



When Passion Rules

By Johanna Lindsey



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New York Times bestselling author Johanna Lindsey weaves an adventurous tale set in the world of continental royalty, now available in mass market.

In this “magical” (*Library Journal*) tale from #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Johanna Lindsey, a stolen princess discovers her true destiny—in royal duty and in love.

On the eve of her debut into London society, Alana Farmer learns the shocking secret of her birthright. Can it be true? Is she really the lost princess of the European kingdom of Lubinia? Returning to the homeland she and her guardian fled when she was an infant to escape Napoleon’s rampaging army, Alana attempts to quell a bloody revolt in this isolated, mountainous country whose customs strike her as medieval! Suspicious that this beautiful newcomer is a wily imposter or a spy scheming to depose the king, Christoph Becker, the captain of the palace guards, arrests Alana and vows to draw the truth from his alluring prisoner, even if he must lay his life on the line to protect her from harm. Now, as a fiery passion flares between Alana and the man who has wrongly imprisoned her, the fate of a nation rests in their hands and on their hearts.

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Editorial Review

Review

"A perfect way to spend a lazy summer afternoon" Library Journal

About the Author

Johanna Lindsey is the author of forty-seven previous novels, every one of which has been a *New York Times* bestseller.

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When Passion Rules

Chapter One



THE LONG BLADE OF the rapier bent as Alana pressed its tip hard against the chest of the man in front of her. It would have been a death skewer if not for the protective padded jackets they both wore.

"You should have accomplished that move three minutes ago," Poppie said, removing his mask so she could see the disapproval in his sharp blue eyes. "What's distracting you today, Alana?"

Choices, she thought, three too many! Of course she was distracted. How could she concentrate on her lesson with so much on her mind? She had a life-changing decision to make. Of the three completely different directions she could take, each held its own special appeal, and she'd run out of time. She was eighteen today. She couldn't put the decision off any longer.

Her uncle was always so serious about these fencing lessons. Now was not the time to tell him of the dilemma she'd been grappling with. But she did need to discuss it with him and would have done so much sooner if he hadn't seemed so preoccupied himself these last few months. It wasn't like him. When she'd asked him if anything was wrong, he'd fobbed her off with a smile and had denied it. That wasn't like him either.

She'd been able to hide her own preoccupation—until today. But then he'd taught her how to hide her emotions. He'd taught her so many odd things over the years. . . .

Her friends called her uncle eccentric. Imagine, his teaching her to use weapons! But she would always defend his right to be different. He wasn't an Englishman, after all. Her friends shouldn't try to compare him to one. She'd even lost a few because of the wide-ranging education Poppie insisted she receive, but she didn't care. The snob who had moved in next door was a prime example of such narrow-mindedness. Alana had mentioned some of her recent studies and how fascinated she was with mathematics when she first met the girl.

"You sound like my older brother," the girl had said disdainfully. "What do you and I need to know about the world? We just need to know how to run a household. Do you know how to do that?"

“No, but I can skewer an apple tossed in the air on the tip of my rapier before it hits the ground.”

They never did become friends. It was no loss. Alana had many others who marveled at her diverse education and just chocked it up to her being a foreigner like Poppie, even though she'd lived in England her whole life and considered herself an Englishwoman.

Poppie wasn't her uncle's real name but the name Alana had given him when she was a child because she liked pretending he was her father rather than her uncle. She was average in height herself, and he wasn't much taller than she was. And although he was in his mid-forties, he didn't have a line on his face yet to prove it, and his dark brown hair was just as dark as it had always been.

Mathew Farmer was his real name, so English-sounding, which was funny, because his foreign accent was so pronounced. He was one of many European aristocrats who had fled the Continent during and immediately after the Napoleonic wars, to start new lives in England. He'd brought her with him because he was the only family she had left.

Her parents had died when she was an infant. Tragically, in a war they weren't even fighting in. They had tried to visit Alana's maternal grandmother in Prussia because they'd received word that she was dying. They were shot on the way by overzealous French sympathizers who mistook them for enemies of Napoléon's. Poppie guessed it was because they were obviously aristocrats, and the simpleminded peons considered all aristocrats to be enemies of France's. He didn't know the details, and it made him sad to speculate. But he did tell her so much about her parents when she was young that she felt as if she had real, firsthand memories of them.

As far back as she could remember, her father's brother had always been her guardian, her teacher, her companion, her friend. He was everything she could want in a father, and she loved him as one. What had happened to her parents was horrible, but she had always been grateful that Poppie was the one who ended up raising her.

Because he was wealthy, her life with him was a mix of privilege and the unexpected. She'd had a long stream of tutors, so many she'd lost count. Each taught her something different and each stayed for only a few months. Lady Annette was the only one who had stayed with her longer. An impoverished young widow forced to seek employment, Lady Annette had been hired by Poppie to teach Alana all aspects of being a lady, then he'd continued to employ her as a chaperone, so Annette had been part of the household for nine years now.

Alana's days became even busier when she turned ten and her martial training began. Poppie himself taught her how to use various weapons. The day he took her into the room that had been cleared of furniture and whose walls were now lined with rapiers, daggers, and firearms, she recalled something he'd told her when she was younger and probably thought she wouldn't remember: “I used to kill people. I don't anymore.”

She'd known he'd fought in the wars that Napoléon had instigated all over the Continent, the same wars he'd come to England to escape, but that had been an odd way to refer to it. That day he'd put the rapier in her hand, she'd asked him, “This is the weapon you killed with?”

“No, but I trained myself to use all weapons, and this one offers the most exercise and requires the greatest dexterity, quickness, agility, and cunning, so training in its use has more than one benefit. But for you in particular, it will teach you to avoid grappling, which a man will most definitely attempt with you, thinking he can subdue you with his superior strength. So it will teach you to keep your distance no matter the weapon

at hand.”

“But I will probably never be required to use it to defend myself?”

“No, you won’t carry a rapier to defend yourself. You will master the pistol for that.”

Sword fighting was simply a form of exercise to keep her fit. She understood that. She came to look forward to those practice sessions with Poppie as the highlight of her days. Unlike some of her other tutors, he was always calm and patient with her.

Annette had risked losing her job when she’d confronted Poppie about the new turn Alana’s studies were taking. Alana had caught the tail end of that argument as she passed Poppie’s study one day. “Weapons? Good Lord, she’s already too bold and opinionated, and now you put weapons in her hands? You’ve given her a man’s education. How do you expect me to counter that at this late date?”

“I don’t expect you to counter it,” Poppie had calmly replied. “I expect you to teach her that she will have choices in how to deal with people. What you criticize as being too bold, manly even, will only be a benefit to her.”

“But it’s not ladylike, not in the least.”

Poppie had chuckled. “It’s enough that you teach her manners and all the other things a lady should know. Keep in mind, you aren’t creating a lady out of thin air. She’s already a lady of the highest caliber. And I’m not going to deny her a real education just because she’s a woman.”

“But she questions everything I’m trying to teach her, just as a man would.”

“I’m glad to hear it. I taught her to be thorough, even meticulous, in the analysis of any given situation. If anything strikes her as odd, she’s not to shrug it off, but to find out why. I have confidence you will persevere without disrupting what she’s already been taught.”

With that remark sounding like a warning, the discussion had ended right then and there.

Now, Alana stepped back from Poppie and moved to the wall to put her weapon away. It was time for her to tell him what was distracting her. She couldn’t put it off any longer.

“I have some unexpected decisions to make, Poppie. Can we discuss them tonight at dinner, or as soon as I get back from the orphanage?”

She knew he would be frowning now. He might not have forbade it, but he didn’t like her going to the orphanage even though it was his orphanage. When she’d found out last year about this institution he had established soon after they’d arrived in London and had been supporting ever since, she’d been incredulous. She didn’t know why he’d never mentioned it to her. Because her later education had leaned toward turning her into a lady? And ladies shouldn’t associate with urchins from the slums? But his explanation had been simple.

“I was given a new life here, a second chance. I felt unworthy of it. I needed to give something back, to try to give others the same chance I was given for a new life. It took me a few years to figure out that the people most in need of my help were the most hopeless, the homeless street urchins.”

A worthy cause. Could she do any less? It had seemed so natural for her to decide to teach there. Her education had included so many different subjects and skills that she was far more qualified than any of the other teachers. She loved doing it. Whether she should continue to teach at the orphanage was one of the decisions she had to confront because teaching wasn't at all compatible with the other two paths she could choose.

"I've made a decision as well," he said, standing behind her. "I never thought this day would be so momentous for you, but I cannot put off this matter any longer. Come to my office now."

Good Lord, was she going to have even more choices set before her? She swung around abruptly and saw how uneasy he looked. He couldn't see the apprehension in her gray-blue eyes through the fencing mask she hadn't yet removed. Momentous? That sounded so much more important than her own dilemma.

He turned to the door, expecting her to follow him. "Wait, Poppie. The children have planned a birthday party for me. They'll be disappointed if I don't visit the orphanage today."

He didn't immediately answer. He had to think about it? When he cared for those children as much as she did?

He finally said, "Very well, but don't be long."

He left the room before he could see her hesitant nod. By rote she removed her mask, the padded jacket, and the tie that bound back her long black hair. Now she was filled with dread.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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Information is provisions for individuals to get better life, information nowadays can get by anyone on everywhere. The information can be a knowledge or any news even a problem. What people must be consider while those information which is in the former life are hard to be find than now could be taking seriously which one works to believe or which one typically the resource are convinced. If you find the unstable resource then you obtain it as your main information it will have huge disadvantage for you. All of those possibilities will not happen with you if you take When Passion Rules as your daily resource information.

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