



# A Much Married Man

*Nicholas Coleridge*

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## **A Much Married Man** Nicholas Coleridge

From one of the sharpest observers of the modern scene, comes this witty, intelligent, and irresistible novel in the tradition of *Gosford Park* and *Snobs*.

A man of wealth and privilege, Anthony Anscombe has everything he could ever want: an exquisite family estate, enviable social standing, and a desirable inheritance. But with all of his money and privilege, Anthony still has an aching desire for one thing: the perfect match. Running headlong into marriage is Anthony's forte...and his greatest weakness.

As Anthony surveys Winchford Priory, his beautiful Elizabethan house in the English countryside, Anthony has the distinct feeling that he's under siege. And he's absolutely right. He may be surrounded by his sprawling estate, but lurking in the village are more than one or two reminders of his complicated past, including three ex-wives, a mistress, and a legion of children and stepchildren, all dependent on him and all determined to do whatever it takes to get what they want.

### **Meet the wives**

Amanda: the ravishing first wife. Unpredictable and mesmerizing, she dared Anthony to fall in love with her, and he took her up on the challenge. Anthony was head over heels from the first night they danced on the rooftop of his family home. Of course, the free-spirited Amanda was never cut out for country life, but young love is blind.

Sandra: the steadfast second wife. Sturdy, dependable and domesticated, Sandra pulled Anthony back from the compelling chaos that surrounded his first wife. Sandra had plans to turn Anthony's estate into a proper family home, until a stunning secret forced her to make a life-altering decision.

Dita: the snobbish third wife. A true force of nature, Dita was smart, tough, rapaciously social and high-maintenance. She enthusiastically stormed through Anthony's life, organizing and rearranging, and rubbing plenty of people the wrong way, particularly the previous Mrs. Anscombes and their children.

With the entire cast of his life roosting in the village, it's no wonder Anthony doesn't have a minute's peace! Adding to the crazy mix is the mistress, Nora, a new age hippy and acupuncturist, whom Anthony seduced with disastrous consequences.

*A Much Married Man* is a wickedly funny social satire with memorable characters that will stay with readers long after the final page. Like a modern day Edith Wharton or Anthony Trollope, Nicholas Coleridge delivers a sensational glimpse inside the salacious world of the upper classes.

## **A Much Married Man Details**

Date : Published June 12th 2007 by Thomas Dunne Books (first published 2006)

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Author : Nicholas Coleridge

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# From Reader Review A Much Married Man for online ebook

## Ellie Revert says

A fun beach read, especially as we have spent much time in England. However, Anthony was infuriating to observe--I wanted to shake some sense into him regarding his thoughts about women. Always gallant, but more than a little foolish.

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## Kim says

Wish 3.5 was available. Some parts were simply too unbelievable to make it 4 stars, but a good read, especially the last few chapters.

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## Amanda Gareis says

Picked this up for free when I was desperate for a read. Just terrible. Thoroughly misogynist, casually racist, crudely cruel about physical appearance. The most disgusting thing about this pointless, offensive book (among many, I don't have time for a complete catalogue of its sins) is the casual way it treats sexual assault. There's a minor character, a stepson named Morad, who is a total psychopath. At 16 he strips a bathing suit off a 14 year old, violently. He drags her six feet under water, and then continues his attack:

"Through the distortion of the water, and the tangle of flailing limbs, it was hard to see what was going on, but Katie looked terrified down there. She was trying to fight him off, pushing at his face, and Morad was ripping at her bikini top which finally came away in his hand. Briefly, he rose to the surface...Katie surfaced, sobbing...But Morad was dragging Katie back under, this time wrenching at her bikini bottoms with stubby, brutal fingers. Grasping the elastic waistband, he dragged them down around her knees...Katie looked stricken as Morad jerked the bikini bottoms right over her ankles, and rushed to cover a delicate triangle of copper-coloured pubic hair with her hands..."

(edited for length)

This passage, by the way, is not the first (or the last) time the author focuses inappropriately on the sexual characteristics of an underaged child. The vicious detail of the incident is appallingly out of the blue, and then is never properly addressed. There's a complete change of tone. After this incident, Morad gets ducked in the pool, but that's it. No one does anything. The whole point of this incident is to show that Morad's a baddy and his mom protects him, but there's no mention of how Katie copes.

65 pages later, Morad shoots Katie's dog, out of spite that she's still not interested in him. They don't have enough proof, they say, so no one calls the police, again.

Less than 40 pages later, Morad drugs Katie, then sexually assaults her. The main character walks in on the scene:

"To his surprise he heard a moaning sound coming from the television room, as if someone was ill in there. He pushed open the door and was met by one of the most revolting sights imaginable. Poor, sweet Katie was

lying on the sofa, virtually passed out and whimpering. Her dress was pulled up above her waist and her knickers yanked below her knees. Standing over her with a hideous leering expression was Morad, vigorously masturbating over her supine body."

Again, there's sickening detail and savagery to this premeditated attack and the way it is described, but the tone abruptly changes once more. The action cuts out there to the next chapter, where Morad, AFTER SEXUALLY ASSAULTING A DRUGGED CHILD, is simply banned from the house for 6 months. No one calls the police. Again. This is how it's dealt with:

"As for Katie, she was a dear girl. Not only was she the prettiest of them all, she was also the easiest. She had been sweetly forgiving over the latest hideous Morad episode, even though Anthony knew she had been badly freaked out by it, and had suffered from nightmares for weeks afterwards. Sandra said she wouldn't be surprised if the episode put Katie off boys for life, and she would have reported Morad to the police had [Katie's family] not been living in one of [the main character and his 3rd wife]'s houses, which made it quite literally too close to home. Katie kept insisting that it really didn't matter."

Remember, this book is a comedy.

Later, Morad drugs and date-rapes another girl, goes to trial, and the victim is paid off by a rich stepfather. Eventually at the end of the book, in a couple of random sentences, it's revealed that at some point he gets done for robbery and gets an 18 month sentence.

This is supposed to be a comedy! The rapes of these girls are nothing more than light-weight movers in a sub-plot of no importance: basically their function is to prove that the main character's 3rd wife is a terrible person who will defend her terrible son at all costs, as if it hadn't been already demonstrated in a hundred blindingly obvious examples. Eventually it leads to the breakup of this 3rd marriage, but you know, that could have happened a hundred different ways. Any of which could have worked without without the grotesque, bizarre, exploitive child abuse and rape casually deployed in a comedy.

I really can't express how much I hated everything about this book. I read it to the end, in disbelief, hoping that it would somehow make sense, but the trite, ridiculous ending rambles on until it sputters to a boring joke. On the second to last page, after an absurd breakneck section summing up and tying up every loose end of every minor character, Katie is mentioned once more:

"Katie led a rather solitary life in London...Since the incident with Morad at Dita's lunch party, Katie hadn't had a steady boyfriend, and Anthony hoped it hadn't put her off for life. On the other hand, she seemed perfectly happy without one, in her vague, arty way."

Oh, that's okay then. Her abuse in her early teens by a member of the extended family has left her unable to form healthy relationships, but no big deal.

I'm appalled that it's so popular, I can't imagine who the audience is.

I'm neither a prude nor a snob, and I've read lots of "terrible" books that I've enjoyed or admired on some level, at least. But this was just disgusting. Zero stars, if that was possible.

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## **Letitia Todd Kim says**

Barely 3-star read about a hapless English aristocrat who impulsively entwines himself with a series of unsuitable partners: in turn, a peripatetic and untamable wild child, a maternal, mom-jean-wearing homebody, a daft new age healer, and a superficial society lady. It's an entertaining story as far as it goes, but the protagonist is so impotent and the foils so bromidic and one-dimensional that it negatively impacted the book as a whole.

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## **Krysia says**

This book was a nice 'getaway' book....it didn't take a lot of concentration or translation of big words to enjoy this delicious novel. i read it in 2 days, actually. it's a very interesting trip into modern British society, with the narrator as a bumbling and sometimes dense - but successful - man, who gets sucked into marriage after marriage with hilarious results.

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## **Debbie says**

maybe 2 1/2 stars.  
simple fun beach style read.

Anthony - what can I say, a bit of an idiot when it comes to women but his heart is in the right place, at least he tries to do what he thinks is the right thing but is somewhat naive although charming, bumbling yet successful at work and not always a good reader of a persons character.

His wives - all seem to be selfish in their own way but with the exception of Dita do at least have redeeming qualities.

The ending was all a bit too 'pat'.

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## **Casey Rock says**

Definitely a fun and quick read. You'll covet pieces of each of the characters lives and then want to reach out to help them as things don't go their way.

Only regret: predictable at times.

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## **Erin says**

Lots of foreshadowing leaving few surprised. A little annoying how the author would make a major event suddenly seem minor by having it play a small role in the next chapter. Still not bad overall.

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**Valerie Li says**

like a modern day forsyte saga (and enjoyable for that in itself), but the "modern"-ity of it ruins the ending...everything wraps up too happily and neatly, the crisp wryness degenerates into sap.

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**Carrie Turner says**

This was pretty good. I could totally see it as a tv series or movie. I like how it all wrapped up neatly into a bow as it concluded. It was an entertaining light read.

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**Susan Liston says**

I read this when it first came out...12 years ago...I see, which is probably why I remembered very little. There are a lot of legitimate criticisms of this book in other reviews, and I could add some more. They clearly jumped out at me more this time around or surely I would have found these flaws more memorable. But I decided to just read it as escapist trashy entertainment and not worry about it otherwise. Much easier.

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**Barbara says**

what a page turner! how one man manages to get involved with so many women- and how he learns that marriage is not what he thought it would be- after many wives and children. A terrific summer project!

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**Camandwmm says**

Felt sorry for this man, just could not find happiness. Too many children to be responsible for, his and wives from previous marriages. Sad, never happy with anyone, too many affairs.

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**Tamara says**

so far, so good. I am just finishing up with wife 1 (apparently there are 3 ex-wives/wives and a mistress all living in the same village in England). Interesting so far.

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**Ellen says**

I wish I could give 3.75 but feel guilty about a 4 star review. If you like Downton Abbey you'll enjoy this

book. It's like a modern day postscript to all that English drama. My husband reminded me that I can go to the library, so I did, and it's a fantastic book to check out from your local branch.

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