

The Governess of Highland Hall: Edwardian Brides, Book One

by Carrie Turansky



About the Book

Worlds lie between the marketplaces of India and the halls of a magnificent country estate like Highland Hall. Will Julia be able to find her place when a governess is neither upstairs family nor downstairs help?

Missionary Julia Foster loves working alongside her parents, ministering and caring for young girls in India. But when the family must return to England due to illness, she readily accepts the burden for her parents' financial support. Taking on a job at Highland Hall as governess, she quickly finds that teaching her four privileged, ill-mannered charges at a grand estate is more challenging than expected, and she isn't sure what to make of the estate's preoccupied master, Sir William Ramsey.

Widowed and left to care for his two young children and his deceased cousin Randolph's two teenage girls, William is consumed with saving the estate from the financial ruin. The last thing he needs is any distraction coming from the kindhearted-yet-determined governess who seems to be quietly transforming his household with her persuasive personality, vibrant prayer life, and strong faith.

While both are tending past wounds and guarding fragile secrets, Julia and William are determined to do what it takes to save their families --- common ground that proves fertile for unexpected feelings. But will William choose Julia's steadfast heart and faith over the wealth and power he needs to secure Highland Hall's future?

Discussion Guide

1. Education was quite different in the Edwardian Era than it is today. What do you think of Julia's approach to teaching and working with Andrew and Millie? How do you think being taught by a governess would compare to the various types of education children receive today? What would be the benefits or drawbacks?
2. William was haunted by memories of his wife's unfaithfulness. How did this impact him in the story, and how would you advise someone who has experienced that kind of wounding as he or she moves on?
3. Why did Katherine struggle with the idea of having a governess? Were her objections reasonable? How do you think Julia was able to help her grow and change in the story?
4. William and David struggled with sibling rivalry in their relationship. Why do you think that happened, and how did it impact them? Adult sibling relationships can be complicated. Share what you believe is the best method of conflict resolution within these close connections.

5. Sarah's handicap was caused by a stroke when she was an infant, and it limited her use of one hand and arm. Clark helps her see that God can bring good into our lives through our handicaps and struggles. Can you share a difficult experience or limitation you've faced in your life and a way God used it for good?
6. William thought inheriting the title of baronet and overseeing his family's estate would help him regain his feelings of self-worth. What are some other ways a person could regain a sense of self-worth and experience healing after they have been hurt or betrayed?
7. Katherine was preparing for the London social season and her debut in society where she hoped to meet her future husband. What do you think of these methods of finding a mate? Were they too shallow, or do we over think it today, relying less on family connections?
8. Sarah and Julia enjoyed a special friendship. What do you think drew them together? What are some of the blessings you have enjoyed in your friendships?
9. Andrew had a hard time controlling all his extra energy. What are some ways Julia helped him deal with that challenge? Do you find children with Andrew's challenges receive greater empathy and resources today or not?
10. At the beginning of the story, Julia felt her family was called to serve the Lord in India, but in the end she changed her mind and decided to stay in England and marry William. What do you think of her choosing a different direction in life? Have you ever sensed the Lord directing you to serve Him in a particular way? Have you ever changed course and gone in a different direction?
11. Sarah asks Julia to keep information about Clark from William. Do you think she was right in doing so, and was Julia, as William's employee, right to keep the secret to herself?
12. When the story opens William has a formal and distant relationship to God. How did it change over the course of the story, and what brought about those changes?

Author Bio

Carrie Turansky is the award-winning author of 11 inspirational romance novels and novellas. She has been a winner of the ACFW Carol Award, the Crystal Globe Award, and the International Digital Award. Carrie lives in central New Jersey with her husband, Scott, who is a pastor, author, speaker and counselor. They have five young adult children and three grandchildren. She and her family served in Kenya as missionaries, giving them a passion for what God is doing around the world. Carrie leads women's ministry at her church, and she enjoys gardening, reading, flower arranging, and cooking healthy meals for friends and Family. You may contact her through Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and her website: www.carrieturansky.com.

Critical Praise

"There is much to like about Carrie Turansky's *THE GOVERNESS OF HIGHLAND HALL*: a sweet noble heroine, a proud yet vulnerable hero, and a 'Downton Abbey'–inspired setting. Endearing supporting characters and two romances add to the pleasure. Fans of Christian fiction and 'Downton Abbey' will enjoy this story!"

— Julie Klassen, bestselling author of *THE TUTOR'S DAUGHTER*

"I admit I'm a 'Downton Abbey' junkie. Thankfully, I got my fix with Carrie Turansky's delightful new novel. Everything about this book breathes upstairs-downstairs, and I was swept away into the world of Highland Hall --- the language, the customs, the clothes, the drama, the romance, oh, the romance! Absolutely charming, if I do say so myself!"

— Susan May Warren, RITA and Christy Award winner and bestselling novelist of *DUCHESS*

"Prim and wonderful, *THE GOVERNESS OF HIGHLAND HALL* is an exquisitely woven 'Downton Abbey' tapestry, proper and perfectly of English nobility and their servants. With the utmost sensitivity and skill, Carrie Turansky has penned a breathless Edwardian love story not to be missed!"

— Julie Lessman, award-winning author of the *Daughters of Boston* and *Winds of Change* series

"In *THE GOVERNESS OF HIGHLAND HALL*, Carrie Turansky blends a compelling heroine standing on the precipice of class divide with a magnificent Edwardian country estate in danger of ruin. She mixes well with an unforgettable cast of characters. The result is a beautifully written, faith-filled romance --- the first in a series not to be missed."

— Cathy Gohlke, Christy Award–winning author of *PROMISE ME THIS* and *BAND OF SISTERS*

"Fans of sweet romance will delight in THE GOVERNESS OF HIGHLAND HALL, set on a majestic estate of old, where love blossoms both upstairs and down in Edwardian England. Author Carrie Turansky has woven a tender and uplifting tale with a heartwarming message."

— Joanne Bischof, award-winning author of the *Cadence of Grace* series

"With its engaging cast of characters, a setting reminiscent of 'Downton Abbey', and a storyline that celebrates faith, family, and friendship, THE GOVERNESS OF HIGHLAND HALL is more than a historical romance. It's a book that's sure to delight Carrie Turansky's current fans and bring her many more."

— Amanda Cabot, bestselling author of CHRISTMAS ROSES

"THE GOVERNESS OF HIGHLAND HALL is a deeply emotional story of learning to submit to God's will. Fans of 'Downton Abbey' will enjoy the Edwardian time period, the English traditions, and the upstairs-below-stairs intrigue. The characters are richly developed, Turansky's prose lyrical. I enjoyed my stay at Highland Hall!"

— Beth White, Carol Award-winning author of CONTROLLING INTEREST and THE PELICAN BRIDE (coming in April 2014)

"THE GOVERNESS OF HIGHLAND HALL is a delightful journey to Edwardian England with a cast of colorful characters and plot twists at every turn. With a nice mix of upstairs-downstairs drama and a spunky heroine, Carrie Turansky weaves a tale that will enchant 'Downton Abbey' aficionados. Lovely and heartfelt."

— Carla Stewart, award-winning author of CHASING LILACS and SWEET DREAMS

"THE GOVERNESS OF HIGHLAND HALL is as delightful as an English high tea, replete with an endearing cast of characters living on a grand English estate and flavored with memories of India. Carrie Turansky lends a lovely, fresh voice to a fascinating era!"

— Laura Frantz, author of LOVE'S RECKONING

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Publication Date: October 15, 2013
Genres: Christian, Christian Fiction, Fiction, Historical Fiction, Historical Romance, Romance
Paperback: 336 pages
Publisher: Multnomah Books
ISBN-10: 1601424965
ISBN-13: 9781601424969