



The Grandmother's Tale

R.K. Narayan

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The Grandmother's Tale Details

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From Reader Review The Grandmother's Tale for online ebook

Sai Priya says

nice one....clearly describes how marriage and husband is considered as most important to a woman in India.Also shows how much people suffer with child marriages which seem quite absurd and pointless.

Sadayappan says

Mr. R.K. Narayan's writing never ceases to amaze me. The simplicity, the style, the story, all are captivating.

Varsha says

The version I read was a set of 3 novellas including The grandmothers tale, Guru and Salt and sawdust. Out of the three, Guru was the one I liked the best. This was my first foray into R K Narayan's world and I loved his storytelling. Will definitely pick up some more.

Phani Tholeti says

A story that's too short for a novel and too long for a short story, it's a delightfully fast paced story about a woman whose husband, whom she was married to as a child, has run away to some place and how she hunts him down. While any other writer could and would have filled it with details of colonial India and the hunt and its details, RK Narayan is characteristically unbothered by these details. A wonderful 2 hour read.

Chokila E Kasthuri says

It is a nice book which revolves about the the life of his great grand mother who went in search of her husband. To know the rest read the book

Hemangini Patel (MyPetridish) says

Husband hunting anyone? R. K. Narayan has been writing for almost six decades when he published this book. His journey began as simple story writer of India in 1935, it spanned his lifetime and gave us a master story-teller.

While R. K. Narayan heard this tale from his Grand Mother, narration of this story happens in a 3rd person view. We see Bala grow from a docile young girl to a strong, smart and surprisingly cunning woman. How Bala finds Vishwa and how she gets him back is the main part of the story. Most of all, I can not imagine this

strength and vigor in a young lady of today. There is a radical change in women in R. K. Narayan's stories from 1935 to 1992.

Grandmother's Tale by R. K. Narayan is a must read for the amazing (unexpected) Bala. No wonder since R. K. Narayan did not stop writing when he was rejected for publication, it is not in the family blood.

As opposed to the women of 50's India, Bala is another strong character from his tales.

Maybe if you are in for a story of husband hunting & unexpected character development then go for this novel. For the love of stories, please don't expect it to be another grandma tells you stories of Gods & Goddesses or summer days with mangoes and pickles. Finally, its story of a woman that's it.

PS: Avoid reading reviews with the story of this novel, it will ruin the many surprises that await you.

Rishi Prakash says

This is the last “novel” written by the great man and I must say a perfect conclusion for sure. He has come back to his normal self here after his last book which was completely off track!

This book is about Bala and Vishwa, RK's great grandparents and their life from marriage till their death. It tells the complete story from the time when marriages used to happen at a very young age and the bride or the groom had no idea whatsoever what it meant for them! It has been very well described here too when Bala first looks at her groom while sitting for the wedding rituals and realises “I remember this guy from the other lane always playing whenever i have passed from there”!

The character which stands out here is Bala (great grandmother) with her energy and zeal to do things rather than accepting her fate. When I sit back and look at all RKN novels which started in 1935 and concludes with this one in 1992 then the slow change in the female characters is quite noticeable. RKN's writings cover a span of nearly six decades which saw remarkable changes in women's priorities and choices, their approach to cultures, traditions, customs and social norms. The submissive and docile woman of the 1940s and 1950s, and the educated and assertive woman of the 1960s and 1970s have been substituted by the bold and rebellious one of the 1980s and 1990s which we see in Bala. He obviously had a vision on the empowerment of women which was spot on when we see how things have been moving coming to 21st century.

A must read to enjoy and appreciate the sheer simplicity with which the strength of a character has been developed with her age.

Jyoti says

simple book with some twists and turns that are least expected . The lady in the story is shown as a very bold person who fights for her rights and even succeeds in winning her husband back . This story is set up during the old era and the story plot and thinking by the author on these lines is something least expected.

Tam_the_med_bookie says

?Book Review: Grandmother's Tale (1992) by R.K. Narayan

*?Pages: 97

*?Price: ?145 (paperback)

*?Genre: Non fiction

This book tells about the story of the great grandmother (Bala) of one of the most beloved authors i.e. R.K.Narayan. She was married to a man at an early age of 7 to a boy of 10 (which was the norm during those times : the girl gets sent to the groom's place only when she grows up & gets mature enough). Before their consummation of marriage, the groom goes away joining a group of pilgrims going to Pandaripur.

After that no one knows about his whereabouts. Her life became worse as years passed by as she was already married in name to a man who was not even existing in her life! Unable to bear the gossips going on about her , she leaves home determined to find her so called husband, braving her way to Poona all by herself.

She found him after all, he being prosperous and married. She took matters in her own hands determined to get back her husband after all the years of separation & humiliation she had faced.

After years of patience & playing with the trust she gained from the other wife, she manages to get back with her husband.

They lived till old age with their children after returning back to Kumbakonam until their deaths were planned by someone in their household (no spoilers here!).

The story goes in the form of a narration with bits of facts regarding the life of the author thrown here & there.

The change in the nature of Bala from being a docile girl to an aggressive woman is really appreciable?

This is one superb read! ?Rating: 5?????/5?????

?? Recommended!

Ajay says

One of the best ever stories, which one should read during the primary school days. The book made me to miss my grand mother very much. The value of the grand mother and especially her stories is much valued under her absence. Even though the logic of her stories is compromised in some parts, the beauty lies in the way she narrates it. This particular book not just refreshes the childhood feel , but revives the way which our brain processes those stories.

Somdutta says

This book contains three entertaining stories of ordinary people at a phase in their lives that lead them to act in a way which brings out the whimsical nature of human beings. These stories set light on the complex, sometimes amusing and whimsical side of human beings that lead them to attain sometimes selfish and sometimes selfless ends.

Shalet Jimmy says

The Grandmother's Tale by R K Narayan

There was a time when grandiloquent languages gave me sleepless nights. How I wished I could use such words while writing. It was then I accidentally chanced upon R K Narayan's books which thankfully broke all my misconceptions. I knew at once that a story could be told beautifully with simple words too. My all time favourites are ' The Guide ' and ' The English Teacher'. But there are several more to explore.

Coming to Grandmother's tale, I did have a different picture before reading it. I was associating the title of the book with so many things such as pickles , Tairu saadam, the mischief of Swamy and many tales told by his grandmother. But it was not so. The book was about Bala and Vishwa, RK's great grandparents and their life from marriage till their death. Though I could read this book at a stretch, I could not relish it as I have done many of his other books.

RK's grandparents tied the knot when they were little children. Unlike today, the husband and wife could not be together until the young wife Bala attains puberty. Once in a while, they were left alone only for a few minutes to talk to each other. Many of their such meetings went awry as they could not muster the courage to talk to themselves. But eventually in one of such meeting, Bala somehow manages to talk to him. All she did was to point out to Vishwa, a dark patch under one of his ear. To this, he replies " This is a lucky sign and my mother says I would be a king," which became true. He becomes rich but at the cost of Bala. The story is all about how Bala manages to bring back his husband who left her and got married to another woman. As the story was completely told only from the point of Bala, there were many questions unanswered. Why did Vishwa become ready to desert his second wife though he loves her and come back to his first wife whom he hardly knows. What happened to Surma, his second wife when she was abandoned by Vishwa. Though he prospered after coming back to his village why didn't he make any effort to search Surma.

I grabbed this book as I was quite lured by the picture of the book where a small boy was seen sitting with his grandmother with inquisitive eyes on a swing.

I love RK's book. But for this one I will just 2/5.

Senthil Kumaran says

This is Narayan's very last book, wherein he even references his "My Days" book. Given that it must have been written in 2000s, it still exhibits Narayan's style to the core. The style is simple and vivid at the same time and brings joy to the readers who can relate to the anecdotes which are shared. It is a personal story of Narayan's great grandmother, who exhibited a enormous resolve and courage to bring back her husband who had run away from the town at the age of 10. The story as narrated by Narayan's grandmother, is about how this young girl named Bala (Balambal) embarks to find her husband and brings him back and they raises a family and the "interesting story" which follows after Bala's death.

Vidya Karanth says

really enjoyed reading the short stories .. very nice narration

Ashok Krishna says

There are many types of authors. Some of them, like the great Kahlil Gibran, teach us the basic truths of life with great eloquence. Some others, like the equally great Marcus Aurelius, teach the greatest of philosophies in the simplest of languages. And, then there are authors like R.K.Narayan, who have the knack of telling simple things in simple language and yet making it interesting enough. 'Grandmother's Tale' is a sample for that talent of R.K.Narayan, who is famous more for his manner of telling a tale, than for the eloquence with which it is told. But, this book is a simple sample, though.

Said to be the last book of R.K.Narayan, and set in the era of British Empire in India, this book recounts the life of his great grandmother Balambal (mother of his maternal grandmother), as told by his maternal grandmother. Balambal, his great grandmother, gets married at the young age of 7 to a boy from her neighbourhood, Vishwanathan, who was 10 years old at the time of their marriage. After a bit of initial interest in his wife, an innocent pre-teen curiosity about her, Vishwa leaves the town with a group of pilgrims headed to the northern parts of the country, without informing anyone, except Bala.

Within a week's time, the whole town sets in search of Vishwa, fearing the worst about his fate. Soon the dust settles and everyone comes to his/her own conclusion about Vishwa's fate. Bala, being aware of her husband's decision, remains confident though. But, when she starts growing up and turning into a woman, tongues start wagging about the possibilities of her having become a widow and thus being ineligible to visit the temple or lead a normal life as she has been doing. Infuriated, Bala leaves the village, vowing to come back with her husband.

After going through a lot of ordeals, she at traces her husband at last in Pune and manages to bring him back to her native village by cunning behavior and feminine obduracy. Then she goes on to lead a long, peaceful life with her husband and their offspring, till her death due to old age. The tale goes on to tell us about Vishwa, who lived for some more time with all the troubles related to old age and loneliness that plagues one after the demise of one's companion of such long time, before meeting his death at the hands of a conspiring servant.

A simple tale overall, the book is filled with the wit, twists and uncanny knack of RKN to make even the most ordinary of events seem interesting. What more, the book is embellished with lovely drawings by his famed sibling, R.K.Laxman. A worthy read, if you are looking to pass an hour of your time by reading a book that will be simple and yet riveting enough to be un-put-down-able.

Grandmother's Tale – as interesting as only the grandmother's tales can be!
