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Denise Liebig

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Upstate New York, 2012. Emily Stanton, a sociology major, graduates from college and is obligated to work for the mysterious company that funded her education. But a job with Evergreen Research Corporation is not what she expects. From fancy balls and operas to corsets and kid gloves, Emily learns to be a specialist in 1910 society. In the process, she finds herself fully immersed in the lives of wealthy aristocrats and industry leaders, whose thirst for power leads them to manipulate everything, including time. Thrust into this strange and dangerous world, Emily becomes their most important asset.

Unable to trust her coworkers or her surroundings, however, Emily finds herself alone--with her very survival in the hands of a handsome stranger, Wendell Beringer. Unfortunately, Emily soon discovers that he has a few secrets of his own. Can she trust this man or the feelings she develops for him? Only time will tell.

Follow Emily's unexpected journey, where journal entries to her deceased aunt and the powerful secrets they contain, become her only link to the life she once knew and the future she must choose to follow.

Dear Maude Details

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From Reader Review Dear Maude for online ebook

Michael Mulvihill says

Denise Liebig has written an intelligent, engaging, well written and commendable debut novel "Dear Maude." What she achieves in this novel is a deep understanding of: place, time, character, period, and an ability to maintain a sense of mystery throughout. No small achievement this must be said. The novel oscillates between a narrative form and a diarist form. I found this structurally uneven and this is the prime reason why I awarded this readable and enjoyable novel a four out of five and not a five out of five. But the author should be by no means be disappointed. This author will gain many fans believe me.

Lovers of period drama, romance, mills and boom novels, suspense, mystery, readers that love novels set in affluent environments, young adult readers, people who love a story about a young inexperienced girl falling in love, these readers will fall head over heals with this book, and this is something I can say unequivocally. There is a huge market for the "Dear Maude Trilogy." People will adore this young novelist whose main character Emily Stanton is both intelligent, inexperienced and lacking what colloquially we call the state of being, 'street wise.'

Her main character is a beautiful, humble, young woman, who is both modest and warm of heart.

Readers will find the protagonist of the book endearing, empathetic, engaging, and involved. These affects are executed by the author stylistically via the manner in which she writes the book which is both: emotional, warm, and full of awareness of how others that surround the main character are cold and adrift from basic human decency. Thus, other characters act as baselines of comparison to Emily Stanton's good heart, for although their bank statements maybe healthy, too many of the people Emily Stanton will encounter will be merely spiritually redundant and mentally impoverished, especially in regard to what it is to be a human being in this life. Because the author writes in the first person she achieves by this format of writing the ability to really grasp the inner world of Emily Stanton. What the reader gets in return is an excellent example of what it is like to be an outsider from the out-group attempting to fit in to the in-group, terms I learnt from my studies of social psychology and sociology.

The descriptions of the hyper affluent, how they dress, how they dine, is magnificent. What it feels like to be an underling, to be a person not from this society is so well done that all we can do is salute Denise Liebig and encourage her to finish this trilogy which she intends to provide us readers with.

The author manages to play on our nerves. We have no idea, as we read through the book, if the novel is a young adult book, a romance, a science fiction, a dystopian novel (for e.g. the contract provided by The Evergreen Research Corporation seems like a barbaric example of where Corporate American is headed in terms of workers rights and human rights) or an example of historical romantic fiction. Well done to Denise! in this present zeitgeist readers love a cross-fertilization of genres. The author keeps us in a sense of mystery, we wonder what exactly is happening to Emily, is she being used, or is she simply being employed to perform a set amount of duties that may or may not be to her personal detriment? These factors help to make this novel splendid and rather appetizing for perspective readers.

Denise Liebig shall find a loyal following as an authoress and many more praise worthy people than I shall sing her praises as an authoress.

Richard Taylor says

Fantastic head-spinning journey

I once joined a neighborhood book club and found I was the only male with seventeen women. I enjoyed that

but found all our selections were chic lit. Never would have read those books and I'd have missed a lot of good reading. Denise Liebig could have been an author of one of those books. Dear Maude is chic lit, well written, and smooth, and it kept me smiling the whole way. It is cute, funny, and enjoyable while mind altering. This enjoyable read draws in science fiction, romance, time travel mixed with a touch of Grisham's The Firm. I recommend it for a light hearted trip. Thanks you Denise

Lewis Kelley says

If you are reading reviews of "Dear Maude" by Denise Liebig, you have likely already read a synopsis. But even if you have, any brief outline of the contents of the book should be taken with a grain of salt. Unpredictable, wonderfully atypical, there are simply too many elements to the story to succinctly sum it up in a brief post (the "Maude" journal being one clever component). Time travel, detailed period depictions of life, characters from the past and the future, a devilish corporation behind the many machinations taking place. And that is only a fraction of what Mrs. Liebig has cleverly and deftly created. It is plain why the author made this a trilogy. There is simply a lot of story to tell and a number of characters who in order to be fleshed out require more time. The hook has been set superbly so to speak.

The writing is intelligent without being so pretentious the flow is affected. The pace is rapid with jarring changes in direction and settings which adds to the sense of uncertainty. The protagonist, Emily Stanton is often (and rightfully) confused as she struggles to piece together what exactly is happening to her and what is real and what and who is legitimate in the new world(s) she finds herself thrust into. My favorite character trait though is her irreverent thoughts as she deals with the day to day reality of being a modern woman thrust back in time and required to live the role. I pictured the writer giggling to herself as she created the dialogue and couldn't help wondering if she would have liked to add further mischief to Emily's musings. I can't imagine any woman in any century wearing a corset and being a happy camper for instance and Emily certainly hates it. I am extremely interested in discovering what the author creates in subsequent additions to the story. Women's literature, Chic lit; whatever labels someone wants to ascribe to it. This is simply good story telling by a talented writer in her unique voice. Loved it and waiting impatiently for the follow up!

Ken Fry says

Not read anything by Denise Liebig before...most certainly will in the future, The story is an amazing structure of originality that puts some established figures to shame. I found it hard to put down. So clever it's narrative process I was totally unprepared for it....Time travel, social experimentation, love, greed and a perennial secret diary to deceased relative, Maude. It is funny and a very clever interpretation of physics that few would dare to write.

The dodgy Evergreen Research Foundations was an inspired construct, as an instrument of concealed greed. Anything negative about this review,,,maybe to many descriptives but the weight of the story eclipses that. Overall, I loved and given time will read 2+3!

P.S. Don't wear corsets.

Lori Holuta says

A bit slow to start, but not enough to give up. Once the real adventure kicked in, I was hooked! Gobbled up

the book like candy. :)

Grant Leishman says

How do I write a review of Denise Liebig's Dear Maude, the first book in the Dear Maude Trilogy, that does the book the justice it deserves, without giving away too much of the plot? Ah therein lies the conundrum. Conundrum is a very useful word in describing Dear Maude. It is full of conundrums and paradoxes, that make you think, make you pause and make you question what you know about physics, science and of course the paradox of time-travel.

The whole time-travel thing caught me on the hop. I hadn't read much about Dear Maude until I dived into it and my initial thought was this is classic chick-lit. Exceptionally well-written and enjoyable chick-lit, in my opinion, but chick-lit nonetheless. By the time I realised it was so, so, much more than that, I was totally hooked. Suffice it to say, this is the best book within its genre that I've read in many a long day and I would go even further to say this is one of the better books I've ever read. Definitely a contender for a coveted "Grunter" award at the end of this year. I often talk in my reviews about the joy of discovering fresh, exciting and new indie talent. Denise Liebig is definitely that. She puts many a big-5 author to shame, in my humble opinion.

Okay, so the story is pretty straightforward, to begin with. Emily (Em) needed a scholarship to go to University and the quid pro quo for the scholarship was that she had to agree to work for the Evergreen Foundation for four years after graduation. No big deal, right? What're four years, for a degree? WRONG! It doesn't take too long for Em to figure out she's sold her soul to the devil - and that's all I'm telling you about the plot. Read it yourself - you'll love it.

As a debut novel, Dear Maude was an outstanding success. That Liebig has been able to follow up Dear Maude with the remaining two books in the trilogy is a testament to her seriousness as an author and her consistency. I literally cannot wait to read Books 2 & 3 now.

If you like time-travel, with all its conundrums and paradoxes, or if you like a female protagonist with strength, character, and determination, you'll love Dear Maude. I sure did and give it the full 5-Star treatment. Kudos to the author and long may she continue to turn out fine books like this debut novel.

C.N. says

Nothing is free in life and this is what Emily learns. She gets a free ride through college on condition she works for Evergreen Research Corporation afterward for four years. This isn't much to ask or is it? Evergreen are not what they appear to be on face value and are actually an organization that can interfere with the past to make rich people even richer. This is where Emily, a 'wild card' comes in as she can influence without causing a time paradox to herself and therefore negating her action.

Dear Maude is Emily's diary and a reminder of a very dear relative now deceased, who Emily adored. She can connect with the diary just as she did the real Maude and so give a wonderful first-hand view of her experiences, especially those out of her own time. This is a story with twists and turns that cannot be predicted, leaving the enjoyment intact and intense. Highly recommended.

Kamylyon says

Finally!

Some actual imagination about time travel!
I mean, it can't all be lairds and beautiful 21st century females, can it?

C.A. Pack says

WOW

I loved this book. It is not what I expected based on the title. The protagonist is a college graduate who must now work for the company that gave her a scholarship for her tuition. And that's where it gets interesting. The characters are great. The plot has unexpected twists and turns. The setting is unique. And it's well written. I'll definitely be reading the next two books in this trilogy.

Kelly Pinella says

In 2012, Emily Stanton's living situation at college is an interesting one. Laced with hidden mystery, Emily has a four-year scholarship. Her roommate is a wealthy school girl named Sophia. Emily is a smart student who loves her parents, and she has the natural ability to get good grades. The terms of her scholarship states that after she graduates, she must work for the mysterious company, Evergreen Research Corporation. Before graduating, Sophia introduces Emily to Gerd as well as Sophia's father named George, the prestigious yet deceptive Lord Winston. Every now and then, Emily writes in a journal to her deceased aunt named Maude because while Maude was alive, Emily adored her. (Maude had died when Emily was fifteen.) The story is filled with charm, 1910 waltzes, beautiful gowns, wealthy balls, tender loving romance, social etiquette, mystery from 2125, and a touch of humor. About half way through the book, time travel becomes more entertaining. A super ending brings it all together.

Denise Liebig gives excellent detail for each scene in first person narrative. She does a very good job keeping the reader in mind while unfolding the story. The pacing and rhythm is just right. Beautifully written, this story brings time travel to life. Denise knows how to keep the mystery going. This story is elegant and entertaining.

Jan Raymond says

I'm glad this is the first of a series and there is more to come. Though the book works well as a standalone, you do know there is more to come and can't wait for it. Emily Stanton comes out as a brave, strong character. She is courageous and works hard at doing well.

When she signs up for her scholarship, she has no idea what a roller coaster ride her life would become when she finished college. I like the first person narrative and the journal style of writing. It brings you closer to the character and you empathise with what she goes through. It has a bit of everything, reality, fantasy,

intrigue, love and after a slow beginning, you kind of rush to the end. Looking forward to the next one.

Eichin Chang-Lim says

Dear Maude is the first installment of The Dear Maude Trilogy. It starts with the main character, Emily, a diligent college student receiving a full scholarship from a company on condition that she works for that company for four years after graduation. However, the nature of her work had never been clearly defined. The setup of the story is creative and well thought out. The story line is captivating and engaging right from the first line. Then, the plot turns and twists once the time travel theme emerges. The entire story is written in the first-person narrative. The main character's frequent internal dialogs are refreshing and brilliant, funny at times.

Besides time travel, the story encompasses heart-wrenching romance and endearing family love. Ms. Liebig carefully crafts all aspects of the story. It's safe to say it is a superb multi-genre novel, a masterpiece that well deserves five stars.

Sheila Kell says

The story begins with Emily Stanton in college sharing her room with a nasty student who suddenly acts like her best friend when Emily meets a guy. She'd accepted a full scholarship from a mysterious company with the expectation she either pays them back or works for them for four years. Holding to her responsibilities, she works for Evergreen Research Corporation and is chosen for a prestigious assignment. One she must agree to before she knows what it entails.

During the entire time she journals her life, writing the entries to her deceased aunt Maude whom she adored.

This story is chock full of adventure, mystery, romance and time-travel. The unexpected twists and turn of this intriguing novel had me reading it in one setting. Well worth losing some sleep. The characters come to life and the descriptions were so vivid I felt as if I had fallen into time with Emily.

Denise Liebig crafted a well-written and captivating story to begin her series. Don't worry, there is not a cliff-hanger. Everything comes together nicely in the final chapter. I highly recommend this novel and am ready for the rest of the series

Bob Laerhoven says

My roots are not only foreign (I'm a Belgian-Flemish professional author), but moreover I have been for nearly two decades a literary author who, later in life, began to write cross-over. In a novel, first of all I search for style, style and again style. If the story is additionally captivating, that's a second plus. That's why I have enjoyed reading "Dear Maude", the excellent debut of authoress Denise Liebig. The novel has an elegant style and is moreover an interesting "cross-over" between many genres: mystery, time-travel fantasy, adventure, romance, even social critique...But "Dear Maude" has also an epistolary aspect – the main, and

very likeable, character Emily Stanton writes diary entries addressed to her deceased aunt Maude - which I found emotionally touching and intimate, highlighting a refined sense of nostalgia. In those entries, Denise Liebig's style is at its best, rendering a profound sense for detail, emotional subtleties, and "tone". Don't expect a synopsis of the story from me. Other reviewers will have done so nicely. I try to convey my feelings during the reading process. Emily Stanton is a strong-willed but also empathetic and warm character who touched my heart. The nasty Evergreen Research Corporation is a chilling example of the direction the ultra-liberal capitalism is leading to, and the distinction – not only in material matters but also spiritually – between the haves and the have-nots in a society is delicately, but at the same time with great clarity, criticized.

So, there you have it: a debut that stands out in the crowd, a sly and intelligent mixture of a "thrilling" novel and an "endearing" novel. Oh yes, and one more thing: the feminine touch in "Dear Maude" lies in the abundance of beautiful details...which a male novelist would tend to overlook....I think that Denise Liebig is on her way to become a praised authoress. I received a copy of the book in exchange for an honest review

Virginia Gray says

More Twists than a Rollercoaster!

Fasten your seatbelts. This book is unique and exciting and suspenseful, and I found myself truly worried about the safety of the main characters by the end. The time period the author chose and the way women were expected to behave was fascinating. Once I was pulled in, I couldn't put it down. I will say this, however: after reading the first couple of chapters, I thought, okay, this is another one of those "socially awkward girl meets rich, handsome man" stories. But then events shot off in wild directions, and I became completely engaged. Stay with the story. It ends explosively! I can't wait for Book 2.
