



The Kaleidoscope Season

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Set in a small town in southern Georgia 1948, the book centers around Emily Jean Knowles, a soon-to-be-twelve-year-old girl who lives with Granna. Granna is a staunch Southern Baptist who has raised her granddaughter to be a well-mannered young lady, but Emily has retained much of her childhood 'activity' and 'inquisitiveness.'

The story is full of interesting characters like Emily Jean's favorite Uncle Bob; her maternal grandmother, whom she meets for the first time; her best friend, Starlett; and her favorite teacher, Miss Mary Afton. Uncle Bob comes home to live and work for the summer, and he and Emily Jean separately undertake journeys of religious discovery.

The Kaleidoscope Season Details

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Author : Sharon Downing Jarvis

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From Reader Review The Kaleidoscope Season for online ebook

Rena Phung says

Loved every turn of this charming, multi-faceted, heartfelt generational tale. And I wept. Her description of life's shifting scenes captured exactly how I have felt during a kaleidoscope-shifting summer of my own.

♥?♥?♥?

Judie says

I pulled this book from my shelves with the idea of skimming through it before disposing of it; but I found it interesting and really good! I didn't remember it that way. This is a quote I liked, "Young as I was, I sensed a part of this and understood that you can't hold on to special moments very long. They may be savored at length only in memories and pictures. There's no time to pass the kaleidoscope around for others to glimpse a particularly beautiful pattern. Chances are it will have altered before it leaves your hand." And another quote, "With a sense of wonder, I realized that these people were my own people--they were part of me and I of them." This was a very satisfying book with filled with wonderful, human characters.

Kim says

Yesterday my 13-year-old son and I completed "Kaleidoscope Season." He was home from school with a sore throat and we finished the final two chapters. This was his first read of this wonderful book and my fourth or fifth. We began it in the summer and have loved the experience! The subjects of racial prejudice, religious prejudice, and physical maturation sparked interesting side conversations. We laughed together, and cried together, and bonded again as we shared this sweet, sensitive, intelligent book.

Having lost a father at a young age, I enjoyed living through EJs discovery of her dad, and grandmother. Memories of Glencoe, Missouri and the back roads to the Mermac River flooded my mind. There is something fundamental in this book that always brings me a feeling of peace. I love this book!

Lucy says

Emily Jean Knowles, a girl who is "nearly twelve" is being raised in Georgia in the late 1940's by her Southern Baptist grandmother because her mother and father both died during her infancy. She knows very little about her mother due to her grandmother's disappointment over her rash marriage to Emily's father, who she has only been told was not "their people."

After a visit from a couple of "those mormons", some letters to her knew penpal LaRue in Wyoming, a visit to her other grandmother during the summer, and witnessing her beloved Uncle Bob, who is going into the ministry, fall in love with her favorite teacher's helper at her school, Starlett, and finding his own faith challenged, Emily's view of the world shifts and changes, much like a kaleidoscope, as she discovers a new faith, new courage, and the confidence that comes when you know you're loved.

In spite of its dramatic, choppy and came-from-left-field ending, I found myself enjoying this quaint, summery, coming-of-age story.

Catherine says

I was prepared to not like this book. I have not read many LDS genre books that I've liked. I hated the first two pages. I found them cloyingly sweet and felt a bit beat about the head with the title of the book. By darn the writer was going to make sure I knew why it was called The Kaleidoscope Season - I guess she figured I wasn't smart enough to figure it out on my own. But I came on here and read the other reviews and decided to keep reading.

I am glad I read this book. Other than the first two pages, the story is interesting and thought provoking. I loved the descriptions and Emily Jean's experiences with all the different religions. I liked the character of Emily Jean. She makes mistakes and isn't always 100% honest - yet she is a good girl. Jarvis uses strong voice when writing her characters. I really felt like I could hear them talking - each was distinct. Well done Miss Jarvis!

Sarah says

There are three LDS authors of fiction I like: Card, Jarvis, and Hale, that's it and in that order.

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I just re-read this and I loved it, I've always liked it, but I really like it now. Its charms haven't faded with time. The author captures the voice and feel of the South so well, the people and the way they act feels so real and genuine, it's a heartwarming story that makes you feel good and you will definitely get hungry for some good square meals and fresh vegetables from the garden.

Olivia says

One of my favorites

Tracy says

More than anything, I loved the author's voice. Love and kindness filled the tone, along with the wisdom that comes from age.

I would classify this as a coming of age story, but there are multiple themes going on: southern tradition, religion, loss of parents, discovering family history, and difficult family relationships. I really enjoyed reading, and I'll be looking for more from this author. I've already put it on my daughter's nightstand.

Nicole says

I was surprised how much I liked this book. It's an LDS author and does include some of the LDS faith, but not much. It was very well done, undertones, not a cheesy, pushy LDS book -- the conversion story of a young "almost 12-year-old" girl in the South (Georgia) in the late 1940s. I loved the feel of the book, the characters, the tone of voice you could hear when Vesta spoke (the only black character in the book, *Gone with the Wind* really captured that style of speaking for me and haven't read another book since that has, this one did a pretty good job). It did take me quite a while to read it as it was a slower read for me, but I enjoyed how it meandered through Emily Jean's summer, the different experiences she had, and the changes that came into her life in many forms.

Good, clean read - probably 4.5 stars.

Abbie says

I enjoyed this much more than I thought I would.

Lukensfamily says

This is a story seen through the eyes of a 13 year old. She is being raised by her mother's mother....grandmother and knows very little about her parents and her fathers side of the family. Emily Jean, the 13 year old, begins to learn about her "distant" family. The interesting think is that it is contrary to the information her grandmother believes. Sometimes we are too quick to blame and want things to be our way. Along with this, the grandmother is a faithful Baptist and the LDS missionaries come into the picture which adds more fuel to the "fire." An easy read and very enjoyable for an LDS person.

Becky says

I received this book as a gift--thank you Heather! My mom read it first after the holidays and company were gone. I had a fun time reading this YAL Mormon novel. Yes, there is a faith conversion story which is really important, but I found it to be more of a "coming-of-age" novel.

Laura says

I am so glad that my friend told me to not read the back before starting this book! Part of the fun of this book was that the storyline develops slowly and thoughtfully so reading a synopsis on the back of the book would have ruined it for me.

When I saw the book was set in the deep south, I was scared--I usually don't like that deep south genre. And then when I saw it was published by Deseret Book Co., I was even more nervous--I'm not a fan of most LDS fiction. But it is definitely NOT like most LDS fiction and it sucked me in--I found myself thinking about the

characters even when I wasn't reading. And it was well written, thoughtful, and fun to read.

Katie says

This is a great book! It is an LDS book, but beyond the great conversion story, I love the Southern setting, the way it treats conflict between race, generations and religion, and the theme of family ties.

Tasha says

A beautiful story about growing up and changes. I read it at the suggestion of a friend, and I wasn't too excited because I have not read many LDS fiction books that I like. They never seem like real life, everything is always too peachy in the end. This was no different in that aspect, but I was still pleasantly surprised. The description of life in the South was so beautiful; including the flowers, food, and the people. I wanted to go to Bama and have some green n' beans! I was immediately immersed in the life of Miss Emily Knowls. I would have preferred a different ending, but I still recommend this book, especially if you have a soft spot for the South and Family.
