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10 East 53<sup>rd</sup> Street, New York, New York 10022

Publicity Contact:

Pamela Jaffee, Director of Publicity

212.207.7495 / pam.jaffee@harpercollins.com

*Once Upon a Time, Not So Very Long Ago...*

# A Kiss at Midnight

The Glass Slipper. The Prince. The Ball. The Gown.

(The Rats)

The Cinderella Story, Reimagined

By New York Times Bestselling Author Eloisa James

Avon Books



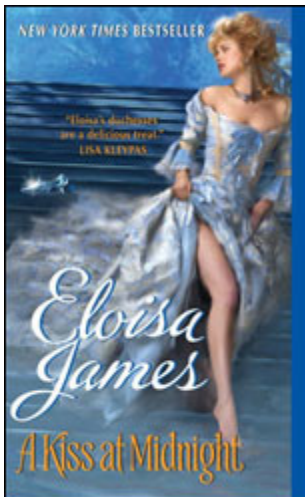
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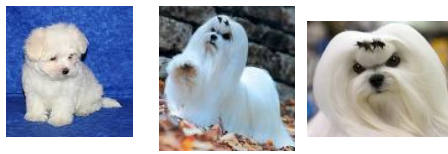


“Miss. Katherine Daltry, known to almost all as Kate, got down from her horse seething with rage.

It should be said that the condition wasn't unfamiliar to her. Before her father died seven years earlier, she found herself sometimes irritated with her new stepmother. But it wasn't until after he was gone, and the new Mrs. Daltry – who had held that title for a matter of mere months – started ruling the roost, that Kate really learned the meaning of anger.”

And thus begins A KISS AT MIDNIGHT by New York Times Bestselling author Eloisa James (Avon Books, ISBN 978-006-1626845, on-sale 7/27/10, \$7.99 US), a gorgeous reimagining of one of history's most beloved fairy tales. Kate Daltry had every expectation that Yarrow House would one day be hers...until her father died, and left absolutely everything he had to his new wife, Mariana, and her daughter Victoria...leaving Kate no more than a maid-of-all-work for the two, living in the garret of the house she grew up in.

Kate is beset by the rats running amok in the house. No, we do not refer to her stepmother or her lovely – but somewhat thoughtless – stepsister. Nor to the *genus Rattus* (in strict usage of the label) – but to the three purebred Maltese dogs that prove to be the ankle-biters of fate.



You see, Victoria was to be presented to the cousin of her beloved fiancé, Lord Archibald Dimsdale. Problem is that dear Archie's cousin is a prince, no less than his Highness, Gabriel Augustus-Frederick William von Achenberg of Warl-Marburg-Baalsfeld, at a fabulous ball on the family estate. Until one of the 'rats' (Caesar, to be precise) bit poor Victoria. Right on the lip. And the wound is ungodly ugly – so much so that the Daltry ladies are afraid that the Prince will be shocked, appalled...and cancel the engagement. And, for reasons that must go unsaid, it's direly important that he *not* call off the betrothal.

So, Kate (of the freckles, uncoiffed hair, work-worn hands and homespun garments) is enlisted to “be” Victoria...to be presented to the prince in the guise of her sister.

So, from the cinders, Kate rises anew, and graces Archie's arm, masquerading as who she is not. Princes are equal to men in Kate's eyes – and she refuses to fawn over the royal bachelor...which only spurs the impossible attraction he feels for this woman, who is decidedly not what – or who – she seems to be.

This is one fairy tale in which destiny conspires to destroy every chance that Kate and Gabriel might have for a happily-ever-after...unless one kiss, at the stroke of midnight, has the power to change everything.

A KISS AT MIDNIGHT  By Eloisa James  Avon Books  ISBN 978-006-1626845  On-Sale July 27, 2010  \$7.99 US

### **About the Author:**



*New York Times* bestselling author Eloisa James writes historical romances for HarperCollins Publishers. Her novels have been published to great acclaim. A reviewer from *USA Today* wrote of Eloisa's very first book that she "found herself devouring the book like a dieter with a Hershey bar"; later *People Magazine* raved that "romance writing does not get much better than this." Her novels have repeatedly received starred reviews from *Publishers' Weekly* and *Library Journal* and regularly appear on the best-seller lists.

After graduating from Harvard University, Eloisa got an M.Phil. from Oxford University, a Ph.D. from Yale and eventually became a Shakespeare professor, publishing an academic book with Oxford University Press. Currently she is an associate professor at Fordham University in New York City. Her "double life" is a source of fascination to the media and her readers. In her professorial guise, she's written a *New York Times* op-ed defending romance, as well as articles published everywhere from women's magazines such as *More* to writers' journals such as the *Romance Writers' Report*.

#### *Eloisa...on her double life:*

“When I'm not writing novels, I'm a Shakespeare professor. It's rather like having two lives. The other day I bought a delicious pink suit to tape a television segment on romance; I'll never wear that suit to teach in, nor even to give a paper at the Shakespeare Association of America conference. It's like being Superman, with power suits for both lives. Yet the literature professor in me certainly plays into my romances. *The Taming of the Duke* (April 2006) has obvious Shakespearean resonances, as do many of my novels. I often weave early modern poetry into my work; the same novel might contain bits of Catullus, Shakespeare and anonymous bawdy ballads from the 16th century.

When I rip off my power suit, whether it's academic or romantic, underneath is the rather tired, chocolate-stained sweatshirt of a mom. Just as I use Shakespeare in my romances, I almost always employ my experiences as a mother. When I wrote about a miscarriage in *Midnight Pleasures*, I used my own fears of premature birth; when the little girl in *Fool For Love* threw up and threw up, I described my own daughter, who had that unsavory habit for well over her first year of life.

So I'm a writer, a professor, a mother - and a wife. My husband Alessandro is Italian, born in Florence. We spend the lazy summer months with his mother and sister in Italy. It always strikes me as a huge irony that as a romance writer I find myself married to a knight, a *cavaliere*, as you say in Italian.”

One more thing...Eloisa is a friend, with girlfriends who are writers and girlfriends who are Shakespeare professors. And girlfriends who are romance readers. In fact, she has something of a community going on her website.

Please stop by and join the conversation at:

<http://www.facebook.com/EloisaJamesFans>

## The Romance of the Fairy Tale: Eloisa on the Cinderella Myth

On Fairy Tale Time: A fairy tale exists in a kind of timeless hour, caught between today and yesterday...A KISS AT MIDNIGHT, I cannot emphasize too firmly, is a fairy tale.

A Place in Time: If I had to suggest a date, this story would be set somewhere around 1813, during the Regency.

And on glass slippers: My biggest literary debt lies in Perrault's version of *Cinderella*. Scholars generally think that Perrault mistook the wood *vair* (fur) for *verre* (glass); I reimagined his slippers as translucent, due to being created by stiffened taffeta.

And a final word on Cinderellas:

In the wondrously various world of *Cinderellas*, the prince always manages to find his cinders girl, and carries her off to his castle. Sometimes, the evil stepsisters are banished, sometimes they become housemaids in the castle, and once in a blue moon, they transform into house fairies. The wicked stepmother is never seen again, the pumpkin rots in the garden, and the rats are set free to wander wither they wish.

This particular Cinderella ends a bit differently.

There are many ways that princes found wives, but it is doubtful that any of them ended with a castle and an English bride in just this way.

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