



From This Day Forward

Margaret Daley

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Penniless, pregnant, and newly widowed immigrant Rachel Gordon doesn't believe her situation could get any worse...until she meets her new neighbors. Shortly after the War of 1812, Rachel and her husband set out from England for a plantation in South Carolina, which he had purchased sight unseen. However, while en route, Tom Gordon fell overboard and drowned, leaving Rachel, frightened and alone, to make a home for her and her newborn. Can a battle-scarred American physician who comes to her rescue also heal her wounded heart?

From This Day Forward Details

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From Reader Review From This Day Forward for online ebook

Christy says

I really, really wanted to give this book more than 3 stars, but in good conscience, I just couldn't. The story on its own was riveting beyond belief, but I struggled to believe it was a historical novel, especially one set in the early 1800's. Sure, they had no electricity, they farmed their land, they got hot in the summertime because of no air conditioning, but nothing really transported me almost 200 years back in time. I was also easily bored with all the wishy-washy mentions of Rachel returning to England, as well as Nathan thinking that was the best plan for her, too. One other thing that just niggled at me was the overuse of the word "pivot." I know that's small, but when a word that's not used often in every-day conversation is used so much in the span of 300 pages, it becomes noticeable.

Truly, though, I loved the story itself--a stubborn woman with almost nothing to her name determined to make a life for herself and her newborn daughter. Throw in a couple of surprise young'uns that were spitfires at first, then sweethearts shortly thereafter, along with a half-way decent mystery, and it was a mostly pleasing read. However, when I read a historical novel, I long for it to take me back to that distant time and place so I can feel apart of it. That was missing here, and it was too difficult to overlook.

Salena Stormo says

This tender tale of romance and hardships will tug at your heartstrings from the first page. Rachel, a widow from England, arrives in South Carolina to claim the plantation her husband, Tom, said would be a new start for them. After being disowned by her parents in England for marring Tom, and pregnant with her first child, she has no where else to go and decides to carry on without him after he dies during their voyage. Her maid, Maddy, accompanies her as they travel the road to the plantation late at night during a storm. A freak accident leaves her on the side of the road, injured and in labor.

Nathan, her new neighbor and a doctor comes across Rachel and Maddy and takes them back to his place to deliver the baby and nurse Rachel back to health. Nathan struggles with images from the war of 1812 where he fought against the English and watched many young men perish as he was helpless to stop it.

Soon the two of them find their lives intertwined in more ways than one as they solve a mystery surrounding Rachel's new home and uncover a family secret that threatens to tear Nathan apart and question his identity.

Through it all their unspoken love for one another creates a bond that will last forever! This book is sweet, timeless and comforting. It possesses all the charm of a classic in the making.

Margaret Daley is a talented writer who effortlessly draws you into a world where the characters come alive as you emerge yourself into their lives and walk beside them.

Tara Bentley says

From the first page author Margaret Daley gives readers a intriguing tale full of mystery, interesting

characters, all set in an historical southern setting.

The story begins with Rachel's dangerous journey through a stormy night after arriving on American soil for the first time. Fresh from the loss of her husband and desperate to find her new home, she finds herself stranded and in labor when her horse is spooked by the storm. Thrown together by her desperate circumstances, Rachel must rely on her neighbor and good Samaritan, Dr. Nathan Stuart.

Daley does a wonderful job of exploring the harsh reality of plantation life in the south, the unseen world of life in a murky swamp, as well as the little known after-effects of the war of 1812. Each character is well developed and likeable from the beginning. Suspense is well balanced with the budding romance of the main characters. All in all, a great read!

I received a complimentary copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest and unbiased review.

Enjoy!

Holly Renee says

Rachel Gordon set sail from England to Charleston, South Carolina with her husband in the hopes of running a plantation. What Rachel Gordon never anticipated was being stranded in this new country as a pregnant widow with a plantation that is next to uninhabitable. Disowned by her family in England, she determines to make a new life in Charleston--even at the disapproval of her new neighbor, Nathan Stuart.

Dr. Nathan Stuart knows that Rachel's plantation is no place for a widowed woman--and he's not about to let her stay there and face any harm. As he and Rachel work together, a certain bond forms between them . . . one that could lead to so much more than either ever imagined, and one that neither of them wants to move forward with.

From This Day Forward is a great historical debut for author Margaret Daley. While the wording in this novel seems a bit awkward at first, and it does take a while for the story to really pick up its pace and start moving, once readers reach a certain point, the wording becomes less awkward and Margaret Daley seems to ease into her own element as she unveils a mystery surrounding strange events that occur on the plantation.

And that's when this story begins to make a heavy impact.

While this story is definitely a historical romance, we do see elements of suspense in it--and I don't mind them one bit. Though the back cover never hints at this story having any suspense, I truly enjoyed it and the mystery fit very naturally into the plot.

As a native Charlestonian, I can attest to the amazing research and authenticity Margaret Daley used in describing plantation life. When looking back in history, we often view the plantation lifestyle with a sort of a "Gone with the Wind" nostalgia, but the truth is that for people who actually lived during that era, it was anything but. Margaret Daley uses this truth to deepen the external struggles that go on with the main characters.

She also does a great job with the character's inner struggles and keeps readers engaged as we wonder what these characters will choose in the end.

I definitely recommend From this Day Forward!

I received a complimentary copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest and unbiased review.

Anita Draper says

Margaret Daley has successfully filled her debut historical with the emotion, suspense, and action her fans have come to love and expect. The 1816 inspirational romance begins with a dramatic situation and doesn't let up as the tension builds toward a climatic end.

As a Canadian, I was particularly interested in the way Daley handled the War of 1812 and whether it would stir patriotism to such an extent as to colour the effect of the story itself.

I needn't have worried. Daley is a professional - an expert at the writing craft. Her English heroine, Rachel Gordon and hero, Nathan Stuart each carried a full arsenal of internal conflict and used them with equal effectiveness. The result is a book which can be read in the romantic and inspirational spirit it was written without the reader worrying about choosing sides.

After choosing love over family, Englishwoman Rachel Gordon was banished from the ancestral home. In a new land with nothing save for a maid, her baby and what she carries in a cart, newly widowed Rachel faces her own shortcomings. Raised in the nobility without a thought to where her food came from, Rachel must now provide nourishment for three. She has her husband's gun for protection, but not the skills to fire it. And the hazards of the new land include creatures she never imagined she'd encounter, never mind have to defend herself against. Oh, for the safety of an English manor.

Doctor Nathan Stuart is still suffering the effects of the war, both from the men he was unable to save as well as those whose lives he was forced to take before they took his. Yet he can't help feeling remorse for breaking the Hippocratic oath. What good is a man if he can't stand on his word? Flowing on Nathan's internal conflict is the demoralizing relationship with his grandfather – a man whose hatred of anything English overrides everything.

With a cast like this, readers who love Daley's novels for what she puts in them will take away a satisfaction of knowing another time hurdle has been breached.

Look out history – Margaret Daley has you in her sights.

Hannah says

This cover drew my eye at church and I simply had to check it out. And I read the whole thing that

afternoon. :)

I love the plucky heroine and her struggle against amazing odds to make a life for herself and those close to her. I also loved that the main characters find strength and healing by giving to others and showing compassion on those two small waifs (that part of the story was probably my favorite).

Four stars, simply because it didn't seem quite plausible that a woman would notice a man romantically quite so soon after being widowed from an abusive husband and birthing a child. Plenty of time for that later in the tale...

Kathleen E. says

A beautiful story of love and redemption.

Monday, December 5, 2011

Margaret Daley's From This Day Forward

A beautiful story of love and redemption. Rachel Gordon goes forward in her life with gentleness and care. How we treat others definitely matters.

~*~

Through the pine trees Rachel glimpsed a red brick house much like Pinecrest except that this place exuded warmth. A profusion of flowers softened the exterior and welcomed visitors. Rachel immediately thought of her family estate in England. The beat of her heart slowed to a throbbing ache. She missed her sister and two brothers. She missed her parents and wished she were going to her mother for advice about babies, not a woman who was practically a stranger.

~*~ From This Day Forward, page 82.

Historical Fiction

Join Rachel Gordon as she presses forward after arriving on the shores of Charleston, South Carolina, in the Spring of 1816, expectant with child and only one direction to go: Forward. There is no other choice as her husband purchased what he believed to be a plantation, sight unseen using all their resources. She is newly widowed while coming to an unfamiliar land, now totally in charge of obtaining transportation and moving supplies needed for her journey to her new home with her young maid, Maddy.

~*~

The wind picked up, whipping strands of her long brown hair that had escaped its coiffure about her face and threatening to whisk away her bonnet. Lightning zigzagged across the sky, followed by thunder. Maddy jumped in her seat. The gelding's ears flattened.

A chill embedded itself deep in Rachel. She arched her back to ease the pang still plaguing her. Suddenly lightning struck a tree nearby, its flash a beacon in the growing darkness. A crack as the pine split into two pieces echoed through the forest. Immediately afterward, a boom of thunder cleaved the air. Maddy shrieked. The horse increased its pace while a few more splotches of water splashed Rachel. Then all at once rain fell in gray sheets.

The gelding lurched forward even faster. Rachel grasped the reins, trying to maintain control. She pulled on the leather straps to slow the horse. Nothing. He kept galloping down the road, oblivious to his surroundings, as though the hounds of hell were nipping at his hooves.

Rachel glanced from one side to the other but saw little except a wall of gray and green. Another peal of thunder spurred her horse into a dead run. The jostling motion bounced her around, nearly throwing her off the seat. A scream from Maddy competed with the din of the storm.

The cart hit another rut in the road. Rachel flew from the seat, the reins wrenched from her hands. The impact with the ground jarred her, knocking the breath from her lungs. Rain pelted her face as she sucked in oxygen-rich air. Stunned, Rachel closed her eyes against the continual downpour. Everything seemed to

come to a standstill, as though her body went numb....

"Help!" Maddy's cries sounded above the rumble of the storm.

~*~ From This Day Forward, pages 9,10.

I give this novel a 5-star rating! It is very well written, detailed in every way while incorporating the times. Rachel opening her arms and sheltering others, goes beyond what she has ever experienced. From being served to serving, Rachel uses her skills and determination to begin anew. It is necessary for her to learn to receive help from others when she previously was the one giving aid. She must earn an income, care for her infant, begin settling her home, learn how to cook and tend the land. Quite an undertaking all at once. There is a lot of action in this book! The interweaving of characters within the story helps in healing the past as consistency and truthfulness build trust. This is not "a figure it out ahead" read, but expanded stories of daily life. I finished this novel in two days while traveling. This is a wholesome book for all ages.

From This Day Forward became available in September 2011 from Summerside Press as part of their new American Tapestry line. You may read the complete first chapter at Margaret Daley's Web site. I received this book from the author in exchange for my review in my own words.

TheSmellyLady says

Oh my word! Good book! People falling overboard, fighting alligators, a snake in the baby's cradle. This book is full of action, adventure and love.

What I liked about this book is Rachel had a kind heart. She is determined to try things even though she has never experienced them before. She is determined. She is willing to forgive and take in strangers when she herself has little. I also liked the bad guys and the alligator fights and the snakes. Hard to put down, and kept me wanting to keep reading because something kept happening.

Dianne Sidebottom says

I found the story interesting as I didn't realise the war with the English spaned over 40 years. Certainly the hate towards English people was depicted in the grandfather in this story. For an English lady to come to America experiencing the death of her husband overboard may have been good but in the condition of being near giving birth something else. Nathan had conflicts facing him coming home from the war weather to be a doctor or a planter, he was fortunate enough that his mother was sending him money from England so he wasn't hard up. (I wouldn't like to have been a pregnant lady back in these times myself) The added characters of Ben n Emma and Mr Baker n Jasper the dog certainly were great additions to the story and how love can be fostered in a day to day scratching a living. A good historical read.

Kristi says

If you in the mood for something on the light side, then this cute historical romanace novel is for you. I appreciated the character development. Personally, I felt the development of the love story was a little choppy, but there are enough twists in turns to keep the pages moving.

Christine Lindsay says

The riveting human drama in 'From This Day Forward' held me captive from the first page. The story starts off like a clap of thunder, spooking the heroine's horse and throwing her into premature labor. From the start my emotions were engaged as newly widowed Rachel Gordon from England arrives in Charleston. Alone, with little money, a young maid, and now a baby daughter, Rachel needs help to start over in this new land—a land that only recently fought a war to gain independence from her homeland, England.

Nathan Stuart, the doctor who finds Rachel on that stormy night brings her child safely into the world, setting up a tender love story. It's just the book I love to read—one that has layers of relationships, love growing between new friends, the orphans that mysteriously show up on Rachel's life become important to her, and of course the growing romance between Rachel and Nathan.

This book has enough twists and turns in it to satisfy those who love a good romantic suspense. I highly recommend it.

Avery Cove says

Reading Margaret Daley's book, From This Day Forward, is pure enjoyment. This historical novel is set at a rural, abandoned farm just outside Charleston, South Carolina. The story pulls the reader into a era long forgotten. When Rachel and Nathan's worlds collide, their lives are forever changed. This mismatched couple's journey starts with excitement, and the tension increases with each turned page. This book is definitely one to keep--it has not only suspense, but also it delivers a tender romance.

Lauralee Bliss says

Margaret Daley is well known for her suspense novels through Love Inspired, so it is not by accident that her first historical novel would likewise be a ride of suspense and intrigue throughout. She does not disappoint as the reader is led on a series of events through the eyes of both the heroine, Rachel, and the reluctant but oftentimes heroic doctor Nathan Stuart. While they struggle through events that seem to pepper them constantly (and at a more rapid clip that nearly begs for some time to allow the reader to catch a breath), they also struggle with themselves. This is the author's first venture into historical writing, and despite the few modern phrases , she has entered it at a fast gallop that will leave you hanging on for dear life until the end.

Carrie Schmidt (Reading is My SuperPower) says

This book was good in many ways but it also felt like the author was trying to fit an entire series worth of plot into one book. It seemed like just when I relaxed from the resolution of one round of bad luck that had beset our main characters, another storm blew in with a vengeance. And then it ended so abruptly - all of a sudden, everything was okay. I just felt that after hanging with them through the entirety of all that had gone wrong, I wanted to stick around a bit longer to see something go right for a change. Overall, though, it was a

pleasant afternoon of my life spent with Rachel and Nathan and their supporting characters.

Hanna says

I thought I might like one of Margaret Daley's books, and I was correct! The romance was almost perfect; I loved Nathan! I frequently got mad at Rachel, because she was so stubborn. But I did like her maid. All in all, I loved this book. (Hence the five stars) Although the situation between Nathan and his father... well, let's just say that I didn't like the ending of it. I feel like it didn't get resolved enough. But other than, that, this was a great book that I think I read in like two days.
