

Wife in Name Only

Charlotte M. Brame

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Wife in Name Only Details


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
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From Reader Review *Wife in Name Only* for online ebook

Mary Christian Payne says

WONDERFUL VINTAGE HISTORICAL ROMANCE

I just adore this lovely writing. Such good story. I recommend it highly. The story has a bit of everything-- history, romance, mystery. A great read.

Tonileg says

This was a complicated revenge plot in a historical English romance with no sexy scenes so it is OK for all audiences.

This all starts about 17 years before the story with a birth and a death and then another death and a kidnapping by the nurse/nanny. Then we jump to the story where a childhood friends love each other, one with romantic obsessive love and the other with friendship and brotherhood. I liked that Philippa is considered the ideal woman, beautiful, accomplished and beloved to the whole ton, but inside she was a vindictive obsessive back stabber to her best-friend/bother/childhood friend. This had a complicated storyline with lots of characters.

241 pages which felt like 300 pages.

2 stars

Hannah says

Innocent and pleasant story. A woman attempts revenge, setting a man up to marry a woman who he thinks is his ideal but who has an unknown stain in her lineage. He is proud and believes he must sacrifice his bride and his heart to uphold the purity of his own race...is there any hope for them? Perhaps they will both die of disappointment...unless the woman who deceived them with the false grounds for their union in the first place might have been mistaken in the past of the young wife...will justice be done?

About a 3.75 for me. The ending is really sweet, though!

Evelina | AvalinahsBooks says

Reviewing *Wife in Name Only* is quite a dilemma for me – on one hand, it was an engaging, tense read, but on the other – it's entirely full of sexist, class-prejudiced nonsense that a book couldn't really do without in the 19 century. Which is why it's probably best said that *Wife in Name Only* is simply a product of its time, and should be viewed as such. *However, I feel like it could be very harmful to a young mind, especially a female one.* This book needs to be read with a clear notion of what you're reading and what kind of outdated views on society and life you will find in it. If you are aware of this, you may enjoy the book quite a lot, because it's built well as a story, despite its very real shortcomings. And this is why I am giving it 2.5 stars.

If you want to read more and find out what in particular was so hard to stomach about this book, but why it was still engaging, come and read the full review on my blog.

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Claudia says

Charlotte Brontë was a popular and prolific author in the mid- to late 19th century. This novel portrays the prejudices and mores prevalent during that time period. The story is fairly melodramatic but the plot is interesting.

Maria Mercedes says

Slow start but about chapter 3 begins to pick up and its story I want to reread

OLT says

I'm a compulsive HR reader. Most of the historical romances I read take place in the 1700s or 1800s but were written in the 1990s up to present day. So this one is quite the oddity for me. It's an HR written in 1876 and was actually a contemporary romance in its day. As such, it's nice not to find anachronisms in speech, behavior and title use, but the story itself is very heavy on melodrama and can be very tedious for the modern reader.

If you can get over that melodrama and also the slow pacing of the story, you just might find this as entertaining and educational as I did. I say "might" because a reader used to the breezier, sexier, more anachronistic modern style of writing may very well say "This is not for me." And it doesn't help that there are lots of misspellings and formatting issues in this Kindle version.

But I enjoyed this for the historical aspect of it. The English author of this book, Charlotte Brontë, lived from 1836-1884. In 1863 she married and had seven children with an alcoholic and unsuccessful businessman. Charlotte had to do something to support the family and took to writing romances, most of them, as was customary in Victorian times, in installment form in English periodicals, often reprinted in the U.S. under the pseudonym Bertha M. Clay. (BTW, Bertha Clay was one of the most popular writers of the day in the U.S. but, unfortunately, her work was pirated there and Brontë didn't receive many royalties.)

But back to this novel, which was published in installments from November 1876 to some time in 1877. It has some twists and turns, an interesting way of developing the story and introducing the characters but can be a bit exasperating because of some characters' actions and all the melodramatic tropes to be found. To give her credit, readers then wanted these and many authors today use them all in romances.

So what have we got in this novel? Well, there's misalliance, unrequited love, an abducted heiress, obsession, jealousy, and revenge. A lot of the story development depends on coincidence, lies and misunderstanding, the huge divide between the social classes, one obsessed and vengefully manipulative woman, and one

particularly dense hero (Norman, Lord Arleigh, what is your I.Q. anyway?) As I said, it's a good read for those curious about Victorian romances actually written in Victorian times.

DelliaJoann VanScyoc says

Unusual

I had to go back to the beginning to get the names straight. The section where Philippa was introduced was too confusing because you left the story line hanging and too much about the person Phillipa. I guess if the customs of ancient rich families were more familiar I could understand but here in my corner of the world it seems ludicrous. It had A good ending and it shows that forgiveness was better than hatred and revenge. We need more of that in this generation.

Pam says

It begins with the story about a doctor, and then skips to head several years with new characters which makes it a little choppy. It is one story that does not really have one main character, but is the combined story of several characters and the effects their actions have on each other. I was delightfully surprised when the story to a turn toward revenge. I found all the characters to be sympathetic. All the stories led toward people being a product of the effects others had, had upon them. It was a fun and entertaining read.

Elizabeth S says

This book sounds like it was written by a eugenist. The heroine has a father who is a criminal so the hero who is a aristocrat casts her off when he finds out about it. Even though he was married to her and she did not know he did not know. He is not willing to have children with a woman without perfect pedigree so he mentally abandons her. I was thinking, "How many shocking secrets are in your line, Sir" The heroine is completely weak and spineless. I just scanned most of it to see if it got better at the end, it did not.

Grandma says

Mysteriously Wonderful

Until near the end I was kept guessing the out come. Wonderful book. Wonderful storyline. I would recommend it to anyone.

Carolyn Malone says

Rambling Read

several times I was thrown off by the jump in the story. had it not been for the name of the L'Estrange's being mentioned early on, I would have thought I was reading two different books. If you like tragic love stories, you'll love this book.

Courtney Lyman says

I only got halfway through. Could not make myself finish. Too melodramatic. Too boring. Just couldn't make myself care about any of the characters.

Dorian says

"Wife in Name Only" by Charlotte M. Brame is fairly typical of the "dime novel" genre (though lacking the usual rich Americans). It starts off with a young nobleman (startlingly, the heir to an Earldom, not a Baronetcy), travelling incognito with his heavily pregnant wife. They arrive in a small village (in England) and she is in a bad way. She gives birth and then dies. The nobleman leaves the baby with the village doctor and continues on his way to Italy to see his probably-dying father (who doesn't know about his marriage and would disapprove if he did), promising to return in three years for the child (who must be named Madaline, after her now-dead mother).

(view spoiler) The new earl (his father having died in the meantime) returns, his child has vanished, no-one knows where. He hires detectives, takes out newspaper advertisements, but to no avail. (All of this takes up five and a half chapters, and would probably be condensed into five and a half pages of prologue in a modern novel.)

Now the scene, time and characters change. Enter Lady Philippa, who considers herself betrothed (by maternal fancies, no more) to Lord Arleigh. And the same Lord Arleigh, who considers himself no such thing. Cue seven and a half chapters of her angsting about but he must love her and him not loving her. Eventually they have it out and she decides that he has spurned her and she must have revenge.

Philippa marries a duke who loves her, though she doesn't him. Accidentally, she comes across Madaline - who doesn't know who she is, and thinks her foster-parents are her real parents. Her foster-father has recently been convicted of theft and is in jail. Philippa reckons that Arleigh is likely to fall in love with this now-young-lady, so takes her into her household. Arleigh sees her and does. Eventually, they are married, despite her being of low birth (so they all think). (Eleven chapters.)

Darling Philippa sends Arleigh a "wedding present" of the "truth" about his wife, that she is a felon's daughter (he didn't know this previously, thanks to P's machinations). He immediately decides that she must be his wife in name only (finally, in chapter 26, the book's title makes sense!), for he cannot smirch his noble lineage by bringing the children of a criminal into it. Arleigh and Madaline separate (not without strenuous protests from her), but both are so vastly in love that they pine horribly. (Another seven chapters.)

Arleigh goes to Scotland after a while, and almost dies in a rainstorm, but is rescued by...his wife's father. They become friends, but fail to share enough of their individual troubles to realise the truth of their situation. Meanwhile, the unfortunate Madaline is going into a decline (of course). Arleigh visits Madaline's supposed father in prison, in the hope that he might have been falsely accused, but no such luck. (Six

chapters.)

In due course, both Madaline's father and her foster-mother visit the area where she is living, and bump into each other. A bit more angst, and All Is Revealed over two more chapters (with fainting). They publish the truth to the world, leaving out only Philippa's role in it all. Philippa is overcome with remorse and visits them to ask forgiveness, which they (of course) bestow, and all ends happily in chapter 40.

It's really an incredibly silly book, but it has a certain weird charm.

Heidi says

Good plot

Character development was decent for several characters. Plot was slow moving initially and it was unclear how Madeline and Philippa were connected until halfway through the book. Madeline's character was weak. Will read more by this author.
