



# One Day In May

*Catherine Alliott*

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## **One Day In May** Catherine Alliott

Single mother Hattie has plenty of reasons to be happy with her life. Her antiques business is flourishing, her teenage son is settled at boarding school and she's enjoying a fling with a younger, very sexy man. But all that changes one fine day in May.

## **One Day In May Details**

Date : Published April 27th 2010 by Michael Joseph (first published January 1st 2010)

ISBN : 9780718153625

Author : Catherine Alliott

Format : Paperback 480 pages

Genre : Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Romance, Fiction, Contemporary



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# From Reader Review One Day In May for online ebook

## Sam says

Second book I have read from this author. Enjoyed rural affair but this book annoyed me. I won't give it away but hate it when authors blatantly lie to you and mislead you. It is lazy writing. Not just the most obvious twist - but the way the author paints our leading ladies perception of different characters. Also I am not averse to a bit of artistic licence but there are some major inaccuracies in the book - the aristocracy don't put modern art all over their stately homes for a start - emails way before they existed!! The lead didn't endear herself to me all. Bit of a weak character. What is it about chick lit and the leads always having to fall over with egg on their faces?

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## Vera says

I thought I was going to love this book but I was disappointed by its weak story line, and I really didn't like the end. I thought some parts were exaggerated and some were boring. I don't think I will ever read it again.

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## Cynthia Coghill says

Hattie a single parent prefers to complicate her life with secrets than put it out there. With a cast of characters that vary from the well drawn out to the clichéd, Catherine Alliott displays glimmers of the style that has made her previous books so popular.

This book suffered from being about 100 pages too long without adding anything to the meandering storyline. Unfortunately the ending dragged and became tedious, proving that sometimes less is best.

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## Astrid says

We all tell lies - some lies are just bigger than others. This book is all about that - but in a way that I did not always find convincing. I picked it up from a free library during the summer holiday - if I had picked it up when I had more books to read, I would not have finished it. Which would have been a shame, as the end was quite good. If you are looking for a simple read, pick up this book.

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## Leah says

I absolutely love Catherine Alliott's books and have read the majority of those she's had published so far. She has a quirky kind of writing style and although some of her plots are a little bit odd (see Rosie Meadows Regrets to know what I mean), her books are ultimately enjoyable. Therefore I was thrilled to see Catherine was back after a two-year absence with a new book (The Secret Life of Evie Hamilton) and I couldn't wait to get my hands on it. The fact it's still sitting on my shelf is irrelevant! I was then sent One Day In May to read

and have only just gotten around to it as I knew it would take me a few days to read as it's quite a large book!

The book, as I mentioned, is rather large and the trade paperback (the only version of the book available – the paperback is out in 2011) comes in at just over 450 pages. It makes a change to read something a bit meatier and I couldn't wait to get sucked in. The book easily sucked me in, as I expected, and I managed to finish the book a mere 48 hours after starting it. For such a long book, I was incredibly worried that it might lag in places but it never really does. Catherine has always written relatively long books so I always know what to expect and I found *One Day In May* a very absorbing and fantastic tale.

While the main plot at the beginning of the review may well be about Hattie bumping into the widow of her first love, Dominic, there is actually so much more going on in the book. There's the fact Hattie and her partner Maggie are co-re-decorating Laura and Hugh's, Hattie's sister and brother-in-law, house along with a completely different designer Ralph De Grandville which causes much consternation between all parties concerned. Hattie's relationship with Ivan, her younger boyfriend, is also a bit of a talking point throughout the book. But my favourite sub-plot to the book was learning all about the younger Hattie and how she came to fall in love with Dominic, a married politician. I found that part of the book entirely absorbing although I was constantly telling Hattie not to go there or do that! Another fantastic part of the entire story was Hattie's visit to Bosnia where she joins her brother Kit who was working with the International Red Cross during the war there. Catherine must have really had to do her research about that and it sounded like such terrible things happened there. The terror and sense of not knowing what may happen to you was palpable and it was really gripping.

As far as characters go, *One Day In May* had plenty of fantastic characters. I must of course mention Hattie first as she's not only our main character but the book is also told entirely from her point of view. Hattie was immensely likeable and although some of her decisions may have been questionable, I could completely understand everything she did. I absolutely loved Seffy, Hattie's son. He was a typical teenager but he definitely had some hidden depths which are revealed as the book progresses. I also really loved Maggie, Hattie's best friend and business partner. She was very forthright and vocal and was completely unafraid to voice her opinion, no matter who it offended. The sparring between herself and Ralph De Grandville (the other interior designer) was legendary. The rest of Hattie's family were great, too, and they sound like a family anyone would be proud to call family. I couldn't mention the characters without mentioning Letty, Dominic's widow, and Hal, Dominic's brother. We didn't really see much of Letty, though, but I really liked Hal. I also must mention Ivan, Hattie's young boyfriend. We don't actually see much of him but he is quite an important character. To be honest, we see so little of him that I still don't really know what I thought of him!

Catherine's writing is as fantastic as ever. She seems to have a similar writing style to Katie Fforde, whom I adore. I hate to tag the style as old-fashioned as it's not really old-fashioned but it's different to the younger chick lit generation. More mature, perhaps. It's a hugely enjoyable writing style though and I hugely enjoy reading it. As it usual with a Catherine Alliott book there are plenty of twists and turns. I actually thought I had the ending all sussed out but no, Catherine came up with another twist! We also find out just why the book is titled *One Day In May* – I got about halfway through the book and I was wondering where the title had come from! I suppose the only downside for me was the ending. Don't get me wrong, it was a good ending but I just wasn't expecting it and it kind of felt a bit rushed.

Overall *One Day In May* is another fantastic read from Catherine Alliott. I, for one, am thrilled she's back and I really missed her books in her two year absence. Here's to many more fab Catherine Alliott books. *One Day In May* is a fine read and I look forward to getting stuck into *The Secret Life of Evie Hamilton*! Hugely

recommended!

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## Nina Draganova says

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## Kaley says

One Day in May by Catherine Alliott may be one of my favourite chick lit reads of the year so far! I decided to read it for this month's Chick Lit Plus Challenge read because it's May and since the book has "May" in the title I found it fitting. It's been sitting on my shelf for awhile but I'm glad I finally got around to reading it because I really enjoyed it!

I'm a huge fan of British/Irish chick lit. I have some favourites - Matthews, O'Flanagan, Ahern - and I think Alliott may end up on this list as well. I read A Crowded Marriage ages ago and liked it. I recently reviewed Rural Affair over at Novel Escapes but unfortunately that one didn't do much for me (you can read the review [here](#)). I still wanted to give One Day in May a try (it was waiting patiently on my shelf, after all) and I found it to be Brit chick lit at it's finest. I'm not sure why I love these kinds of books so much. It could be because the setting and language is just a little bit different from what I know here in Canada. Some chick lit books are just so generic in their location so it's nice to be plopped in the English countryside and be able to take a quick jaunt over to France for a few scenes. It's something different than NYC or LA and I really appreciate that.

There was a lot going on in this novel but I never felt lost or that there was too much happening. There's a flashback portion at the beginning as we learn about how Hattie came to adopt Seffy and go into business with Maggie. And of course, we also learn the details of the very brief affair with Dominic. Everything was woven together well and even though my co-worker (who had borrowed my copy last month to read on vacay and loved it too) warned me that it started slow, I didn't find that to be the case.

There are many delightful characters in this novel. Hattie has a large but lovely family - son, parents, brother, sister, brother-in-law, two nieces, and a nephew. She also has Maggie, her slightly abrasive but well meaning BFF, long time friend Christian, and boy toy Ivan. It is so clear that Hattie cares deeply for everyone in her life and they, in turn, care for her. The family dynamic is so great in this novel and is one of my favourite parts of the book.

I'm usually able to figure out the end result of most chick lit novels but One Day in May totally threw me for a loop. There were a couple of things that I did NOT see coming at all and I loved that. And that's all you'll get out of me on that. No spoilers here! :)

I always know a book is really good when I HAVE to pass along the book to my mom as soon as I'm

finished. Catherine Alliot's *One Day in May* is one of those books and it will be heading home with me for the long weekend. It was a fun, sweet, and moving story and I definitely recommend it to all chick lit lovers!

Happy reading :)

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### **Tracy Kellies says**

Maybe I will read this book "One day in May"...

I gave up after a few pages. I can't understand for the life of me why it was so hard for me to get in to the flow of the book. I am rather gonna keep this one for a rainy day...

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### **Karen says**

This is a story all about lies. Big lies, little lies. Lies to yourself and lies to your family. I first started this book some time ago, and I trundled along with it, but in the last two weeks I have seriously started to get back into it.

I have to admit, that I was bowled over by the shocking admission that happens towards the end of the story. I, as a reader, had been suckered into the lies that Hattie had managed to weave around her life, and when I read it, I was as shocked as the characters in the story.

And that is why I loved this story. It was gritty, it was life, it was fantastic, and was real. Hattie had spent a lifetime telling herself lies to make herself feel better, and while they didn't unravel, it struck a chord, because often we tell ourselves lies in order to feel better about ourselves and our lives.

Hattie as a character was shallow to start with; a married man that she had left and mourned for the rest of her young life; with a younger man that she told herself she wasn't serious about; an adopted son that she adored, a thriving business, but there was something missing. By the end of the story you knew what was missing. And so did Hattie. After years of lies, she finally found the truth.

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### **Jouraine says**

Where do I begin to express my dislike for this book? I'm not sure because anything I say might actually spoil the read for anyone who might want to (piece of advice: don't). The characters are really weak, and even after finishing the book I can't say that I know enough about the main character to think of her with anything but indifference; and as for the plot, that's another story (I crack myself up), it's totally non-existent. Based on the blurb, I got the impression going in that there would be some sort of romance and something interesting -- that was not the case. Absolutely nothing happened, in the first 3/4 of the book, and then in the last quarter things picked up but in a "Bobby in the shower", wishy-washy kinda way. I really didn't appreciate that. I love a good twist but I did not see the point of this last minute effort. Why all the seemingly significant events and developemtn in the lives of second and third string characters? How was this germane to the main character's development? And where the heck was the editor on this one?

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## **Plum-crazy says**

Well I was disappointed in this. Normally I find Alliot's books good fun but from the start I had my doubts. I didn't warm to any of the characters & Hattie herself wasn't a particularly credible character - the whole adoption thing (which admittedly would be very admirable in real life) didn't ring true although the tale leading up to it was much more serious than is usual in this style of book, & indeed for this author. Otherwise, it was predictable (it was so, so obvious that a part received text was going to have some "vital" significance \*yawn\*), an unrealistic tale but neither out-&-out escapism. Not one of her best.....

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## **Gail Mallin says**

Catherine Alliot is on top form with this book. It's funny and the characters are engaging. I would have given it five stars except for one thing, I think the plot twist towards the end of the book is a bit of a cheat. The story is told in the first person by the heroine, Hattie, who is very open about her life, but Alliot deliberately misleads the reader about Hattie's son so that the plot twist can have the necessary impact, which struck me as a bit devious.

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## **Eva says**

boring, predictable and cliché, with characters that are more like caricatures. the silver lining is the writing.

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## **Kaye R says**

This is the story of Hattie, an almost 40-year-old single mum with teenage son Seffen, who has a serious attitude problem (what teenager doesn't?). She runs a French antiques business with her friend Maggie, and has a secret toy-boy Ivan.

Her gorgeous sister Laura is married to an upper-crust rich man with a country manor in need of serious re-decorating, so Hattie is called in to oblige. This brings back memories of Hattie's first love Dominic, a married politician, as the manor is located in the village where he lived.

"One Day in May" has very well developed characters, who are quirky, funny, likeable, flawed, and they each have a back-story which explains why they are the way they are. I also enjoyed the relationships between the characters, and many of the scenes are funny and highly entertaining.

The main problem for me, however, was that I guessed the story's big "secret" before the end of chapter one, so felt the plot was a little on the thin side.

Hattie herself was also a bit of a puzzle. She suffers from low self-esteem (even hiding her face in the morning from her lover, lest he see her without make-up), but there doesn't seem to be any reason for it. At times, I just wanted to slap her, as she didn't seem to have much to complain about. She had also wasted 15

years of her life mourning her married lover, who came across to me as a sleazy bastard, who cheated on his heavily pregnant wife with the intern!

Overall, however, the book had many moments of enjoyment, and it was an easy read.

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### **Jacqueline says**

This was a four star read right up until the end - then it was ruined. I cannot remember the last time i was let down so badly by a story.

I don't want to ruin the story, but I cannot understand how she ended up with that guy. Perhaps the author did too good a job of persuading me that he was wrong and the other was right. Perhaps the author just changed her mind. Either way, it was ruined for me. Such a shame.

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