



Second Chances

Tess St. John

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Lady Emma Easton's elopement to an elderly earl shields her from an abusive father, until her husband's death leaves her vulnerable once again. When she learns her father is scheming to marry her off, only one man can protect her—the earl's trusted friend, Viscount Drake.

After losing his wife, Lord Harold Drake vowed never to marry again. But his heart warms to the young widow he's promised to protect. Emma's love frees him from the darkness that's consumed him. But now Drake must protect her from her father's evil whims, or face losing her forever.

SECOND CHANCES is Book 1 in the Chances Are Series. Each book stands alone, but might be more enjoyable read in sequence.

Second Chances Details

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Author : Tess St. John

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From Reader Review *Second Chances* for online ebook

Susan says

Tess St John's debut novel, *SECOND CHANCES* is definitely worth a first and second chance. A beautifully crafted historical, the hero and heroine have loved and lost and vowed never to love again.

His wife died in childbirth. Her husband was elderly and frail, but the love they shared was the only one she'd ever known. When she is in danger and he protects her, they both realize that their friendship has grown into something neither expected.

While they enjoy their second chance, we will have to wait for Ms St John's next installment in the *Chances Are* series.

Lori McD says

3+ stars

This romance, while somewhat predictable, is heart warming. It's like a great cup of hot cocoa on a cold day - soothing, warm, and just makes you feel good!

It's 5 years after the Earl of Easton, Harmon Winterbourne, rescued the 15 year old Emma from her abusive father and whisked her away in marriage, making her Lady Easton. Harmon is now in his 80s and dying. He's estranged from his children, but he's never told Emma quite what the problem was; she only knows he's written to them several times, but his children want nothing to do with him.

Before he dies, Harmon asks his good friend, Lord Harold Drake the fifth Viscount Drake, to marry Emma. Lord Drake is in his late 20s and is widowed with a 2 year old daughter, Samantha. His wife died in childbirth. Lord Drake has vowed to never marry again; he doesn't think he could ever love a woman like he loved his first wife. Both Drake and Emma are embarrassed by Harmon's request, Harmon does manage to get Lord Drake to promise to watch over Emma after he dies; Harmon especially warns Drake to keep her father from her.

After Harmon's death, Emma dutifully sends out the notice of his death to his family and to the papers. But only Lord Drake and his mother show up for Harmon's funeral; none of his children bother to come. Emma figures they'll come in short order, though, because Harmon's lawyer cannot read the will until all those mentioned in it are present.

It's a time of economic upheaval for England, and many of its banks seem to be closing. Lord Drake discovers that all his cash holdings are gone. He still has other investments and properties he can sell, but he's only got enough cash on hand for the next few months. Drake let his wife handle the books, and after her death, he could never be bothered. He still doesn't want to deal with any of it, so he asks Emma if it would be alright for him to bring Samantha, her nanny, his mother, her sister, and some servants to live with her until Harmon's children arrive. Both Lord Drake and his mother are mentioned in the will, so they'll need to be

present. Emma is delighted to have the company.

In her years in the house, Emma has acted more as a companion/servant than the lady of the house. She even occupies a small bedroom close to the Lord's bedroom rather than occupying the Lady's chambers. When Drake and his mother arrive, they put an end to Emma's servant days, and his mother and her sister take up training Emma on how to act, dress, and look like a lady.

When Harmon's children do arrive, they're not very friendly. And when the will is read, and Emma receives all the cash and liquid holdings that Harmon had, she protests. During the reading of the will, it comes out that Harmon's first wife (and his children's mother) moved out of the house after their last child, a son, died. She was in her late 40s then, and because Harmon didn't want her to have the child, fearing for her life, (view spoiler)

Pam says

Second Chances: Chances Are Series Book 1 is by Tess St. John. It is a great book and one you definitely cannot put down, even in the late night or early morning hours.

Emma is locked in the attic room. Her Father was upset when she rode out alone on her horse after meeting the aged man her Father was going to marry her to. Emma did not like the man's cold eyes. The opening of the door caught her attention. It was her maid, Selma, who came not only to let her out but to help her get away. They snuck out of the house to a horse and carriage which was waiting. As soon as Emma was in, the carriage took off. The man in the carriage was Harmon Westbourne, Earl of Easton. He had come to rescue the fifteen-year-old Emma. Although he was older than she was by many years, she recognized his compassion and wisdom and off they went to Gretna Green to marry. Now she would not have to fear her Father.

Five years later, on his death bed, Harmon told his friend, Harold Drake, the fifth Viscount Drake, that he would like for Drake to marry Emma to protect her. Being still under age, she was still in danger from her Father. Drake told him he wouldn't marry her but would put her under his protection. Drake had no intention of marrying again after losing his beloved wife.

Will Drake's protection be enough to shield Emma from her Father and Harmon's heirs?

Atunah says

I have to say that not very often does a book make me cry, especially right at the beginning. This one made me cry twice and that was just at 40% of the sample in. Right from the get go it hit me with the emotional hammer.

I really liked it. Slowly watching 2 people fall in love that didn't think they had any space left in their hearts was wonderful.

There was a quite understated beauty about the hero and the heroine that was just so well felt. Lovely. I am so bad at explaining things, which is why I leave the writing to those that know what they are doing.

Andi G. says

A perfect, classical historical romance example. A superb story of second chances, of love overcoming any obstacle. Beautifully written, this book will keep you on your toes and not let you put it down. Recommended for all the genre avid readers - it s a must not miss - but also readers who enjoy a suspenseful captivating romantic read.

I received a copy and voluntarily reviewed.

Laila Viking says

A well written historical romance. I like the storyline and plot. The story is true to the time period and places. The story is predictable but in spite of that it is captivating and believable. When the story is a bit slow in the beginning it is very fast in the end. Recommendable read.

I received a free copy of this book and am voluntarily leaving a review

Cara says

Second Chances by Tess St. John is a beautiful story of the healing power of love, with just enough danger and suspense to keep you on the edge of your seat.

Emma, Lady Easton, is kind, proud, and strong. She's been nursemaid to her elderly husband, Harmon, for five years. He'd rescued her from marriage to a cruel man, a man her father had chosen. Emma is joined at Harmon's death bed by Lord Drake, a man who has been like a son to Harmon. To further protect Emma from her heartless father who will again try to force her into marriage, Harmon asks Lord Drake to marry Emma. Both Lord Drake, who is mourning the death of his wife two years earlier, and Emma refuse.

During the course of the story, as Lord Drake fights to protect Emma from her father, Emma and Drake fall in love. Drake is still suffering over the loss of his wife and feels guilt that he can love another woman. Emma is afraid to acknowledge her love for Drake. She fears he still loves his wife. Because Emma is not yet 21, her father tries to take control over her life. He has already found another husband for her, an older man who will pay a lot of money for Emma. But Emma will not let her father control her. She fights for her independence, and for the freedom to marry the man she chooses.

The setting of Second Chances, the English countryside, peopled with lords and ladies, is engaging. The unfolding love story and the trust that develops between Drake and Emma is heartwarming. Second Chances

grabbed me from the first page. This is the first book in the Chances Are series. I can't wait to read the others.

Cathiecaffey says

There is a free Prequel, EMMA'S CHANCE available at Smashwords.com and search Tess St. John or direct for EMMA'S CHANCE at <http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/...> and for SECOND CHANCES <http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/....>

I'm currently reading SECOND CHANCES and its awesome!. But here's a quick review on EMMA'S CHANCE since its not posted here under her books (then go grab it to read!)

EMMA'S CHANCE review: Wow, what a beautiful writing voice this author has. Its a short story (and an excerpt of the first book) but so worthy to read. It gave me a feel of the story and too just so much the emotional impact this story will have. I was so moved with this prequel. Reading the excerpt, I was back here getting the first book, SECOND CHANCES.

Angie says

Good story about second chances for love. The plot moved along smoothly, and there was enough ups and downs to keep the story interesting. I am looking forward to the story about Katherine and Malcome.

SheLove2Read says

I cried through the entire first chapter - that's how I knew this was going to be a great book! This is a lovely historical romance about two people who desperately need and DESERVE a second chance in life and in love.

Tess St John is a new author to me but I'm going to be checking out more of her stories. I recommend you read the free prequel before reading this one so you'll be up to speed.

etherealfire says

My Kindle e-book

Sieravonne says

2.5 stars

Good story. I like it when the heroine wasn't a doormat to infatuation or love, but there were a few things

that I would like to remark on...

- Chapter 1: Ladies watched their language and didn't use profanities.

- I got a bit bored from Chapter 13 to 15.

- Chapter 21: I think it was stupid that Emma needed to transfer back her monetarily inheritance to the estate. In doing so was not only an insult but disregarding and not fulfilling the wish of the dead. Harmon, her late husband, had his reasons why he gave away all the money to her and leave nothing to his children. I'm sure Harmon was rolling in his grave when Emma did it.

If she thinks that the money belongs to the estate, she should at least set aside a portion for herself. In that way, she can runaway from her tyrant father and live the way she wanted to. She didn't have to be at someone's mercy. She didn't need to burden other people (namely the Westbourne siblings, Drake, Drake's mother and aunt, and Katherine Ashby) to help her escape. Where was her common sense?

- Chapter 22: I find this conversation bothering:

Malcolm: "I cannot attest that all my thoughts are pure, but my intentions are. If all we share is friendship that will be enough for me, Katherine."

Katherine : "I think I want to find out if there is more between us."

Malcolm: "Thank God, because I lied."

- Chapter 25: I find this statement so incest even if they weren't really father and daughter by blood:

Emma could not understand her father hating her because she looked like her mother.
Shouldn't that have made him love her more?

- Lastly, also in Chapter 25, I think that the conversation between Emma and father, while Drake and Katherine was trying to ascertain her safety, were not in sync. In my judgement, the conversation took more than 5 minutes but less than 10, however, the scene with Drake and Katherine took less than 5 minutes.

Miguelina Perez says

In "Second Chances" Tess St. John weaves a delightful tale about second chances; not only about love but redemption, as well.

Emma is rescued by Lord Easton, a man old enough to be her grandfather, from an abusive father. Marrying the sixteen year old he shocks English society, but he does not care. He needed a companion and Emma needed a haven. It was the perfect situation for both of them. The story starts with five years having passed and Lord Easton is on his deathbed, with Emma by his bedside.

Worried about Emma after he is gone, Lord Easton sends for his best friend, Harold Drake, the fifth Viscount Drake. As he is dying, Lord Easton asks Drake to marry Emma. Having recently lost his wife and raising a two-year old daughter with his mother's help, Drake tells him he cannot make such a promise for he still loves his wife. But, he instead promises to watch over Emma and make sure her father keeps his distance.

Claiming that their marriage should be annulled, because it was never consummated, Emma's father arrives with the support of Lord Easton's sons, the now angry adult sons whose mother claimed Lord Easton had killed her child.

While St. John's novel is heavily character driven, this is a good thing. The novel pulls in the reader into its world where the characters are humanized with faults and their eventual road to redemption with the exception of Drake and Emma who St. John purposefully felt did not require redemption, though one would argue that resolving their own issues; Drake to fall in love again and Emma to trust, someone else other than her husband; could be called redemption, but still not to be compared with the redemption of the minor characters.

Once the brothers realize that their mother had twisted the truth they are filled with regret for their treatment of Emma and side with her against her father and his claims. There is a sweet development in their relationships with Emma as they all align themselves as her champions. St. John goes further by introducing Drake's sister-in-law, his deceased wife's twin sister. At first I was annoyed at the possibility that she would be in competition for Drake's affections, but instead I was pleasantly surprised when St. John reveals that their relationship is one of brotherly love.

Another pleasant surprise – St. John hints of a possible romance between Malcolm Westbourne, Lord Easton's eldest and heir and Drake's sister-in-law, Katherine Ashby. Joyfully and cleverly pulled off, they are given a few minutes of time throughout the novel as their relationship begins to develop. I did find out that St. John is having their story told in her next part of the "Second Chances Are" series – "A Chance for Freedom" coming out this year.

Character driven novels are usually considered taboo, unless of course you can pull it off and St. John is one of those writer's that does it with finesse. The novel is true to the period, but told in a more modern dialect – which I am happy to say does not distract or take away from the story or period.

Sandra says

Never once did I want to put the book down, even though it made me cry right from the start. I sometimes felt like I was on an emotional roller coaster. The book was well written and very descriptive. The characters were either ones you loved and could relate to, or a few you loved to hate. I found it suspenseful at times and I was not sure what might happen next. I loved the book and would highly recommend it.

Diane K. Peterson says

What a good book! Especially for the author's first. I enjoyed *Second Chances* immensely. The story had good emotional conflict. The characters were warm and real. The only thing I didn't like was the evil father subplot. It never seems very realistic to me to have these evil characters. Life just isn't usually like that. BUT

it was still a really, really good book. I'm looking forward to other books in the series.
