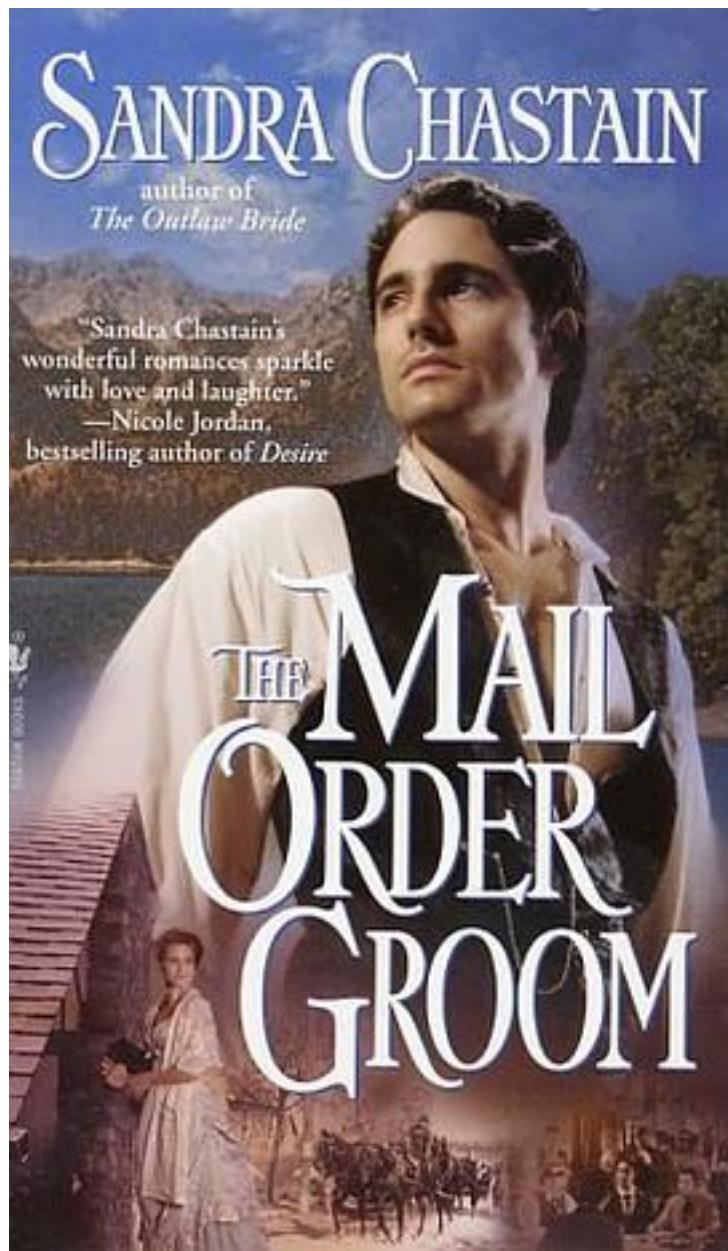


# The Mail Order Groom



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## Poetry In Motion ...

Stunning Melissa Grayson, a veritable Helen of Troy in the Wild West, will do anything to satisfy her one burning passion--teaching art and poetry to the children at Grayson Academy, the private school left to her by her beloved father. But it isn't easy when every trip she makes into town drives the unmarried men into a frenzy of fisticuffs in their attempts to win her hand. Exasperated by the civil unrest caused by Melissa's beauty, the local clergy and sheriff finally give her an ultimatum: marriage or jail, the latter of which would surely mean the end of her school.

Prepared to make any sacrifice for her students, Melissa writes her pen pal in New York, James Harold Pickney IV, a sickly, sensitive scholar. Together they agree to forge a platonic marriage whose real commitment will be to the cause of education.

## Plainspoken Passion ...

When he's not hightailing it from one of his many misadventures, gambling man Lucky Lawrence has a habit of rescuing damsels in distress--sometimes from himself. But this time he's the one who needs rescuing, as a murderously sore loser has a score to settle with him--and expects him to pay with his life. Even Lucky wouldn't have bet that this latest escapade would lead him to be mistaken for a bookish Harvard boy--and land him the most beautiful woman he has ever seen. Nor did Melissa Grayson expect her asthmatic pen pal to be so ruggedly handsome, with such broad shoulders and teasing eyes. Might she discover a passion she as yet has only read about? And what of ailing James Pickney, en route to his bride-to-be? Will either groom survive to stake his claim, or will Melissa be a widow before she's a wife?

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目录:

[The Mail Order Groom](#) [下载链接1](#)

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