



Once an Heiress

Renee Ryan

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Boston society darling Gigi Wentworth leaves behind everything she holds dear for the sake of love—only to learn that the man with whom she'd planned to elope is nothing but a thieving scoundrel. Abandoned in New York City and saddled with debt, Gigi must sell a prized family heirloom, but even that sacrifice isn't enough to get her home. Her determination drives her to take on work as a lady's maid, keeping her identity a secret...until she's discovered by a former friend with a hidden agenda.

Although dealing with his own serious family issue, Christopher "Fitz" Fitzpatrick sets out to return the missing heiress to her rightful place in society. But the more he interacts with this new Gigi, the more shocked he is to find her so changed. Gone is the frivolous beauty in expensive gowns. In her place is a woman he could grow to love. When secrets are revealed, will Gigi and Fitz find the trust they need to confront the past and open their hearts?

Once an Heiress Details

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From Reader Review Once an Heiress for online ebook

Evalina says

An advantage of reading books in a series is the author has an opportunity to develop characters who are regarded as minor at the start of the series and readers get to experience once again that everyone has a story. This is the case with "Once An Heiress", the third book in the 'Gilded Promises' series. While this book is part of a series, it may also be read as a standalone novel.

"Once An Heiress" is the story of Sally Smith, a character in the first two books in the series, who is maid/confidante to the main female characters of those books. In the third book, we learn that 'Sally' is really Georgina 'Gigi' Wentworth, a disgraced heiress from Boston. While there was a slight discrepancy with the character 'Sally' between the first and second books, I believe it was because the character became more real to the author as she progressed with the series. By the time 'Sally' is developed in the third novel, we learn the reason for the "mystery" the character presented in the first two novels. I must admit that while I read and enjoyed the previous two books, I fell in love with the character 'Sally/Gigi'. I became so engaged with this character's story that I reread the previous two books in the series and then read the third book again.

Intertwined into this story is the character of 'Fitz', the man Gigi left behind when she ran away to New York City with another man who ended up deserting her. Since her father had threatened to disown her if she continued a relationship with the other man, Gigi is left to fend for herself and ends up becoming a maid to survive. Along with survival, however, is Gigi's need for redemption. Gigi's efforts toward achieving redemption also provides thoughts for the reader to reflect on. I particularly loved the way the author wove the parable of the Prodigal Son into Gigi's story.

While we read of Gigi's issues with achieving redemption, we also learn of the soul-searching and struggles occurring in Fitz. Fitz arrives in New York City after a detective he hired has located Gigi. While Fitz states he has been searching for Gigi for one reason, we learn there is another underlying reason for his search. Before this story ends, both main characters will have learned much about forgiveness, redemption and restoration. Suffice it to say, this story is one that will keep you engrossed to the end.

I voluntarily received an ARC in exchange for an honest review. However, the thoughts and opinions given in this review are my own.

Maria Dariotis says

I haven't had the pleasure of reading Renee Ryan's Books but I can tell you I'll be looking her up.

Can be read as a stand alone but reading the previous books gives you a clearer picture on the secondary characters. Boston socialite Gigi Wentworth has eloped with the man she believes loves and cherishes her more than anything. Leaving a life of wealth and privilege behind she travels to New York only to be abandoned by the man she believed had loved her. Selling a cherished family heirloom and taking a position as a lady's maid to survive is a struggle for the once pampered young woman. Until she comes face to face with Christopher Fitzpatrick, her secret identity will be exposed.

Christopher Fitzpatrick can't believe the young Gigi has changed so much, not the spoiled heiress of the Boston Society but a woman of strength and character and he finds that the more he knows of her the more he falls in love. But he can't allow himself to lose his heart he has his own issues.

This was a well written book and the flow and development of the plot was nicely done. The characters were likeable, the romance beautiful and well crafted. Through redemption they find forgiveness and love. I received a complimentary copy from the publisher through NetGalley for my honest unbiased opinion.

Cindy says

Once an Heiress by Renee Ryan was a wonderful historical novel set during the Gilded Age in New York City. This is the third book in the "Gilded Promises" series which was preceded by Journey's End and A Touch of Scarlet.

I love books that have strong, well-developed characters that almost come to life on the written page. Gigi and "Fitz" are two characters that fall into this category. In fact, I almost felt like they stepped off of the page into my life and they are still with me. Well done, Ms. Ryan.

There is a conflict between these two flawed but lovable characters. Gigi feels she is beyond redemption of her past sins, but our God is a God of second chances.

The plot flowed along very nicely and took me right along for the ride. I found myself getting so lost in the story that I lost all track of time. When a book is this good, I hate to finish the last page.

I highly recommend this book to anyone who loves historical romance novels. It's a story that follows the theme of the prodigal son. A story of redemption and second chances. A story to be embraced and loved.

On a 5-Star scale = 5 Stars!!!!

I would like to thank the author for my copy of Once an Heiress. I voluntarily received an Advanced Readers Copy in exchange for an honest review.

Alison says

This is the third and final book of Renee Ryan's, Gilded Promises Series and I have to say, I LOVED this book! Even though it is a part of a series, this book can be read as a stand-alone....but I will warn you....it will definitely whet your reader's appetite to read the other books in this series. It is that good!

From the very first page I was swept into 1901 and the tale of Gigi Wentworth, once a society darling, now fallen heiress. Forced to live the life of a servant after being left penniless and saddled with debt by a thieving scoundrel, Gigi assumes an alias as a lady's maid to the daughter of a renowned opera singer.

Taking us into the back-drop of theater life, a missing heirloom, and hidden secrets, Renee Ryan masterfully weaves a beautiful story of true love and redemption. From the gorgeous and stunning cover to the very last page of this book, you will be drawn into the lives of these characters and the stories they tell. Enjoy!

~ I voluntarily received an Advanced Readers Copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. The thoughts and opinions given in this review are my own.

Diane says

Once a Heiress is the third book in the Gilded promise series but can be read as a stand alone. I have loved each of the books and encourage you to read them all. This one was a fabulous addition to the series. Renee Ryan has a wonderful writing style that is both captivating and intriguing. Her characters come alive in the pages of her novels and grab your attention and don't let go. If I could have I would have devoured this book in one sitting. I really enjoyed how the story unfolded and the characters evolved. This is a prodigal story that tugged on my heart because it touched the deepest part that we all share in ...making mistakes and hurting the ones we love and feeling like we can never be forgiven. So this is a story for everyone, a story that will touch you deeply and share with you God's unconditional love and that no sin is unforgivable. If you have ever felt like you can't be forgiven or you can't forgive yourself this story will lead you to a place of hope and joy.

I voluntarily received an advanced copy of this book in exchange for an honest review

Jennifer says

This was a surprise. It was clean, featured a wonderful H, and had a lovely message of hope and forgiveness. The plot was well paced and the author didn't let the angst be drawn out for too long. I adored the H. He was such a good man. The author gave him opportunities to flirt with, think about, or start a relationship with OW, but he never does. He stayed true to the h, even when he was furious with her in the beginning of this story. The h, on the other hand, was so frustrating. Filled with self loathing, it took a while for me to connect with her character. I understand what she went through and the motivation behind her decisions, but it was all just so frustrating.

The development of the MCs's relationship felt natural and so sweet. And while the resolution to the h's familial problems was a little too easy, I found that I didn't mind it. Sometimes that's how it is in real life when you own up to your mistakes and look the people you've wronged in the face. The only thing that was unresolved was all the secrets and lying. (view spoiler). An epilogue that takes place further in the future would have been appreciated as well.

I would recommend this to anyone who likes inspirational Christian romance, a clean and safe read, with an amazing H and an h who grows on you. I do really admire what she tried to do, however misguided it might've been. But the H really stole the show.

Vivienne says

A Parable Re-told

As the blurb says, this book is set in the Gilded Age, this particular story being set in 1901 New York City. This is the first book I have read by this author and from reading some of the reviews, I know this is the third in a series, but the reviewers also said it can be read as a stand-alone story.

Gigi Wentworth closed her ears to family warnings, went her own way with disastrous consequences, and is now seeking to atone for her actions. Like many who make wrong decisions, Gigi feels that she cannot return

to her family until she can redeem herself, sure that her family, especially her father, will not welcome her until she can. She is also sure that God has abandoned her and that she must make atonement so that God will forgive her and accept her once again. Even when a friend tells her that God will forgive if she will only ask, Gigi cannot bring herself to believe it, as she feels that if her earthly father won't forgive her until she has redeemed herself, then neither will her Heavenly Father. When her childhood friend, Fitz, eventually finds her, her first reaction is to run, but she has committed herself to her employer so running is not an option. Gigi has a secret she won't tell Fitz, and Fitz has a secret he won't tell Gigi. Fitz feels he owes an enormous debt to his cousin and that the only way he can repay the debt lies with Gigi, and therein we have a complicated, yet simple story.

This story has some wonderful characters, Gigi, the dazzling society beauty turned lady's maid; the austere Fitz, who has personal troubles; Sophie, the troubled young lady who is yet more than a young woman on the fringes of high society; Esmeralda, Sophie's mother, a larger than life character, an internationally renowned opera singer, with a diva's temperament, but also a loving, and ambitious, mother. The storyline and characters pulled me in and the writing flows effortlessly, drawing me with it. The dialogue is natural and the prose is good. This is a story filled with angst, yet also has some delightful light-hearted moments and some tender ones. The concluding chapters have quite emotional tones, and I am pleased the story ends the way it does. It is realistic, but I can't say more without giving away too much.

I have given this book four stars because I do feel the angst lasted for too many chapters, and words used throughout the book, atone/ment, redeem/redemption, forgive/ness, are repeated so many times that they verged on the distracting.

Bree says

If a reader is looking to be swept away in a beautiful story, they won't have to look past this book. It was beautiful and breathtaking to read. Each chapter held a glimmer of gold to it as you were taken back in time and given a gown or dinner coat. I was enchanted reading this story.

E. Espinoza says

From the eye-catching earth tones in the captivating cover art, to the intriguing story contained within, *Once an Heiress*, by Renee Ryan, captured my attention and kept me continuously enthralled. Though it happens to be the third book in the *Gilded Promises* series, it can be read quite well as a stand-alone novel. Even though I have not yet read the first two books in the series, I was able to enjoy this book with pleasurable ease, because this novel combines elements of history, mystery, intrigue, faith, and romance that effortlessly meld together to create a uniquely satisfying story.

The well-crafted elements of plot, characterization, and setting come together artfully to create an alluring reading experience. The entertaining plot of this novel is extremely clever and character-driven. There are also moments of mystery sprinkled throughout the story that are entirely satisfying and engaging. The characters are well-developed and experience remarkable growth as the story unfolds. The early twentieth century setting adds depth and history to the story as the characters interact backstage in a theater, visit in the drawing rooms of friends, and stroll along the sidewalks of New York City. Page after page, there is certainly much to enjoy about this novel.

I can easily recommend this book to readers of historical fiction who also enjoy a bit of mystery and

appreciate a dash of romance as well. Renee Ryan has certainly created a compelling novel that is well worth the reader's time and attention.

*I was provided a copy of the book by the author. All opinions in my review, whether positive or negative, are entirely my own.

Phyllis says

What a great book! I have not previously read any books by this author, but now I am ready to find as many as I can to read them!

While this book is the third in the series, it does stand alone. In reading the story I could tell that there were books that preceded it, but did not feel that I missed out on the story in not knowing more about the secondary characters from this book. That said, I do plan on going back and reading the first two books of this series, but mostly because I enjoyed this story so much and am curious to learn more about the others.

The characters were very well developed and the plot moved along very well. The story gripped me from the very beginning as Gigi attempted to redeem her family heirloom necklace in hopes of atoning for her sins in leaving her family as she did.

The conflict between Fitz and Gigi (or Sally, as she is known to her employers) was very well crafted and quite believable. The feelings of being beyond redemption that Gigi experienced were also explained in such a way as to be compelling. I really appreciated the way that not all the problems in the book were perfectly resolved - it was much more realistic and as in real life, sin has consequences despite the fact that we are forgiven.

This is a beautiful story of redemption with the theme of the Prodigal Son.

This review originally appeared at This review was originally posted on Among the Reads

I voluntarily received an advanced copy of this book in exchange for an honest review

Angela Aldridge says

A Very Nice Conclusion to Renee Ryan's Gilded Promises series.

Gigi Wentworth, a former Boston society girl, made an unfortunate decision (a cad deceived her and left her almost penniless in New York) and she has been working in disguise as a lady's maid for about a year, trying to earn back a family heirloom from a crooked pawnbroker so she can return home - and hoping for her family's forgiveness.

Christopher "Fitz" Fitzpatrick has been searching for Gigi, and is shocked when he finally finds her - she is definitely not the frivolous heiress he remembered. As they spend time together, Fitz begins to understand what Gigi is up against, and regrets that he didn't do more to keep her from choosing a cad. They begin to open up more about the past - can they forgive and trust enough to believe in a future?

This was a page-turner for me, as usual with a book by Renee Ryan. Sorry to see the series end, and looking forward to her next novel. Highly Recommend.

I voluntarily received an advanced copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Lynda Edwards says

I have read several of Renee Ryan's novels and enjoyed them all. Somehow, however, I missed the beginning books in her Gilded Promises series; hoping I could read this one as a standalone, I eagerly snapped it up. Even so, I found myself unprepared for the depth of storytelling and how it engaged my emotions on a level that I have not experienced in a long time—this is one of the absolute best books I have had the privilege of reading this year.

These characters are incredibly vivid and multifaceted. Flawed and sometimes a bit ugly, they are also honest, more so than we are willing to be with ourselves in many cases. Along with that honesty is a journey of self-discovery, of trying to understand who we are and what motivates us and those in our lives.

That particular characteristic kept me turning the pages in fascination: to watch people willing to admit their missteps and struggle through resolving the issues that arise is empowering, regardless of what situation the reader may be facing. Hope exists, no matter how bleak things may seem.

There is a strong faith element in this novel as well, especially as regards forgiveness. Interestingly enough, the forgiveness most necessary here is of self, of understanding that it is available from God, and often from others, if we but ask. As with salvation, it cannot be earned but it is freely given based on who God is. The reader is invited to watch that play out beautifully in these pages.

The romance is incredible. Misunderstandings, fear, pride, the past, and even the future conspire to keep the hero and heroine apart, but rather than feeling cliché or implausible, the author skillfully uses these obstacles to build the romantic tension. And just when I thought the ending had come and it couldn't get any better, there were several more pages that led to a tearful and truly sigh-worthy ending.

I really enjoyed this book of second chances, redemption, and love. I highly recommend it to those who enjoy historical romance, stories set in the Gilded Age, an interest in historical theater, or the parable of the Prodigal son. The characters come alive on the page, inviting us to journey with them a while and share their discoveries, maybe even spurring one or two of our own.

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Tricia Mingerink says

I probably shouldn't have started with book 3 first, but this was the one that first caught my eye to the series and I didn't realize it was the last book until I'd already started it. Oh well. It didn't seem to hurt my understanding of the book to have started with this one.

Over all, I enjoyed the book. It was a good glimpse into the Gilded Age New York society. Sometimes some of the dialogue seemed a bit stilted and awkward. Still, it remained compelling enough to keep me listening, a good easy read to listen to without taking too much concentration.

The Christian theme in the book is very light, more prominent at the end.

The audiobook's narrator was good, but struggled with the male voices.

Kelly Knapp says

Can Gigi/Sally become the prodigal child?

Because this Inspirational story was set at the turn of the 20th Century, I was surprised that it was not replete with Biblical verses, but the author penned a perfect cozy romance with tension and big moral issues.

The author showed the protagonist in a real type of moral dilemma for the period. Gigi, daughter of blue blood Bostonians attempts to elope but finds herself stranded by the groom. Now considered a fallen woman, Gigi (calling herself Sally) fears going home to be rejected, finding herself taking on the duties of a maid and then finding a niche as a personal maid, who has the ability to provide etiquette to up and coming debutantes.

But people from her past are searching for her and are getting close. And those who employ her are curious how a maid knows so much about proper decorum. As Gigi/Sally's two worlds begin to collide, will she become the prodigal child or a permanent outcast?

Won as part of the Goodreads Firstreads giveaways

Valri Western says

This was such a fabulous book! I really wished I could have read it in one sitting but for some reason, my husband wanted to eat and I had to sleep! It was really a fantastic book! Sometimes you just connect with characters and they become so real to you that you feel you are actually watching them in their real life. This is how I felt while reading this book. I felt they were real people and I was reading their life story. I kept cheering Gigi on. She used to be a spoiled, rich girl in Boston who lived with her family and wanted for nothing. She met a guy who turned her head and who her Father hated so she defied her Father and ran away. She thought she knew everything! Of course, because she knew nothing of the world and had been sheltered, she didn't know that this guy was a charlatan - he took her to New York City, checked into a fancy hotel and then took all her money and left! Gigi was destitute but she had too much pride to go back home so she had to work off the hotel bill and then find a job. Her strength and character were amazing to me. She had taken a precious family heirloom when she ran off and then pawned it for money but she had to buy it back before she could return home. This becomes the focus of the story! Now we see Christopher "Fitz" Fitzpatrick come into the scene. He was a childhood friend and more to Gigi's family. He has a lot of family issues going on but he goes to New York City to find Gigi after she's been gone almost a year. When he starts spending time with her, he can hardly believe the changes in her! She is not the spoiled rich girl he once knew anymore. This girl is caring and sweet and kind. Ms. Ryan paints a wonderful story of these two, including other characters that help them along their path. All the things that happen in this book make it one of my top favorite books of the year! I definitely recommend it!

I received an ARC of this book for my honest review.
