



Finding Grace

Sarah Pawley

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Grace is seventeen and still unmarried, and for a girl from the country, that's socially unacceptable. When her parents try to force her hand, she flees and rejoins her brother and his wife. She finds a new life and a first real love. But the past will catch up with her...

-Midwest Book Review-

Trying to control your own destiny was not always viewed with the highest praise. "Finding Grace" is a novel from Sarah Pawley, telling of 1927 seventeen-year-old Grace, whose own stubbornness and drive has left her unmarried. As her parents try to rush her marriage, she spurns their attempts and flees, trying to forge her own path. But 1927 Virginia isn't the most open to determined self-made women. "Finding Grace" is a moving story of driven individuals, highly recommended.

Finding Grace Details

Date : Published March 23rd 2011 by CreateSpace (first published March 20th 2011)

ISBN : 9781449559465

Author : Sarah Pawley

Format : Paperback 378 pages

Genre : Romance, Fiction



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From Reader Review Finding Grace for online ebook

Judy says

Rather formulaic, with few surprises, this free download to my Kindle needed a proofreader. The number of typos in this eBook was a bit more than I like, causing distractions to the plot. The characters were good, tho.

Traxy Thornfield says

I wasn't sure what to expect from this book. The description sounded interesting, but I wasn't sure what kind of novel it was going to be, so I went into it with an open mind. It wasn't long at all before my attention was well and truly caught - hook, line and sinker.

Set in the days of the prohibition, 1927 to be precise, Grace Langdon lives with her brothers and extremely strict parents in rural Virginia. It's not a happy life. Her older brother Jack, her only friend, is shunned by the family after leaving with a girl the parents didn't approve of, and Grace wants out as well. One of her favourite books is Jane Eyre, and she doesn't just want to marry because it's what you're supposed to do. Like Jane, she wants to marry for love, and be strong and independent.

One day, Charlie - a boy she remembers from her childhood - comes back, and he seems really sweet. At first. Getting to know him better, she soon realises that he's not her Mr. Rochester, and eventually has to flee to avoid being married off to him by her parents. Grace goes to find her brother and his wife in Chicago. By chance, she happens upon Henry Shaw at the train station, a man who knows her brother. A man with a reputation for being a womaniser, but who is darn attractive, and who also can't seem to stop thinking about Grace ...

Two things that immediately stand out as reasons to love this novel: 1) Jane Eyre, which is quoted every now and again, and 2) Richard Armitage.

Knowing Sarah Pawley is a fan of Richard Armitage, there is no way I can read the description of Henry and the frequent mentions of his voice and not picture/hear that man. Picturing a handsome actor playing the part of the hero is never a bad thing, especially not when they're so easy to imagine. Henry is not a straightforward character either, he has layers and is conflicted so he's also the sort of character that I could easily see Richard Armitage playing.

But wait, there's more!

The characterisation is wonderful. I love Grace and her naive country girl ways, and how she knows what she wants and doesn't want. She's opinionated and strong, like her fictional "mentor" Jane Eyre. Her family life is horrid and I really felt for her as she refused to marry Charlie. Him, too. He's a creepy one. Like St John Rivers, except nothing at all like him. Maybe if St John had been less righteous and more creepy stalker-y. Like Rochester, Henry is a man with a difficult past. Not in a mad wife in the attic way, but in the sense that he's a really nice guy underneath a gruff exterior brought on by life not being too kind to him. He's a World War I veteran, with the mental scarring that goes with it.

There are two things in particular that I'm a sucker for when it comes to romances: chance meetings and age

gaps. Grace and Henry meet each other by accident at the train station when she first arrives in Chicago - score! - and there's a solid 13-15 years worth of age gap. Sweet! In fact, I didn't think about it to begin with, but once I did, I was far too pleased.

To begin with, Finding Grace almost felt a little slow, but things picked up soon enough. As it happened, as Grace and Henry were falling in love with each other in their own way, I was falling in love with the book.

If I have any criticisms of the novel, it's that there was a distinct over-use of "..." in the first half of the book, where commas could and should have been used instead. Also, there were a few words that I wondered about, but I don't know if they are typos or colloquialisms or something. There are several places where it says how the sun "shined", for instance, and I thought "shouldn't that be 'shone'?" (dictionary says "shined" is archaic, so I guess you can use it, especially in a historical context).

Other than that, I loved it. Feisty female, brooding bloke, a love story to set your heart aflutter - and plot twists that makes it truly un-put-downable. I had reached such a place with emotions flying all over the place when it was time to go to bed - another reason why the time bothered me! Can't end on a cliffhanger, damn it!

With frequent mentions of Jane Eyre and Jane Austen - even Elizabeth Gaskell's not-that-internationally-renowned North & South is in there (yes, Grace compares Henry with Mr. Thornton, snap!) - this is one for classical literature aficionados, as well as those who love a good, romantic story. You don't necessarily have to picture Richard Armitage if you don't like to, but he just fits so well. 5 out of 5 newfangled electrical machines!

MaryannC.Book Fiend says

I won this book from a Goodreads Giveaway. This was a nice, enjoyable read. It is the story of 17-year old Grace Langdon who runs away from her home in Virginia after her parents try and force her into marriage. Grace heads to the big city of Chicago where her older brother John now lives with his wife Alice. There in Chicago, Grace adjusts to life living and working in this big, new city where she also becomes attracted to her brother's handsome neighbor Henry. I liked the tense attraction between Grace and Henry, it had a sort of sexiness to it, if that makes sense. I also liked Grace's fierce independence and determination to make her way in the world.

Rachel says

I put this on my trashy shelf not because there are steamy sex scenes (this is billed by many as a "Christian" romance), but honestly I would rather read a Nora Roberts book than this. The plot is boring and predictable. The characters have no real depth. The author seems to have a talent for not developing her characters or plot points. This could have been a much better book if it were written by a better author.

Nicole says

I read this because I was borrowing my mom's nook during a vacation and needed something for a quick

read. It's not my first choice of book, but was all right to entertain me for long car rides. I found it pretty predictable and thought some of the characters were pretty one-dimensional. I just found out this actually follows another book, but this was fine to read without having read the first one. I enjoyed the time period and the basic storyline of a young woman creating her own way and being confident in herself.

Nardine says

Would read again

This was a sweet love story, and it definitely was a page turner for me. I liked the ending even though it was predictable. The story was overall a bit predictable but it did not overtly read that way and I liked that. What I did not like was the numerous typos. I thought It was just in the beginning but it was actually through out the whole book. I would still recommend this to adolescents and adults if you're looking for a sweet love story.

Jennifer C says

This is a lovely story reminiscent of days gone by. There are no steamy love scenes and none are needed. This book is completely focused on the relationships one woman has with the people that are most important in her life. Grace is a beautiful example of a true lady as well as her sister in law Alice. They are women that you want to be your friend. There are some editing issues but if you look beyond that, the story is captivating and heartwarming and one that can be shared with all generations.

I love this time period and since the bulk of the story takes place in Chicago, where I live, this book will hold a special place in my heart.

Victoria says

I've been meaning to review this book for a while now and I haven't gotten around to it. I really enjoyed this book and I related a lot to Grace. I won this book in a first reads giveaway and I was super excited to find it waiting for me right after I learned that I had won and to boot, it came with a personalized handwritten note from Ms. Pawley herself! I started on it immediately and finished it in just a few days. I have not read anything else by her, but I see that she has a book out called "Oh, That I Had Wings". It looks like this book might be a sequel or a prequel to Finding Grace. In Finding Grace, the main character moves in for a while with her brother and his wife. In Oh, That I Had Wings it looks like we get to hear the brothers back story. I am very excited for that part as Jack was one of my favorite characters in Finding Grace. I recommend this book to anyone who enjoys reading. I think that there is at least one character in the book that everyone can relate to and Pawley's writing style is excellent. I was never bogged down with wordy chapters and I was compelled to continue reading to find out what would happen to our protagonist!

Kandice says

Just the quotations from Jane Eyre made this book good, since it is my favorite of all time. I liked this book better than the first in the series. Something this book made me think about was that we never know the internal battles that those around us are fighting, so it is not our place to judge their lifestyle choices. People can change because of us if we try to see them as they can become. Henry changed because Grace saw that there was good in him.

I also love that Grace's character rose above her situation to something better, even though she was continually beat down, she knew that she could be strong and rise above because of the kind actions and words from her brother. I love how she did not let bitterness towards her father and mother consume her soul, but instead thought the words from Jane Eyre over and over, "Love me then, or hate me as you will, you have my full and free forgiveness."

Pretty good book and easy fun read.

Shana says

I received this book today in the mail as a GoodReads First Read. I really enjoyed this book. It is a coming of age book of a young girl named Grace. It is set in the 1920's. The people Grace comes in contact with propel her along to becoming a young woman who can take care of herself, but who learns to trust others to take care of her heart. I loved it and am going to get Ms. Pawley's other book. I would recommend this to anyone!

Literary Chanteuse says

I won this book here on goodreads and am so glad because I loved it! It is set in the 20's at a time when women were still believed to a great extent to be possessions of their husbands. Grace is a strong country girl who leaves her sheltered life to escape the hold of this mentality. She begins her new life with uncertainty but with the help of her much adored older brother and his wife she finds her place and even finds the love she knew she was worthy of.

I love how the author was able to give such a insight to not just how Grace felt but no doubt how many women probably felt during this era. The story had me feeling happiness and sadness as though I was Grace herself. One of my favorite books I've read this year!

Laura McDonald says

Sarah Pawley has been a long time supporter and contributor to Girlebooks, graciously offering her two books for free on the site. I've had her books on my "to read" list for almost as long, and I finally got around to reading Finding Grace. This was her first written of the two, but actually second in the chronology. "Oh, That I Had Wings" tells the story of young Jack Langton growing up in rural Virginia and then off to WWI. Finding Grace follows his younger sister, Grace, in her transition from her humble roots in Virginia on to the big city of Chicago in the 1920s.

Grace is a feisty yet lovable character. Anyone who has read many of the popular books on Girlebooks will recognize her own heroines: Jane Eyre, Elizabeth from *Pride and Prejudice*, Margaret from *North and South*. Pawley was obviously inspired by these books herself, and she weaves her references to them into the plot. Our hero, of course, comes on the scene in unflattering circumstances but gradually becomes more likable to both the reader and Grace as the story progresses.

I highly recommend this one, and you can't be the price for the ebook! I already have her other book loaded up on my kindle, and the beginning chapter is promising.

Helya says

After winning this book in a giveaway by Sarah Pawley recently, I finally got down to reading it. It had been sitting in the box that it was delivered in and I had almost forgotten about it until 2 days ago. Once I started reading it, I was hooked. I really connected with the protagonist, Grace, since she is independent, fiercely stubborn and has a passion for books. The time period of the *Finding Grace* really appealed to me since I hadn't read anything from the 20s before. It was inspiring to see and feel Grace's struggle with her family in Virginia and the "backward ideals" of the time. She's different from the average women during her time and won't submit to the male authority. Her journey of finding herself and attaining freedom burst with empowerment as well as a search for true love. In terms of love, I thought that Charlie was going to be the one in the first few chapters and once his dark and damaged side was revealed, I started seeing him as an obstacle in Grace's way toward happiness. She ran away to Chicago to her brother, Jack, and his loving wife, Alice. (I adore this couple.) Then she met Henry, and their unnerving neighborly courtship bloomed into deep love. I was very engaged at how Pawley showed the way their characters evolved in response to each other. Henry, a young & modern businessman and former womanizer, changes when he starts caring for Grace and he wants to be a good man for her & be the one who loves her. Grace also begins to trust Henry more and it's soon apparent that they need each other. When Grace was shot by a deranged Charlie, I was very surprised. It was definitely unexpected and I actually cried a bit when I read of Henry's reaction to the situation as well as the death of Toby.

When Grace asks Henry to bring her parents to Chicago and to take Charlie's body to his uncle and aunt, I realized how she's selfless and good-hearted. She knows that her parents will never love her the way they should and she accepts that. Grace does it to save her parents' relationship with Jack and ultimately with his and Alice's child. Concerning Charlie, she doesn't hate him at all for what he did but understands that his tragic life made him unstable and caused his suicide.

Once Grace and Henry set out to Florida after her proposes, they travel and become closer. Grace becomes assured of his love for her and they got married. She finally finds peace and happiness with him. They both have scars but together they help each other through anything despite their differences.

The "icing on the cake" was when Alice had the baby and they named him, Toby. For me, this symbolizes what's good in life and what was sacrificed to attain happiness. Toby was a genuinely good character and he died by sacrificing himself for Grace. All in all, this novel was moving and it showed a character's journey to finding freedom, independence and happiness. Grace faced oppression for being a woman and therefore "inferior" but she prevailed and took charge of her own life and future. I strongly recommend this novel to anyone whose open-minded and is willing to be inspired. =)

GenieD says

This might have been a book I liked, but Grace had an abusive father and stupid mother who were portrayed as Christians.

Nowhere did these people show that they were actually Christian people. They never had one action of faith in God or principles of Christianity. Yet the author chose to have them quote scripture once in a while, so these "christians" are who Grace needs to get away from to have a great life.

Baloney! I wonder if the author knows any real Christians at all.

AD23 AD23 says

This novel was beautifully done, capturing the very essence of a young woman coming into her own during the 1920's. Grace Langdon is a feisty lass with a will to be more than what is expected for a girl of seventeen. With a lot of courage, she explores the world outside the confines of her family farm.

I enjoyed going on the journey with Gracie as she walked through her days in wonderment of things like gas stoves and indoor plumbing. The love and passion that pours throughout the pages keeps you enthralled until the very end. Pawley has a wonderful way of expressing her characters emotions, so much so you feel a part of their lives.

I highly recommend this lovely novel.
