



# Love by the Letter

*Melissa Jagears*

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## **Love by the Letter** Melissa Jagears

Dex Stanton has never had much time for book learning. He's been too busy helping to provide for his family. Now that he's heading west, Dex is hoping to start a family of his own. However, his attempt to acquire a mail-order bride fails miserably when the lady writes back ridiculing his terrible spelling. Rachel Oliver may be the last person he wants to know what a dunce he is, but she's also the smartest woman in town--and it's clear he needs her help.

Rachel Oliver has lingered in town for three years secretly mooning over Dex Stanton, but now she's done. If the fool wants to write to a mail-order bride company, so be it. Once she begins giving Dex lessons, however, Rachel realizes she may not be prepared to give up just yet.

As their time together runs short, can two of the most stubborn people in town set aside their pride long enough to find love?

Love by the Letter is a companion novella to A Bride for Keeps, Melissa Jagears's full-length debut novel available fall 2013. Includes an extended sneak peek at A Bride for Keeps.

## **Love by the Letter Details**

Date : Published September 1st 2013 by Bethany House Publishers

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Author : Melissa Jagears

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## **From Reader Review Love by the Letter for online ebook**

### **Maria says**

Dex Stanton is about to move to Lawrence, Kansas, to start a new life. He decides to write to a mail-order bride company to find a good match but the lady whom he writes to laughs at his terrible spelling and he feels discouraged. Therefore, he decides to ask for help and goes to the smartest girl in town, Rachel Oliver, whom he secretly admires, but because of his reading and writing problems never dared to court her. She accepts to give him reading lessons during the last week before he leaves. The only difficulty is that she is deeply in love with him!

I loved this story! My only complaint is that it was a short story. Since I am fond of details and I am always eager to discover as much as I can about the characters, I always feel something is missing when I read a short story. This is just me, though.

Fortunately, in this case the plot was complete. It felt a little rushed by the end but I thought it was a good ending for the kind of story told. The protagonists were well depicted, they were a lovely couple and I enjoyed reading about their emotions every time they were together. Although I wanted it to be longer, I can tell I am satisfied.

“Love by the letter” is a delightful tale about love which tells readers to never abandon hope. I highly recommend Melissa Jagears’ novella and I am looking forward to her first novel A Bride for Keeps.

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### **Lucinda says**

Between 3 1/2 and 4 stars. I don't usually read novellas but this one was cute, especially as an introduction to the novel.

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### **Courtney says**

I love (x3) this novella! I cannot get over how well written the story line was, and how developed the characters were. This is the first writing that I have ever read by Ms. Jagears and I was not disappointed, which was a breath of fresh air for me today.

Love by the Letter is not the typical "judge by the title" book, there are many twists and turns that was taken to lead the reader to know just how witty the title actually is. I highly recommend this novella, and I cannot wait to read the novel that follows with the focus shifted to familiar characters.

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### **Anne says**

Well, finally! I thought I'd never see the day when I'd read a short story and like it. This was really good. It was short and sweet, with just enough plot and characterization to make for a quick, heartwarming love

story. Dex has always had his eye on Rachel, but he thinks she'd never have anything to do with him since he can't read properly and she's the smartest woman he knows. Unbeknownst to him, Rachel is strongly attracted by him and greatly admires his strength and hard-working ways. However she despairs of ever attracting him, since she is convinced he's never looked twice at her. Then, when Dex has recourse to a mail-order bride because he is sure Rachel won't have him, and he needs help writing his response to the letter, what better person is there in town to help him but Rachel?

Just awww. It was really cute. The ending was a bit far-fetched and all, but oh well, it's just a novella, and right now I don't feel like fussing over details in such a short work. If you are looking for a sweet, short love story set in the 19th century in the US, I'd recommend this one!

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### **Aerykah says**

Pretty good! Kinda fast-paced, but that was okay because the characters already had something of a history together.

I enjoyed it & definitely look forward to more books from this author.

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### **Veronica ?? says**

This is a heart-warming novella about life and love in Missouri in the mid 1800's. Dex Stanton is preparing to move to Kansas with his good friend Neil, Neil's sister Patricia, her Fiancé Everett and a few other townsfolk to claim land and start a new life. Dex knows he needs a wife before he leaves and writes for a mail order bride.

Rachel is the local school teacher, the brains of the town. At her mother's urging she has applied to attend college but she would like nothing more than to get married, preferably to Dex but he never even looks her way.

The story is told in the POV of both Dex and Rachel. There are lots of misunderstandings and anguish and a few funny moments when life just doesn't ever go right for poor Dex.

This was a delightful quick read it had me impatient to read the next book in the series, "A Bride for Keeps", to see what's in store for these wonderful characters.

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### **Andrea Cox says**

While this was a cute story, I had trouble buying the tutoring aspect. I've tutored children for fifteen years, and if I had done it the way the leading lady in this book did, I wouldn't have been in business long, not to mention how illiterate my fellow community members would have been. The lady said she wouldn't correct the guy's reading. If that's the case, how was he supposed to learn to read better? That might be solved by her other suggestion: that he guess at what the words are. That's something I've often had to un-teach children in order to teach them the proper way to read, which is to sound out the words rather than guess. If those two things weren't bad enough, the lady then had the gall to nearly burst out laughing at her student as he

stumbled through a page of written words. That seemed so out of character for her and was entirely distracting through that scene that I'm not sure what was the point of that scene.

After those three things, I wasn't holding my breath to be warmly entertained by the remainder of this story. However, I found it to be a sweet tale. I really admired the leading man and the gumption it took to ask the gal he liked to teach him to better read and write. Talk about brave! He was the sort of hero I love reading about: humble, smart in his own way, courteous, thoughtful, and a cowboy type, even if he didn't wear the Stetson.

While I wasn't a fan of Rachel's feminist mother, I liked her brother well enough to try the next book in this series, which features him, if I'm not mistaken.

I was not compensated for my honest review.

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### **Stefanie says**

This was a cute, fun story to read. There wasn't much depth to the book and not a lot of development when it comes to the story itself. It's probably because it is the opening novella to a series, so I'm interested to see if the series develops the characters in a stronger light and adds more detail to the storyline. Overall though, I enjoyed the read!

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### **Cynthia Marcano says**

Melissa Jagears is a talented short story writer. I was hooked to the story from the very beginning.

Rachael is very likeable and Dex is all man and a completely lovable character. Jagears did a great job keeping the story going without it feeling stretched thin. I look forward to reading the next chapter of Rachael & Dex's adventure to Kansas Territory as well as Everett & Patricia's story.

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### **Sarah says**

This was a cute little story that didn't seem to go too fast or too slow. The book was pretty predictable, which I didn't mind since I was looking for just an easy, sweet read. Both the main characters were interesting and well done for such a short story.

I recommend this book for those who like romance, westerns, and quick reads.

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### **Naomi Rawlings says**

Dex and Rachel both have a healthy dose of attraction for each other, but the way they show it had me

wriggling, laughing and blushing all throughout the story. They've known each other for forever and been half in love for just as long, but getting them to talk about their feelings can be mighty entertaining. As a reader you never know quite what to expect. You think they're going to say or do one thing, but then their perfectly laid plans go awry and end in disaster. Though I must admit, after reading this story, I won't ever again think of butterscotch candy in quite the same way. (You'll have to read the novel to find out why.)

The story starts out a little predictable in that you can easily see Dex and Rachel getting together in the end. After all, they only need to confess their feelings and personal failures to each other before they can waltz off into happily-ever-after land. But confessing those things doesn't end up being quite so easy as it first appears. Then just when you think things are finally going to work out for poor Dex and Rachel . . . well, lets just say everything ends up careening down hill really fast, and in a really unexpected way.

This novella offers something for everyone. It's funny at certain moments and serious at others. Rachel and Dex are attracted to one another, but not to the point that attraction consumes the story or risks offending sensitive readers. Furthermore, the author has a fresh style of writing and puts spins on ordinary situations, turning every day things from mundane to extraordinary.

Read the full review here: <http://inspirationalromanceRatings.co...>

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### **Melanie says**

This was such a cute and fun story! It makes me really want to read Melissa's full-length novels -- hopefully this year. I liked how Rachel didn't judge Dex for his difficulty in reading/spelling or let it change her feelings for him.

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### **Dina says**

Nice story, adorable hero, likeable heroine, what's not to like? Well, how can I say this? Hmm... I'm a slut and love scenes are a must in my romance books. There you have it, LOL.

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### **Hannah says**

4.5 stars

I got really emotionally attached to these two characters, so I definitely enjoyed the story! A good opening to the series and a book I've put off reading for far too long.

Gripe: mantel was spelled "mantle" four times, and undue spelled as undo...it just struck me as really ironic in a book where one character's bad spelling causes issues for him. ;)

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### **Beth says**

This was a sweet, lovely novella. There were no great surprises, however due to its short length, it works

perfectly. Rachel and Dex were both very endearing characters, and while there wasn't a lot of time to get to know them, they show up again in the author's full length novel, *A Bride for Keeps*, which I am about 100 pages into & loving!

Recommended if you're in the mood for a short & sweet, romantic read.

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