



Educating Elizabeth: A Victorian Romance

Jennifer Moore

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A headmistress and a wealthy rogue join up for a philanthropic cause in Jennifer Moore's enthralling Victorian romance novel *Educating Elizabeth*.

Elizabeth opens a school for underprivileged factory girls in London's East End with the help of her Blue Orchid Society friends. She's committed to the students' welfare, though her reform activism for the poor has raised the ire of certain lords. But her debt prompts her to seek a new patron in Charles, a handsome earl with cavalier manners. Charles agrees to help—on the condition that Elizabeth give speech lessons to Alice, his young Midlands ward.

As Elizabeth expresses her clear excitement over her pupils' progress, she comes to realize that Charles is kinder than other members of high society. As a pair, they'd test the social divide: Elizabeth is a bright, sensitive teacher with country roots. But her compassion toward Alice nonetheless endears her to Charles. Further, both of them are keeping details about their families from fashionable society. With each other, they make less room for pretense; in time, Charles's banter gives way to more serious exchanges and expressions of their shared beliefs. Charles keeps surprising Elizabeth, as when he reveals his quaint affection for bird watching. He's both avid and gentle, and his values concern more than class fripperies.

Indeed, Elizabeth and Charles stand out among their peers. Intrigue builds when the schoolgirls' hours increase at the factory, thus preventing their attendance. The couple are moved to join with her like-minded friends and find a solution.

An inspiring woman champions a vital cause in Victorian London in *Educating Elizabeth*, a splendid romance between two people with kindred minds.

KAREN RIGBY (September / October 2023)

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