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He made himself an island until something unexpected washed ashore. When Holton lost his wife, Adele, in a freak accident, he shut himself off from the world, living a life of seclusion, making driftwood sculptures and drowning his pain in gin.

Until twenty-three-year-old Libby knocks on his door, asking for a job and claiming to be a friend of his late wife. When he discovers Libby is actually his late wife's illegitimate daughter, given up for adoption without his knowledge, his life is turned upside down as he struggles to accept that the wife he'd given saint status to was not the woman he thought he knew.

Together Holton and Libby form an unlikely bond as the two struggle to learn the identity of Libby's father and the truth about Adele, themselves, and each other.

Driftwood Tides Details

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From Reader Review Driftwood Tides for online ebook

Lindsey Silvestrini says

What a page turner! This is one of those rare books you put up and you just can't put down! Driftwood Tides was well written and paced and best of all, not at all predictable!

As I was reading I was entirely convinced I knew exactly what would happen with Libby and her search for her birth mother but I was dead wrong. I love when that happens! There is nothing worse than reading a book so predictable you can guess the ending.

Libby wants to learn about her birth mother and gets an internship with the broken and wounded Holton, her birth mother's husband. The question is, does he know she existed? Is there any chance he was her father? This book is like a puzzle that needs to be put together and Libby gets to work putting it all together.

Holton's assistant Tess is much kinder to her than Holton and she finds a kinship with her she's never experienced before. With an over-bearing adoptive mother who tries to control her entire life, including planning her wedding to fiancee Rob; Libby hasn't really experienced "normal" family relationships and dynamics.

What Libby discovers on her journey is that family isn't always what you dreamed it would be and that her mother loves her more than she can imagine; she just has a very unique way of showing it. Mother-daughter relationships can be tricky and Libby missed out on knowing her birth mother but her search for her will help restore the relationship with the woman who raised her as her own.

Driftwood Tides was such a heart warming story that I completely lost myself in and was sad to see it end!

Maureen says

This was a page turner for me even though there was no action to speak of! :) The characters and the storyline just kept me wanting more and needing to find out how everything was going to turn out. I really loved Libby and Holton and especially Tess. These are real people going through real situations that unfortunately I could relate to in more ways then one. If you're looking for a wholesome read, with a great message behind it, this book is for you.

Jennifer says

Alcoholic, forgiveness issues

Danelly says

Such a good read. The ending just seemed too rushed I was like what that's it?! Nooo!! I hoped that at least there would be an epilogue but there wasn't. Regardless, the character development was great. I enjoyed getting to see Libby gradually change as she embarks on getting to know herself and Rob too; his character seemed kinda weak at first but he too, gradually changed and matured for the better. Caroline's character seemed funny to me because I could imagine her crazy antics. Overall Driftwood Tides was a delightful read about forgiveness, love, and the beauty of second chances.

Staci says

Gina Holmes tackles difficult topics in her novels. In this novel, the focus is alcoholism and giving up a baby for adoption. I've read several of her novels and enjoyed them all.

In Driftwood Tides, Libby is the daughter given up for adoption and Holten is the alcoholic widower of Libby's birth mother. The thread of forgiveness is the focal point of the novel. While it was difficult to read some of the repeated poor choices and thought processes, the journey was time well spent.

I recommend this novel for those who enjoy contemporary fiction about deep topics.

Gina Maggard says

Amazing story of biological daughter, father and her dead mother.
I recommend it to you as a quick read.

Joleen says

As I was thinking about this review, and thinking how much I liked this book, I was wondering if there was anything about it I didn't like. It's very easy for me to see bothersome things in books, such as lengthy descriptions of what people are wearing, or random detail of birds flitting along wisteria arbors, or yet another discourse on the food served at the tenth meal in the story, or poor grammar and typos, or constant repetition of wording or thoughts, or lengthy interruptions in the narrative for the character to explain some event in their life, all the while we're waiting to hear the answer to a question someone asked 5 paragraphs before, or not being able to relate to the characters, or seemingly interminable run-on sentences like this one.... ;)

I can't think of any one of those irksome things in this book. In fact, I can't think of **anything** I didn't like about it. It was delightful, completely believable, sad, happy, funny at times, sweet, and thought provoking. I enjoyed all the characters. Even the snobby socialite mother had some redeeming qualities. It was completely clean, the Christian element was evident, and there was nothing cringeworthy.

Story:

Libby, 24, finds out by accident that she's adopted. Her father abandoning them when she was a child meant

her mother had a hard time revealing the adoption...ever. So when, through a necessary blood test before she's to marry Robert, she realizes she's been lied to, her mother hands her the adoption papers, and of course Libby sets out to find her natural mother (since no father is mentioned on her young unmarried mother's papers). What she finds is not a mother, but a disgustingly drunk step-father and a whole lot of unanswerable questions.

What she goes through with him, as she's trying to make sense of her life, is a process worth reading. Libby's battled all her life with not fitting in, not feeling truly wanted, and grieving the lack of nurturing all her life. And now, this has-been, extremely talented, financially strapped, alcoholic artist is all she has with whom to find all the lost pieces.

Having read *Crossing Oceans* and *Wings of Glass*, this author has now impressed me three times! Some subjects can be hard to read in a book, but oh my, how Ms. Holmes turns these topics into lovely stories that grip your heart and leave you completely content in the end!

I would recommend this book to anyone.

Iola says

Libby Slater is planning her wedding when a routine medical test reveals a secret from her past: that she's the daughter of a stranger named Adele Davison, not Caroline and George Slater. Libby hasn't seen her father since he left over twenty years ago, and her relationship with her mother has always been difficult. She determines to find Adele, if only to find a father to walk her down the aisle, but her attempt to reconnect with her birth family doesn't go according to plan.

Holton Creary is a talented artist, but is also still grieving the loss of his wife in a car accident five years ago. His grief drove him to gin, and despite the help of his assistant, Tess, he's about to go bankrupt. However, out of respect for his late wife, he grudgingly agrees to give Libby a summer internship ... although he has no idea of the real reason she wants to work with him.

Driftwood Tides is the first Gina Holmes book I've read, and I was impressed. She's an excellent writer, with the ability to create a cast of flawed but likeable characters (with the possible exception of the over-controlling Caroline), and to have them react in realistic ways to the challenges they are presented with. She has also managed to develop a plot with a strong Christian theme of forgiveness, yet keeping the Christian themes light and not at all preachy (if I had one complaint, it would be that I would have liked to have seen more of Libby spiritual development).

Driftwood Tides is more than a story of forgiveness. It's the story of one man struggling to overcome grief with gin, of the woman who loves him enough to stick by him even when he barely acknowledges her existence, of another woman who changes both their lives, and of a young couple attempting to plan for a future together. It's a plot with layers of complexity, and one with an element of unpredictability that turns it into something special.

Thanks to Tyndale House and NetGalley for providing a free ebook for review.

Lydia (Overweight Bookshelf) says

This review first appeared on www.NovelCrossing.com

Some authors I read to be entertained, others for the thrill of adventure or the intrigue of suspense. Then there are the authors that make me feel, contemplate the messiness of life and the lessons of hardship. Gina Holmes is an author in the company of the latter category. She made me weep along with terminally ill Jenny Lucas in *Crossing Oceans*, cower and rage with domestically abused Penny Carson in *Wings of Glass*, and hope for reconciliation with Eric Yoshida in *Dry as Rain*. Her latest novel, *Driftwood Tides*, continues in her strength at examining the breaking points in life and the fruit of dysfunction.

Libby Slater never thought that a simple genetic testing in preparation for her impending marriage would shatter the core of her identity. A daughter of privilege who has grown to resent the confining world of appearance and prestige, she is shaken by the revelation that her haughty and impassive mother and the man who abandoned them are not actually her parents. Libby's quest for answers and belonging brings her to the threshold of a man consumed by misery and alcoholism. Unfortunately for Libby, he is the only one who can give her answers about the mother she never knew.

Holton, a talented driftwood sculptor, lost his will to live when his wife Adele tragically passed in a freak car accident. His self destructive behavior and affinity for gin find him on the brink of death when Libby appears on his doorstep. There is something vaguely familiar about her and she claims to be a friend of his late wife, so he agrees to take her on as a summer intern. Libby's eventual revelation that she is Adele's daughter catapults Holton through an emotional upheaval exacerbated by his dependence on alcohol. After hitting rock bottom, he agrees to pull his life together and forges a bond with Libby as they try to navigate this new found connection and identity crisis.

The symbolism employed by Gina Holmes is unmistakable and moving. Like the battered driftwood that he transforms into beautiful art, Holton has weathered storms with devastating circumstances. In the midst of his grief he is given another reason to hope and allow his life to be reshaped by the Creator into a beautiful testament. Similarly, Libby for the first time, is experiencing what it feels to be loved and cherished by a parent without fear of disappointing.

Driftwood Tides is a contemplative story of forgiveness, redemption and second chances that is heralded by a cast of complex and riveting characters. Gina Holmes' continues to amaze with her perceptive analysis in to the human psyche and spiritual awakening, in a way that brings readers to the blurry border between reality and fiction.

Stephanie A. says

None of the characters are immediately very likeable, except maybe Rufus the hound, but if you can figure out how to cast them right you can wrangle a decent story out of some good stock tropes, namely "girl searching for her birth mother winds up connecting with her late mother's husband" and a middle-aged romance, where said widower and his assistant (Tess, whom I adored) are Obviously In Love but neither will admit it because of the late wife's omnipresent memory.

You just have to get past Holton's gross "slovenly drunk who lives in a pigsty" presentation and maybe shove

aside some "overbearing rich adoptive mother" and "overly clingy fiance whom you nevertheless are kind of annoyed at Libby for moving away from" sideshows. Or at least, I did. Still not totally satisfied with the arc of the young engaged couple, but I thought the story of found family in Nags Head was great.

Kerry Johnson says

Author Gina Holmes has a soft, subtle touch with the rough and raw subjects of life. Driftwood Tides is a shining example of the writing skill it takes to tackle a difficult subject(s) - in this case, alcoholism and parental abandonment - and create a story that's a pleasure to read and a feast of grace.

"He made himself an island until something unexpected washed ashore. When Holton lost his wife, Adele, in a freak accident, he shut himself off from the world, living a life of seclusion, making driftwood sculptures and drowning his pain in gin. Until twenty-three-year-old Libby knocks on his door, asking for a job and claiming to be a friend of his late wife. When he discovers Libby is actually his late wife's illegitimate daughter, given up for adoption without his knowledge, his life is turned upside down as he struggles to accept that the wife he'd given saint status to was not the woman he thought he knew. Together Holton and Libby form an unlikely bond as the two struggle to learn the identity of Libby's father and the truth about Adele, themselves, and each other."

Driftwood Tides revolves around Holton, a widowed artist, his friend and assistant Tess, and Libby, a young woman who at twenty-three receives the shocking news that she's adopted. Her search to find her biological family intersects with the still-mourning, heavily-drinking Holton, who blames himself for his late wife's death.

Holmes creates real-to-life characters who pop off the page, their conversations and decisions as imperfect and human as yours and mine. I appreciate her ability to draw flawed characters so clearly in her stories, and make the reader care deeply about their journey. My favorite character was long-suffering, soft-hearted Tess, who filled a maternal role for Libby and reminded me so much of someone I know.

Driftwood Tides is a story about our decisions and mistakes and their hold on us. But more than that, it's a beautiful picture of an imperfect group of people - a makeshift family - and how they hold each other up with forgiveness and grace.

Though not an easy read, Driftwood Tides is a dazzling waterfall of eloquent words crafted by a master storyteller who knows the workings of the human heart well but more importantly, knows God's grace and forgiveness are enough.

Kat says

starting off as a great book. she is planning her wedding but her mom is taking over. she had genetic testing done and found out her blood type was A but her parents both O so they can't be her parents. her mother confesses to her adoption. she finds her birth mother's married name, goes to the house to find the drunk stepfather and learns her birth mom is dead

he ends up in the hospital almost dying but pulls through and tries to straighten out his life. they have a art

show and with her mom's help he gets enough money to pay the bills. he proposes to his assistant and gets a new showroom for his art.

her and the boyfriend broke up but got together. they were going to get married but she wanted to stay in that town with her dad and help out in his showroom. they decide to wait a year and see how it goes

Christine Dillon says

Well-written contemporary fiction. Real life issues, messy people but plenty to make this worth reading. I look forward to reading more from this author.

C.J. Darlington says

4 1/2 stars. I am such a sucker for stories about people who discover they have unknown relatives (or think they do). Driftwood Tides pulls you right into the story, and I kept reading until the very end. A few things I guessed would happen did, but I wanted them to happen, so it made the story enjoyable. A perfect summer read for anyone who loves a great contemporary family tale. Gina Holmes fans will surely be pleased.

Nora St Laurent says

I'm thankful for a review copy of a book that talks about second chances; from an author I enjoy reading.

Holton Creary, renowned driftwood artist losses his wife, Adele in a freak accident. When she kissed him good-bye that morning little did he know it would be their last embrace. "It wasn't an hour after Holton had handed her a travel mug of coffee and kissed her through the open car window when a squad car pulled up in front of the house. The moment the policeman took off his hat and slid it under his arm, Holton knew...Adele was gone."

"Holton was so stunned that his heart froze, unable to respond. Before that could change, he drove to the nearest liquor store and bought the biggest bottle of gin he could find."

Libby and her fiancé, Rob had their blood tested (before the wedding) to see if either of them were carriers for Cystic Fibrosis, "the disease that had taken the life of Rob's younger sister." The results had great and mysterious news. The great news was neither of them were carriers for the disease. Surprising news was her blood type was A positive. Weird. "Both of her parents had O blood types,...two Os don't produce an A child. It had to be an error!"

This information sends Libby digging for answers and eventually leads her to the front door of Holton Creary, world renowned artist, widow. A man resolved to live a life of seclusion. "Someone Libby found drinking away his pain on the Outer Banks in North Carolina. A knock on Holton's door changes everything for them both." They struggle to find answers to their mounting questions about Adele. Both are surprised by the news of the blood test and what it meant.

Rob, Libby's fiancé is a patient with Libby to a point. He didn't understand why this search had to be done

now. They had a wedding to plan time was ticking. Libby's mom Caroline was the controlling sort and they were slowly losing control of their special day!

"Adele had been the love of his life, but maybe true love wasn't a one-time shot. Maybe like this branch – turned – driftwood, hearts could be repurposed."

Both Libby and Holton learn, "If we want to be forgiven, we have to forgive."

Gina Holmes pens a heartwarming story with complex believable characters I instantly cared for. This is a story of forgiveness and a one of new beginnings. She also talks about giving God control of life by surrendering it all to Him. (Easier said than done!) It's a process that requires you taking one step at a time. Accepting the things I can not change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference. I liked this novel it was a great reminder! This makes for a good read and a lively discussion for a book club pick.

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