, I suppose.

The one poem I really like in this collection, "Rogue Planets," is a prose poem with some actual development. But one good poem in a deluge of Hallmark ones is not enough to raise this book out of its 1/5 rating.

*Note: In typing Leav's poems, I did not recreate her line breaks for speed's sake.

Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

Back when I was with my gamer ex-boyfriend, we would give each other cards containing stupid geeky poetry for Valentine's Day:

*Roses are red
Violets are blue
All my base
Are belong to you.*

As painfully silly as it is, that little snippet is still significantly better than the poetry in this book. At least it wasn't meant to be taken seriously. Unless I've missed something and this book is meant to be some grand satire of the artistic sort. In which case, carry on!

If you think this is good poetry:

*To love him
is something
I hold highly
suspicious.*

*Like having something
so very delicious---
then being told
to do the dishes.*

And you still think it is good poetry beyond the age of 9, we seriously need to have a talk. And if you are one such person on my friend list, kindly remove yourself from it posthaste.

Why the fuck is the rating so high? Suspicious...

Jane Kim says

To the reviews that basically take a giant shit on Leav's ability as a poet,

You're missing the point.

I can only speak for myself completely, but I know many people would agree with me when I say that love does not need advanced prose. If what you're looking for is sheer structural and linguistic genius, then this is not the book for you; however, often, true feelings are raw. Prose that comes from these feelings shouldn't need any gimmicks to impact the human heart. In fact, even words at a bare minimum should be able to resonate with you.

That's the point with Lang Leav. Leav has the ability to string together simple words and strike the human heart, and that's why her book holds so much appeal.

PS: I'm sorry if I offend anyone when I say this, but to be honest, I think it's a bit pretentious to look for stylistic sophistication from a genre or type of prose that is supposed to speak the words your heart could never say. In that case, you may be missing the point of prose altogether.

Jesse (JesseTheReader) says

I've been reading this off and on for the longest time, but I finally made my way through the collection! I'll admit, I don't really know how to review poetry. I enjoyed this collection immensely and I definitely have the desire to pick up more works by Lang Leav. I think she depicted love in an excellent way, showcasing the good, the bad, & the straight up ugly.

Louisa says

What strikes me about Lang Leav's poetry is that I could have written a fair amount of it when I was in primary/high school.

*He makes me turn,
he makes me toss;
his words mean mine
are at a loss.*

He makes me blush!

*He makes me want
to brush and floss.*

stares at floss in my bathroom *thinks romantic thoughts* *NOT*

I like poetry. I like reading it; I like writing it; it's something I wish more people were into, though I can certainly understand why they aren't. Maybe *Love & Misadventure* is a ton more accessible than, say, Robert Frost's or e.e.cummings's poetry.

But it's just not particularly engaging, especially for a tome that **costs a whopping \$27** at my local bookstore.

My poetry professor once said that a good poem ought to have some form of metaphor or poetic sense. Lang Leav's poems are all the definition of bite-sized. They're easy to understand - a little too easy to understand. I've written poems like these myself, but I certainly expect a lot more profound stuff from a book as celebrated as this is.

*Your hand reaches for mine.
We kiss tentatively, passionately
and then, tenderly.*

*You brush my hair away from my face.
"You're beautiful."
I wrinkle my nose in protest.
"You are."*

It's not all bad. **It's just so simple. I wasn't wowed by clever turn of words or phrases.** There are some I like (most of which have turned up in one form or another on Tumblr), but ultimately it didn't resonate with me. Maybe I'll go floss later. That's about all the impact it had.

karen says

this book has an average rating of 4.34 with 2,119 ratings. that's really high.

and it's terrible.

and i'm not one of these assholes that likes to trash something that other people like. usually i try to figure out who *would* like it, even if i didn't myself, because i'm just one reader yadda yadda ranganathan, but in this case, the only people i can see actually enjoying it are 13-year-old girls who are all starry-eyed over some boy. and that's fine - nothing wrong with little girls reading and writing love poetry in their diaries. but that's exactly where it should stay.

i am notorious for not knowing what happens in the Great Wide World. and after reading this book and being utterly baffled as to why anyone would publish it, let alone give it such high star-ratings, i had to find out: "is this chick on *glee* or something??" "is she some rock star's kid??" "is this a little mattie situation where people tell him he's good because he's, you know, terminal?" why does she have a book that people are so delusional about? so i poked around the internet and apparently this chick got famous through tumblr?? and pinterest?? and all those sites you young'uns use these days??

and i looked at her artwork, and it's pretty good

although i feel like mark ryden should be writing her a letter, because ahem

and

so, the artwork is fine, if a kind of watered-down and less delightfully d(m)ark ryden. but it's not good enough to brainwash people in that "oh, james franco, you want to write books now?? you want to have a cooking show?? you want to fly a commercial airline?? go ahead, superfine one, we will stand by you" way. it's not good enough to make me accept that this is a good poem:

Heart on the Line

*Love is good,
it is never bad -
but it will drive you mad!*

*When it is given to you,
in dribs and drabs.*

and it's all like that - barfy-sweet in the happy ones, emo-woe in the sad ones. and rhyming! it made me want to tear my hair out. i bought this book because of the high ratings on goodreads, and because it is an attractively-designed book, and i flipped through and saw it had some decent art, but it just really made me wince. maybe someone else can tell me what the appeal is??

Soul Mates

I don't know how you are so familiar to me - or why it feels less like I am getting to know you and more as though I am remembering who you are. How every smile, every whisper brings me closer to the impossible conclusion that I have known you before, I have loved you before - in another time, a different place - some other existence.

The Girl He Loves

*There was a man who I once knew,
for me there was no other.
The closer to loving me he grew,
the more he would grow further.*

*I tried to love him as a friend,
then to love him as his lover;
but he never loved me in the end -
his heart was for another.*

Always

*You were you
and I was I;
we were two
before our time.*

*I was yours
before I knew,
and you have always
been mine too.*

Beautiful

*Your hand reaches for mine.
We kiss tentatively, passionately
and then, tenderly.*

*You brush my hair away from my face.
"You're beautiful."
I wrinkle my nose in protest.
"You are."*

am i too cynical?? it this sweetie-pie greeting card stuff what people want in their poetry? because i know shit from poundcake about poetry, really, but to me, *this* is a love poem:

from The Bridge: Southern Cross
BY HART CRANE

*I wanted you, nameless Woman of the South,
No wraith, but utterly—as still more alone
The Southern Cross takes night
And lifts her girdles from her, one by one—
High, cool,
 wide from the slowly smoldering fire
Of lower heavens,—
 vaporous scars!*

*Eve! Magdalene!
 or Mary, you?*

*Whatever call—falls vainly on the wave.
O simian Venus, homeless Eve,
Unwedded, stumbling gardenless to grieve
Windswept guitars on lonely decks forever;
Finally to answer all within one grave!*

*And this long wake of phosphor,
 iridescent
Furrow of all our travel—trailed derision!
Eyes crumble at its kiss. Its long-drawn spell
Incites a yell. Slid on that backward vision
The mind is churned to spittle, whispering hell.*

*I wanted you . . . The embers of the Cross
Climbed by aslant and huddling aromatically.
It is blood to remember; it is fire
To stammer back . . . It is
God—your namelessness. And the wash—*

*All night the water combed you with black
Insolence. You crept out simmering, accomplished.
Water rattled that stinging coil, your
Rehearsed hair—docile, alas, from many arms.
Yes, Eve—wraith of my unloved seed!*

*The Cross, a phantom, buckled—dropped below the dawn.
Light drowned the lithic trillions of your spawn.*

and i know - it is a problematic example for a number of reasons, but that is a poem that gets my romantic juices flowing. i have never been into frosting romance. i like my romance to be all red wine and very rare meat. but even frosting should have more substance than these poems.

sorry, world, but i am not with you this time.

come to my blog!

Kimberly Lloyd says

ABSOLUTELY WONDERFUL READ but equally sad

one of my favorite parts:(

“It happens like this.

"One day you meet someone and for some inexplicable reason, you feel more connected to this stranger than anyone else--closer to them than your closest family. Perhaps this person carries within them an angel--one sent to you for some higher purpose; to teach you an important lesson or to keep you safe during a perilous time. What you must do is trust in them--even if they come hand in hand with pain or suffering--the reason for their presence will become clear in due time."

Though here is a word of warning--you may grow to love this person but remember they are not yours to keep. Their purpose isn't to save you but to show you how to save yourself. And once this is fulfilled; the halo lifts and the angel leaves their body as the person exits your life. They will be a stranger to you once more.

READ THIS BOOK

Jason says

The bee, buzzing buzzing buzzing like a chainsaw,
stings me in the eye--
OW!

I've created a tumblr page for my poems about my owwies. Please follow!

Poetry should make us feel. This poetry made me feel tired and kind of itchy and pretty fucking grumpy.
SUCCESS.

That's a five-star book, right? Minus four for the goddamn ampersand. Plus four for feeling so feely about your feelings, and getting so many others to feel. Minus four for being so cranky about what feelings people have, and pissing on other people's reviews.

Can't wait to read this!*

*again!**

****not really!**

Greg says

Hear the song

Love & Misadventure is a book of poetry that made the leap from self-published works available on the internet to being available in your local bookstores in a physical copy you can own, keep, love, cherish, put on a shelf, carry in your bag, forget about, read again, give away to a thrift store or whatever else it is one does with things made from dead trees.

I'm not a poet, but this book did inspire me to write this little couplet:

I cry for all the dead trees,
for these poems you died thee.

So many dead trees. So much blank space in the book, actually every single verso page in the poetry section is blank (the three illustrations grace verso pages and the traditional verso page has its usual blah blah blah stuff about publishing information). So many trees dying for the pretentiousness of blank pages and white space.

Lots of people like this book, and that is great. I can be sort of snobbish with what I choose to read sometimes, but I think it's great when people read and anything people buy bookwise helps keep me in a job so that's good, too.

The poetry is not very good. I'm not trying to disparage anyone who likes this book, but it's just not that good. It's easy to relate to because it writes about feelings and emotions that we have all probably had at times, and it does so in small little bites with enough melodrama that it feels like something most people have probably thought when they are wallowing in their own joy / self-pity. And I totally get that, I have a whole library of songs that I like to listen to and wallow in—some of which are embarrassing and some of which I'm fairly certain are good outside of the cheap emotional responses they are producing. I was going to compare this just now to *Bright Eyes* (to give mention to one of the embarrassing sides of my own tastes), but I'm fairly certain that Connor Oberst is a better wordsmith. But the emotional level in this book gives me the same feelings I have when a couple across from me on the subway are actively engaging in public displays of affection or are having a fight, not really something I'd choose to share with them.

As poems these are just undisciplined ramblings. Sometimes there are rhymes thrown in (ok, actually a lot of times there are rhymes), but there is no apparent rhyme or reason to when they are being used. There is no real structure to it. Rhyming in poetry gives a work structure and lyricism, something lacking in these poems. They maddeningly border on being lyrical at times, but then break apart with some borderline pretentious wordiness. Because there doesn't seem to be a structure to the rhymes in most of these poems, they come across as cutesy conveniences rather than as a limit imposed on the work to give it shape. These poems don't feel like they have been worked on, they feel like they have been dashed off and thrown out there for the world. They don't feel crafted.

I'll let the poems speak for themselves though.

Mornings With You

*I slowly wake
as day is dawning,
to fingertips
and lips imploring.*

*The sheets against my skin,
he says,
like wrapping paper
on Christmas morning.*

or

Solo Show

*He pulls the thick woolen sweater
up, over my head.*

*Little sparks of static
dance across my skin.*

*Does it hurt? He says, running his hands
gently over my warm body.*

*It is your own little fireworks show,
I whisper.*

His Cause and Effect

*He makes me turn
he makes me toss;
his words mean mine
are at a loss.*

He makes me blush!

*He makes me want
to brush and floss.*

and one last one.

A Dangerous Recipe

*To love him
is something,
I hold highly*

suspicious.

*Like having something,
so very delicious--
then being told,
to do the dishes.*

I had written a bit of an apology here about how this just isn't my thing but I get if you like it. Fuck that though, this isn't good. It's popular but so is a lot of poorly written crap out there. I try not to be a snob about things but fuck it, any negative reviews of this book are up against an army of people out to make it look like Lang Leav does no wrong. There are more than enough places you can see people gushing about how good this is, and you can feel good about yourself in those reviews. This might be art and art might be something subjective but there is still well crafted and poorly crafted art. Just because you've created something is it automatically good. You can tell me I'm wrong, but I'll stand behind what I think of this work, which Yes I did read it in its whole fairly awful entirety.

I'm giving it two stars because I also get that I'm not the audience for this. The audience for this might be bigger than the audience for anything for anything that I like but I want more from books and poetry. I don't want cute little easy snippets of just about twitter length 'awwwws'.

No matter how many copies this sells, and no matter how many followers Lang Leav has it won't change the fact that as poetry this is pure drivel and if in the future there is an equivalent of the *Stuffed Owl Anthology of Bad Verse* this whole book could be safely put in it.

Carla (Carla's Book Bits) says

I took some time to peruse this at the library because everyone's been getting excited about it on Tumblr.

I don't really know what I expected.. *Love & Misadventure* just wasn't for me. Given the hype, I guess I expected to read some really insightful and profound stuff, but instead what I got was this:

*"I deplore,
being ignored.
For—
I am not a bore!"*

What.

It's not my cup of tea.

Ariel says

I really enjoy reading modern poetry, especially by poets my age and poets that start their careers with an online following, and so I was really curious to see what Lang Leav had to offer! This collection had a few poems that I dog eared, and I found some of the ideas cute or interesting, but overall it wasn't my style of

poetry. I don't think I'll be picking up anything else by Lang Leav, but that's okay! Life goes on! This is probably more like a 2.5 stars for me!
