



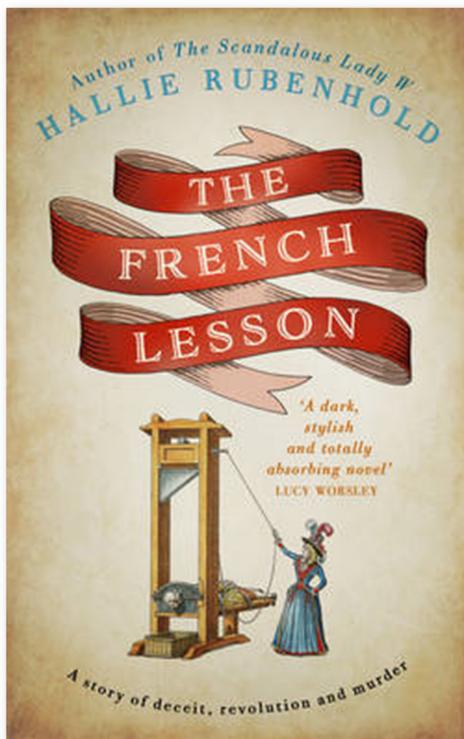
Helping you choose
your next book

LoveReading Reader reviews of **The French Lesson** By Hallie Rubenhold



Doubleday

Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.



Lorraine Blencoe

This is a delightful book that absolutely grips from the first word to the last. It is beautifully written and tells the tale of the French Revolution from an absorbing perspective, and one the reader is immediately complicit in because the reader becomes part of the narrative. It is essentially a story about how some women managed to live by their means when all they had to sell was their dignity. The descriptions are vivid and the characters full of charm. I couldn't put it down.

Angie Rhodes

The year is 1792, the place is Paris and Louis XVI and his Queen Marie Antoinette, have been arrested. Paris is not a safe place, with friends turning in each other. Henrietta Lightfoot is a young Englishwoman who is fleeing from a rather shady past in London. Soon poor Henrietta is caught up in the middle of The French Revolution. Looking for her Lord Allenham, the man she loves more than life it's self goes missing and to her rescue comes Mrs Elliot, who is a celebrated mistress to some of the most influential men in all of France, but alas this comes at a price, one that she will pay dearly for.

With fact mingling with fiction, this is a wonderful gallop through the Revolution with dry humour, spies and plenty of passion. Hallie has written a book that the great Georgette Heyer would be proud of.

Jennifer Merville

The story is set in 1789 in Paris and Henrietta Lightfoot is an English woman in trouble. Her lover the 4th Baron Allenham, George William Allenham has asked her to move to Brussels with him but not long after he has to go to Paris business. But Paris is in the middle of a revolutionary war. She takes refuge in the well to do home of Grace Dalrymple Elliott. But people are talking, maids whisper behind closed doors, chatter can be dangerous. Then she receives a letter from Allenham. For safety sake he gets passage for Henrietta on a ship bound for London. But Henrietta moved to France in the first place to escape London - London is her past and she is determined never to go there again. She decides to follow Allenham to Paris and by means and fortune she travels with strangers staying hither and thither, meeting people who help her and people who are against her. As a woman she must use her charms and abilities to survive and becomes a painter. No one can be trusted - Henrietta needs to survive.

The book follows the tales of woe and joy for Henrietta as she tries to gain some sense of who she is in a game of female power.

Joy Bosworth

It's different - it's not a cosy romance.

It isn't a light romance nor is it escapism. Its deceit and misery with a dash of bodily functions.

Anyone harbouring ideas of Paris and romance should read the section where the mistress employs a deputy during her pregnancy and then provides his 'n' hers bidets.

I'd hoped for a little light on the intricacies of the French court but this is set just to one side of the main events, but it has very thorough details of the clothing of the day and the procedures for those detained and awaiting trial.

The author has a good section explaining which characters are fictitious and which are actual people, which I always appreciate, but on the whole I didn't find it very enjoyable.

Nicola Lowes

This book is written in an eighteenth century style which immediately sends you to the time in which it is set. Yet this does not make it difficult to read. It helps create the atmosphere and tone of the story.

The heroine, Henrietta, is trusting and naïve and falls prey to the plots and scheming of others around her. I wished she had a bit more sense but she was only about twenty at the time of the story so could probably be excused for being taken in so much.

The conditions that Parisians had to live under the aftermath of the revolution were described well and I got a good feeling of that scourge of modern warfare when you cannot trust your neighbours and have to falsely show allegiances whether or not you support them.

Enjoyable and believable with plenty of period detail.

You can follow Nicola on Twitter: @NJlowes

Edel Waugh

*The book is set in Paris during the French Revolution but even though the city is going through a war the beauty of Paris remains. The main character is Lady Allenhams but that is not her real name, her real name is Henrietta. When her love abandons her with instructions to move to England on board a ship she ignores his request despite the fear of the start of war there. She quickly finds herself in bother and need of assistance and it comes in a most unexpected form. Love and lust during the French Revolution was not an easy task, not knowing who to trust and what danger lay ahead was a daily struggle. Life **was very uneasy and unpredictable making this story hard to put down, I needed to know if love was going to prevail or if after everything Henrietta went through was for nothing.***

<http://edelwaugh.blogspot.ie/2016/02/the-french-lesson-by-hallie-rubenhold.html?m=1>

Cathy Small

This book throws us into the middle of the French revolution but with a difference. We follow Henrietta as she searches for her lover but the journey takes her into the heart of the revolution.

All Henrietta wanted was a simple life with her lover Lord Allingham but he has disappeared. She starts to take her decision into her own hands and search for him but this takes her into the paths of many people who are not what they would seem. Henrietta finds herself caught up in a whole world of gossip and a pawn in the lives of 2 powerful woman who are rivals. Rather than returning safely to her home of England, she follows her heart into Paris but finds herself getting deeper and deeper in trouble as she trusts the wrong woman. Her memoirs share some of the horrors of the French Revolution but more of the horrors that she experiences to try and remain safe.

Glenda Worth

Story of Henrietta who has escaped her disreputable life in England and gets caught up in the French revolution. Her exploits help Henrietta to find herself in a time of turmoil.

Henrietta has escaped her life in England and comes to Paris to find Lord Allingham who seems to have disappeared. Grace comes to her rescue helping her to begin with, but it soon becomes obvious that Henrietta is all part of a war between two powerful women.

As Henrietta tries to save her own life and that of her lover she encounters a time of war and bloodshed.

An exciting novel which takes many unpredictable turns keeping the reader engrossed and wanting to read further. Plenty of period drama and gruesome detail adding to the plausibility of a great read.

Jan Kirkcaldy

*Not having read an historical novel for many years, though at one time such books were high on my list of favorites, I started this one with great enthusiasm. Unfortunately for me this feeling did not continue and I found myself becoming somewhat irritated with our erstwhile heroine, "Lady Allingham" or Henriette Lightfoot" as she was also called. **Knowing quite a bit historically about the French Revolution and what terrible things happened during that time, I felt those facts were probably well researched and reported as accurately as we will ever know.** But, and this became my ongoing concern, would there ever have been anyone quite as naive as Henriette in choosing to travel into danger with just her maid and in effect into*

high class prostitution. Probably some. None of her adventures however entertaining to the reader seemed to ring true or even be within the realms of possibility. I struggled to finish this tale but I'm sure many will love it if it suits their favourite genre. Not for me though I'm sorry to say.

Jane Brown

A real romp of a read set in the heady days of the French revolution.

This is the second book in a trilogy. This is about the character Henrietta Lightfoot. Set in Paris and the French revolution where no one's head in society was safe but there is a good deal of love and lust.

Who do you trust the city is in turmoil- Henrietta could have left but chose to remain in this city. She had already fled from London. Her love of her life has disappeared. Nothing is as it appears (this keeps the reader hungry for more) and Henrietta has to fight for her life.

Recommended absorbing novel.

<http://browniebookworld.blogspot.co.uk/>

Lesley Hart

I really enjoyed this book about, Englishwoman, Henrietta Lightfoot finding herself in the midst of the French Revolution in 1792 whilst searching for her lover, rather than returning to England.

Henrietta Lightfoot's lover, Lord Allenham, instructs her to return to England whilst he journeys onto Paris and instead she decides to follow him. Her journey through France to Paris means that she is at the mercy of strangers, because she has no one to introduce her to people who could help her. She unwittingly ends up in Paris at the start of the French Revolution and is in constant danger from revolutionaries and people who befriend her in the guise of being helpful. I really loved this book and the style of writing by Hallie Rubenhold keeps the pages turning. The description was: 'Dangerous Liaisons' meets 'A Tale of Two Cities', which was totally apt. I thoroughly recommend this book.

Bev Farningham

This tells the tale of Henrietta who travels with her lover from London to Brussels at the end of the 18th century. He works for the govt but when war threatens between Austria and France he is called to Paris. As it is dangerous he tells her to stay behind but of course she ignores him and sets off later.

*So begins **a tale wonderfully told of friendships and betrayal and the dangers of the French revolution.***

The whole of society and especially mistresses who go thru men like hot dinners. In France it is respected and accepted, even admired. Plus 2 friends can be the mistresses of each other's husbands with no recriminations. Was a lesson about the half lemons and limes!

Excellent authorship.

Evelyn Love-Gajardo

***A very enjoyable, well-paced novel with a feisty and likeable heroine.** The writer is an authority on Georgian women and it shows in the way she writes about the lives of the different women in the story, set in the French Revolution. She doesn't skim over the horror of the time and we are left in no doubt of the fear of living in Paris in those days.*

Historical fiction of a high standard.