ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

GENERAL

Concerto
Maureen E. Broderick
BookMasters
978-0-9773946-0-9
Four Stars (out of Five)

Alexandra Traynor arts coordinator for a talent management agency has idolized the renowned British pianist-turned-conductor Erik Bohm since high school. But recently since Alex has begun representing Erik and his orchestra their professional relationship has blossomed into something more personal. While Alex has "thrown herself" at Erik she insists to friends in the orchestra that "it's platonic." Indeed the Maestro hasn't deemed to "get physical" with her. Not yet. "The fact that he hasn't" Alex muses to herself "qualifies him as a walking Carrera marble figure or the best damned actor I've ever seen!" The evolving roller-coaster relationship between the charming affable Alex and the gifted but baggage-laden Erik is the subject of Maureen E. Broderick's romance a follow-up to her 1999 novel *Love Waits*.

Alex would like to seal the deal and Erik realizes she is someone special and quite unlike the many one-night-stands of his past. "Alex didn't follow the script!" he tells a friend. But his personal issues are getting in the way and Erik doesn't want to inflict them on her. "My reality is … disturbing" he tells her. Alex hasn't been scheduled to accompany Erik's Orchestra of the Americas through Europe but her association with an up-and-coming Irish rock band offers her an opportunity to connect with her friends in the orchestra while it breaks for a few days in Ireland. Erik realizing Alex will be present at the Dublin concert returns to the piano for the first time in four years and dedicates a thrilling performance of Rachmaninoff's *Variations on a Theme by Paganini* to her. Not long after Erik cites Alex as the reason he will return to the piano the two are fighting "like two children on the front lawn." But they make up and Erik accompanies Alex and a few other musicians on a trip to the west of Ireland where Alex spent summer vacations as a child.

As Alex comes to know Erik she learns of his troubled childhood and his self-seeking parents who sent him off to a musical boarding school at age six. She competes with his "ever-constant mistress" music. She butts heads with him over his fits of jealousy (over such non-threatening types as her Uncle Jim and her gay friend David) and confronts his distant sulking

silences. She learns that he is besieged by horrendous nightmares. Then after Erik tells her flatly “Get out of my sight!” Alex leaves Ireland and goes into her own emotional funk. But they meet again and Alex finds out why Erik shut her out. Back in New York she helps the fatigued and emotionally troubled musician through a long recovery to a return to the stage. Erik’s struggle to purge himself of his demons provides Alex with a test of her feelings. She must either love him as he is—or give him up.