



## The Years of Loving You

*Ella Harper*

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# **The Years of Loving You**

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## **The Years of Loving You** Ella Harper

From the award-winning author of *PIECES OF YOU* comes this enthralling love story, guaranteed to make you laugh, cry and dream upon a star...

What if your first love was your only love?

When Molly is diagnosed with a life changing illness, it feels like her whole world has come crashing down. She hopes the news will make her marriage to Sam stronger. But why does Molly always call best friend Ed in a crisis?

Ed. The very same Ed that Molly fell in love with at a party when they were teenagers, underneath a star-filled sky. Then life took them in very different directions. They could only ever be friends.

Suddenly Molly starts to question every decision she's ever made. What if they could turn back the clock? Back to the very beginning. When the only certainty they shared was each other ...

## **The Years of Loving You Details**

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Author : Ella Harper

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## **From Reader Review The Years of Loving You for online ebook**

### **Rachel Gilbey says**

When Molly receives her heart breaking diagnosis quite early into the book, I feared this would be an incredibly sad story, about a degenerative disease. Thankfully although the disease is featured heavily and in detail as to what the character can expect from it in the future, its actually a heart warming tale of love, and missed chances.

The Years of Loving You tells the story of Ed and Molly, both in the present and in alternating chapters from key moments in their friendship. It shows their misunderstandings, their true thoughts at all stages, and just proves that communication is a powerful tool and should be done more!

Each chapter moves the story on, either a few months in the case of the present story, or up to a few years in the "then" chapters. It was great to see the story from two different perspectives of the same events without it being repetitive.

Ed and Molly both have a multitude of other relationships but are always drawn to each, and I loved the ending of this story. It is a fabulous book that I really enjoyed, and although clearly emotional in places, was sweet and hopeful in others.

Ella Harper is a fabulous story teller and this book had me gripped, to such an extent I didn't mind the heavy bus delays as I was so happy to be living Molly and Ed's story.

Thank you so much to Netgalley and Avon for this review copy. This was my honest opinion.

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### **Paula Angus says**

I wanted to give it a higher rating - I loved the premise but not the execution. It was a nice read but not groundbreaking.

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### **Laura says**

such a lovely, well written story

I've been so eager to read The Years Of Loving You ever since I first clapped my eyes on it - I mean, just look at how beautiful the cover is!

I'm a huge fan of Ella Harper's work, some of you may know her under the name of Sasha Wagstaff and whilst I've not read any of those novels, Ella's début book under this name completely drew me in back last year - you can read my review of Pieces of You here.

The Years of Loving You tells the story of Molly and Ed, whom one night, years ago, met and fell in love after spending a night under the stars, talking, sharing poetry and their dreams of Molly becoming a painter -

Ed a novelist, locking lips and finishing each other's sentences - pure romance at its best. There was an instant attraction between the pair but for one reason or another they just couldn't admit their feelings to each other.

Life just got in the way as it does. Ed has a secret and although he trusts Molly with his life, it's just too painful to share and when that secret comes to a painful end, Ed is at a loss and decides to take the advice of his friend, Boyd, and do some travelling - that's not before writing all his locked in feelings for Molly down into a heartfelt letter and arranging for Molly to join him a few weeks later. She never did and it was never discussed.

During Ed's months away, Molly never heard from him and pushed herself to move her life forward by marrying Sam, and Ed presumed that Molly didn't feel the same way as he did for her and flitted from one fling to another looking for that missing thing he had with Molly.

Over time and as the years passed by, the pair kept their love for each other hidden - yet something pulled them together every time something major in their loves happened, so when Molly gets her diagnosis it's Ed, not Sam she really turns to.

The Years of Loving You was a truly beautiful story about two friends, near lovers and miss-timings, showing just what can happen when you let the one you love get away.

Ella Harper told their story wonderfully with chapters of 'Now' where Molly and Ed deal with her illness, and chapters of 'Molly and Ed' 'Molly' and 'Ed' which reflect back to when they met and poignant times in their individual paths but when they needed each other.

I loved Molly and Ed's characters - they were very real and their lives seemed very normal as if it was a couple that lived in your area and ones that faced real problems.

The Years of Loving You was a heart warming book of life long friendship yet had a sadness to it as both characters clearly wanted to be with each other - the way the book has been left has got me wondering what has happened to them now - I'd love to see a small novella of Molly and Ed - a few years later.

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### **Debra says**

For a more detailed review, check out my review below:

Debra's Book Cafe

Debs :-)

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### **Lucy says**

The Years of Loving You must have sat on my shelf for as long as Molly and Ed kept missing each other. It was a nice story, however, rather predictable towards the end. I felt it was rather long in places, and could do with condensing down a tad. I found myself really resisting the urge to skip a few chapters as it got a bit repetitive but it was a good read all the same.

Molly seemed so nice and well to do - I found it hard to think she gave Ed, who was so down to Earth and her best friend at times - up for Sam who seemed so obsessive about the way he managed certain situations. I would like to say practical but I didn't find him practical, I found him rather condescending as Molly would have known about her condition and the course it likely would take, plus prescriptions, trials, ways to improve her health etc. That really annoyed me about Sam and his discovery on her disease, you cannot control everything around you but he sure did try and that must have made it really hard for Molly to be with him. I don't know how she

I know what it is like for a couple when bad health news is broken and I felt that I could really relate to Molly, not knowing how to break the news, not sure how they will take it, just wanting a bloomin' hug. It can be really intense but as supportive as the five seconds, Sam was, he launched into, "we can do this / we can try" and that isn't support, that borders on denial. Ed definitely knew how to handle Molly and I think he was the best man for her.

Apart from the Molly/Ed/Sam/Illness - I didn't feel there was much else to the book and so my attention waned a bit. This book is good for a break / holiday or romantic read. It's cosy but I didn't have much fizz after a few chapters! It's good if you like this genre and read a lot of these genre of books.

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### **Aditi says**

*"The future for me is already a thing of the past - You were my first love and you will be my last"*

----Bob Dylan

Ella Harper, an award winning author, has penned a tear-jerking romance, *The Years of Loving You* that narrates the story of a woman, who when diagnosed with the early onset of Alzheimer's, starts to put her feelings forward and realizes that she has never let go of her first love, who evolved in her life as her best friend and with whom she feels at ease while sharing difficult situations of her marital life. This is her story as well as that man's story whose heart was broken many years ago and it still remains broken.

### **Synopsis:**

*What if your first love was your only love?*

*When Molly is diagnosed with a life changing illness, it feels like her whole world has come crashing down. She hopes the news will make her marriage to Sam stronger. But why does Molly always call best friend Ed in a crisis?*

*Ed. The very same Ed that Molly fell in love with at a party when they were teenagers, underneath a star-filled sky. Then life took them in very different directions. They could only ever be friends.*

*Suddenly Molly starts to question every decision she's ever made. What if they could turn back the clock? Back to the very beginning. When the only certainty they shared was each other.*

Molly is diagnosed with the early onset of Alzheimer's and Molly wishes that it does not weaken the bond of her marriage with Sam. On the other hand, her best friend, Ed, who was her first love long time ago, embraces her diagnosis with his open arms and vows to support her. Ed is suffering from his troubles, as he is stood up by a woman he gave his heart to. But after all this time, Ed's heart still longs for Molly and Molly is caught on a cross road on whether to trust the man who once ran away from her life.

The author's writing is eloquent and is laced with deep and heart-felt emotions that will move the readers. As the story progressed, it turned painful and heart-breaking as the narrative shifts from the present times to the past when Molly and Ed met for the first time. Those scenes between Molly and Ed are written evocatively. The medium paced book will certainly keep the readers engaged to the tale of Molly and Ed's sad love story.

The love story has lot of dynamics and is constantly shifts with its own pace once from happy to sad to extremely heart-rending. Molly and Ed's story will make the readers fall in love with the idea of first love yet once again, yes the book definitely make me think about my first love. The love depicted between the two characters with lots of passion, feelings, sweetness, promises and realism. There are some love stories which hold the power to make the readers think different or rather with new perspective and this is one such story, which is neither cheesy nor that romantic, but it is real.

The characters are also drawn with lots of realism in their demeanor. The characters are thrown under lots of real-life challenges, and how they react to those situation are also projected with authenticity. The main character, Molly, who is a married woman, annoyed me a bit in the beginning, but later with her diagnosis, my heart felt sorry for her situation and pain. Ed is projected with challenges right from the beginning and his back story break my heart. These two characters are quite evolving in nature and they will make the readers root for them until the end. The supporting characters are made thoughtful, realistic and wise.

In short, if you are a big fan of Nicholas Sparks kinds love stories, them this is a must read for you. The book is enthralling yet poignant right from the start and I did not realize when I got so lost in the tale of Molly and Ed, that even after the end of the book, it was hard for me to let them go.

**Verdict:** *A captivating love story!*

**Courtesy:** *Thanks to the author, Ella Harper, for giving me an opportunity to read and review her novel.*

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## **Gina says**

After page 98, it becomes an intense love affair. A very emotional-driven story, I think those who have fallen in love before will be able to relate very well. Go read and be an emotional wreck!

P/s: Predictable story, but hey, I think it's the emotional ride that counts for this masterpiece.

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## **Alicia says**

### **Wonderful novel but needs condensing**

What a wonderful novel. The storyline is accurate, realistic, and enjoyable.

Taking the concept of friendship between a man and a woman and their bond, relationship, support, love, and missed timing for something more is written well.

The characters are authentic, relatable, flawed, honest and have a history before meeting and after.

Yet, with all of the above, the author has written a novel that is superfluous, repetitive (at times), and would be a true gem with major condensing. Keeping the reader engaged is one of the main goals for any novel, and that only occurred at a few points within.

Since I liked the storyline and enjoyed almost all of the characters, I did keep reading and I am glad that I did, as that last section was just what the novel needed.

Rating: 3.5

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## **Ceri says**

Cheesy, soppy, romantic, typical boy meets girl which I normally stay away from but I loved it! A real feel good story!

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## **Book-shelf Shelf says**

A story of Ed and Molly, who became firm friends while at uni. The book tells us about the life they lead and the dreams they have ...then the reality.

Ella has done it again! She has written a story that will seriously wake you up. Whether it's seeing how Ed and Molly's friendship runs, Hearing of the troubles Molly has or the demise of Ed's mom, who he has told no one about... even Molly. Each subject is touched on with enough realism to inform the reader and keep their interest peaked, but not enough to make it a harrowing story that would have the reader sobbing.

Fabulously done, Thank you Ella x

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## **Jenks says**

Sad, easy read and a subject that actually is quite daring to write about

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## **Emma Crowley says**

The Years of Loving You is the second release from Ella Harper having previously written several books under the name Sasha Wagstaff. I can see why the author decided on a name change for these new books as the writing style, themes and content are vastly different from what she has previously written. I was blown away by last years release Pieces of You and needed tissues in plentiful supply to make it through the read. It was such a raw, honest, emotional accomplished story that stayed with me for quite some time after I had finished reading. So this new book for me had an awful lot to live up to. Well Ella gets the thumbs up for me at initial glance for the cover and title alone. The title instantly strikes a chord with you and made me feel this book was going to be as gut wrenching as book number one. The cover is simple yet stunning capturing an enjoyable moment in a relationship. The vivid colours attract you to this book. But would the story between the covers be as pleasing as the above afore mentioned points? The tag line would make you think so – first love, last chance. If that didn't do it for you the epigraph maybe would 'Yours is the light by which my spirits born, you are my sun, my moon and all my stars'. This pretty much sums up the relationship our two main protagonists Molly and Ed have although they don't always know it.

The chapters are told from the alternating viewpoints of Molly and Ed between the past and the present. This was a good tactic as we got to see how each character was thinking and feeling at any given time. In the present Ed has on the spur of the moment proposed to his girlfriend Saskia but at the engagement party he sees something he would rather not and the engagement is off. Molly is supposedly happily married to Sam and enjoying her painting but a life changing diagnosis puts everything she thought was solid and true right out the window. When we read of this diagnosis I thought we were going to go down the road of Jojo Moyes as in Me Before You but we didn't. Maybe the book needed a bit of that as I think what happens to Molly could have been utilised further. It's obvious from the start and throughout this book that Molly and Ed, who first met in university, are two friends who keep missing their time to be together and have moved on with in their respect lives but deep down they are still very much in love with each other. On first meeting Ed felt like this 'The earth hadn't exactly moved but Ed's life had surely just shifted on its axis. Molly had rendered him dumb', circumstances and life's path have gotten in the way but is now the time for everything to fall into place?

As we move between the past and the present we get a sense of Ed's tough early life and all he had been through to make him the man he was today. We see so many missed opportunities and misunderstandings between himself and Molly that quite frankly became very frustrating. I wanted them to have gotten together when they could have but then that would have been an entirely different book. Ed had an awful lot to deal with as he was growing up and in his early twenties and maybe his mind was not quite focused on the strength and support right in front of him that Molly could offer. As for Molly I felt for her when she hears her upsetting news and her husband Sam irritated me beyond belief I was screaming words at the page that cannot be used here for the way he treated her. Poor Molly was just so afraid she would lose the connections she had built with the things she loved most in the world. The question remained throughout the book – when is it ok to break the boundaries between friendship and love? This kept me reading until the end if only to discover the outcome for Molly and Ed but it did become a bit predictable. Admittedly the connection revealed with the title was superb and effortlessly slipped in but to be honest the book just seemed too dragged out with the outcome inevitable. Yes it is a fantastic love story but I think I had just been too spoilt by the authors first release.

At around the 40% mark I was thinking this really isn't as good as the first book. Nothing is happening and we are reaching the halfway point, yes we have had plenty of background information and Molly has heard her life altering, devastating news. We are going between the past and present with a few paragraphs of

insanely good writing but that's it the book isn't living up to my expectations (admittedly they were incredibly high) when bam Ella hits you in the face with a teasing revelation which if true could turn the story on its head. Within a few pages it comes to fruition and I was hoping this would change the whole tone of the book as the characters (not just the person involved) would all get a serious wake up call. One which when confirmed would prove actions of the past do not always stay there forgotten but can at any time come knocking on your door when least expected. At any time this would be difficult to deal with but an awkward situation when Molly needs Ed the most is not what is required or desired. Will this surprise cause a rift in the unique relationship between Molly and Ed that has the potential to become so much more or will it shatter them apart forever? Unfortunately this surprise element only lasted a few pages and in my opinion was totally under utilised and could have been developed in quite a different way which would have brought further tension and anguish which is what I wanted to see the characters go through. Ok they weren't having the easiest of rides and their indecision was particularly frustrating but this surprise wasn't covered in the best way.

Is The Years of Loving You just all too reminiscent of the hugely successful One Day? Where our two central characters side step each other for years but yet share an incredible, kindred connection obvious to everyone else except themselves. They go off and live different lives but eventually when realisation dawns it may be just too little too late. I couldn't get the One Day comparison out of my head throughout the book but putting that aside at several points the book really felt like it was going to take off but it didn't. It was like a plane just about to fly off from the runway but failing and chickening out at the last minute. I reluctantly say this because I had anticipated this book for several months, it had so much potential but just never followed through. Ok it did restore my faith that the right one is there waiting for you and if you wait long enough the right opportunity and person will present themselves. But Ed and Molly's story proved to be annoying and too drawn out. I believe if this was my first Ella Harper novel I would have really enjoyed it and it raced through the chapters but having adored Pieces of You maybe my expectations were just set far too high to be achievable as sadly they weren't reached. Yes this is a decent enough book and most people will enjoy the story but for me it isn't the best book I have read this year but I'm sure Ella will find some new readers who will enjoy Ed and Molly's story more so than I did.

Many thanks to Harper Collins, Avon for my copy of this book to review via NetGalley and to Sharon for having my review on the blog.

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### **Liz says**

Look at me, reading romance novels around valentine's day. MIRACLES!

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### **Karen says**

Is your husband the love of your life....or your best friend? Molly and Ed have been friends for a long time and despite Molly's marriage to Sam, they have a special connection with each other.

Flashbacks tell of the first meeting between Molly and Ed and Sam and how their relationship evolves over the years. We see how missed opportunities, misunderstandings, and family circumstances underpin their relationship.

When in the present day, Molly is diagnosed with a life changing illness, she wants support but can her husband Sam see her through this or is it to Ed that she turns?

This is a pleasant and poignant read but I preferred the 'now' periods to the past between Ed and Molly which I found a little too schmaltzy and repetitive – I began to get frustrated with the characters and skim read these to get to the rest of the story.

This is not a bad book by any means and covers some deeper and important issues. Despite this I just found it a little lightweight and not really something that I can say I wholly enjoyed.

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### **Alison says**

It's taken me a while to get to this book but I am making a concerted effort this year to read some that have been sitting on my TBR for a while! So it's always a pleasant surprise when you begin reading and think 'yep, this is brilliant' pretty much from the start.

Molly and Ed friends since Uni, classic boy meets girl, have a romantic moment under the stars and then real life gets in the way! She is an artist, he is a writer ....

But during this story with the benefit of flashbacks we get to see what might have happened along with what did occur.

Molly has a heartbreaking medical condition diagnosed, it could have become very melancholy after that but it's still written with humour, love and possible consequences.

Molly and Ed are best friends .. they could have been an item with the whole marriage, kids, shebang but their moment was never there.

Molly marries Sam ... she should be happy she has potential for a wonderful life so why in any crisis does she turn to Ed?

This explores friendship, relationships, family etc on many levels and has the ability to squeeze a few tears out.

I really liked Ed .. he was such a laid back character who absolutely idolises Molly ... she could be a bit of a diva and didn't always make the right decisions in my opinion. His loyalty to his mother proved he was worth his weight in gold.

The sections with Jodie and Jake added a nice dimension.

The book is quite long but beautifully written with such a depth of feeling that I didn't really want it to end. Thanks to Netgalley and the publisher, I reviewed this voluntarily and all opinions are my own.

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