



## The Secret to Southern Charm

*Kristy Woodson Harvey*

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**The Secret to Southern Charm** Kristy Woodson Harvey

**A 2018 Spring Okra Pick**

**One of *Southern Living*'s Best Spring Break Reads**

Leaving fans “practically [begging] for a sequel” (*Bookpage*), critically acclaimed author Kristy Woodson Harvey returns with the second novel in her beloved Peachtree Bluff series, featuring a trio of sisters and their mother who discover a truth that will change not only the way they see themselves, but also how they fit together as a family.

After finding out her military husband is missing in action, middle sister Sloane’s world crumbles as her worst nightmare comes true. She can barely climb out of bed, much less summon the strength to be the parent her children deserve.

Her mother, Ansley, provides a much-needed respite as she puts her personal life on hold to help Sloane and her grandchildren wade through their new grief-stricken lives. But between caring for her own aging mother, her daughters, and her grandchildren, Ansley’s private worry is that secrets from her past will come to light.

But when Sloane’s sisters, Caroline and Emerson, remind Sloane that no matter what, she promised her husband she would carry on for their young sons, Sloane finds the support and courage she needs to chase her biggest dreams—and face her deepest fears. Taking a cue from her middle daughter, Ansley takes her own leap of faith and realizes that, after all this time, she might finally be able to have it all.

Harvey’s signature warmth and wit make this a charming and poignant story of first loves, missed opportunities, and second chances and proves that she is “the next major voice in Southern fiction” (Elin Hilderbrand, *New York Times* bestselling author).

## The Secret to Southern Charm Details

Date : Published April 3rd 2018 by Gallery Books

ISBN :

Author : Kristy Woodson Harvey

Format : Kindle Edition 400 pages

Genre : Fiction, Womens Fiction, Chick Lit

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## **From Reader Review The Secret to Southern Charm for online ebook**

### **Kathryn says**

Great story, excellent narration really complements the story. Really looking forward to #3.

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### **Pamela says**

Wanting something summertime-light and entertaining, but with a reasonably solid story line I plucked this off the library shelf at random. An okay good "Beach" read about sisters, mother/daughter relationships, sweet and sour marriages, grief and joy, sweet tea and southern steel.

It was a bit more serendipitous and Hallmark than I prefer. And contrived. Perhaps reading this as a stand alone didn't help; I wasn't aware it was part of a series. The fault is mine, in that regard.

With thoughtful consideration, THREE \*\*\* Beach Read Series \*\*\* STARS.

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### **Tammy says**

A wonderful little gem with a beautiful story to tell. This is the 2nd book in the series that will have you laughing and tearing up in small town Peachtree Bluff Georgia.

I'm a huge fan of Kristy Woodson Harvey's books and this one is even better than her last. I love this family, and I especially love how together they face their fears, heartbreaks and crisis through being strong resilient women. I enjoy seeing how it shows the true meaning of family through three generations of southern women.

This author knows how to tell an intense filled story and towards the end I got misty eyed, it really pulled at my heart strings.

I recommend first reading book #1 Slightly South of Simple to learn the characters and their family history. Highly recommend! 5 ?

Read for 4in48readathon

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### **Jennifer ~ TarHeelReader says**

#### **5 book comfort food stars to The Secret to Southern Charm, the second installment in the Peachtree Bluff series! ? ? ? ?**

I discovered Kristy Woodson Harvey with the release of her debut, Dear Carolina. I quickly fell for this author's smooth writing, endearing characters, messages of love, and the charm of known locations in her books! Ever since, I preorder all her books and gobble them up...waiting for the next year's installment! They are comfort food after all!

The Secret to Southern Charm is the second in the Peachtree Bluff series, which focuses on three sisters, Sloane, Caroline, and Emerson, as well as their devoted mother, Ansley. The Secret is narrated by Sloane and Ansley in alternating chapters. Sloane's husband is in the military and has gone missing. Will he be found alive, and how will Sloane handle her grief while also being a loving mom?

**What did I absolutely LOVE?** All.of.it. Every word. I enjoyed reading Sloane's story and watching her grow as a character while in the loving arms of her sisters and mother. Kristy starts each chapter with a title, and I find it fun to search for the meaning of the title within the chapter. I think she's done that with all her books, and I adore that added touch. The relationships among the sisters, the daughters with their mothers, and the children with their mothers- all so genuine and warm. The messages on love and second chances were palpable.

Elin Hilderbrand has called Kristy Woodson Harvey "the next major voice in southern fiction," and I wholeheartedly agree. Having written four books in as many years, the quality is always there. I read somewhere that Kristy reads her own words over and over to make sure her writing flows, and it most definitely does.

**Bottom line.** If you are looking for a comforting read, don't miss Kristy's books. While I think The Secret to Southern Charm can be read as a standalone (some of the catch-up from the first book was included), you will love these characters so much, you won't want to miss out on Caroline's story in Slightly South of Simple. Because I can't write about Kristy without mentioning my favorite book of hers, Lies and Other Acts of Love, which is an exceptionally huggable must-read. Speaking of, I have all of Kristy's books on my huggable book shelf, including this one.

I received an ARC of this book from the author, and my preordered copy arrived on release day. I tend to buy extra copies to give as gifts because Kristy's books are so universally loved. The Secret to Southern Charm is available now!

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### Amy says

Last year I read Slightly South of Simple and fell head over heels in love with not only Peachtree Bluff, but also the characters and Harvey's smooth, fluid writing. I couldn't wait to revisit Ansley, Caroline, Sloane and Emerson and now I want to pack my stuff move to Peachtree Bluff! Ok, at least take a vacation there?!

If the cover of STSC doesn't make you long for warm weather then I don't know what will, it's gorgeous and the inside is just as pretty. This time around the story centers more on Sloane and her despair and hopelessness as her husband Adam, is missing in action. It flips between her point of view and Ansley's and the entire family is in crisis mode for various reasons. This was much more emotional for me than the first book, it played off of some of my own worst fears and Harvey writes with a passion that tugs on the heart, it's beautiful and insightful.

The characterization in this series is fantastic, this family of women are all relatable on some level and are the kind of people I would want as friends. I loved finding out more about Sloane, many of her chapters began with an old letter from Adam and they simultaneously broke my heart and made me swoon. You do still uncover some more details about the rest of the family, but Sloane is definitely front and center and her thoughts and feelings about motherhood, being a sister, wife and daughter were SO relatable that Harvey could be plucked them right out of my own head.

Once again this had it all, family drama, secrets, romance, humor and charm, I literally cannot wait for the next book. This is one to pick up when you want to be lost in the pages of a book, pack it for your next vacation, I don't think you'll regret it.

The Secret to Southern Charm in three words: Endearing, Warm and Wise.

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### **Jen says**

The Secret to Southern Charm is the second book in Harvey's Peachtree Bluff series and I thoroughly enjoyed it. It picks right up where she left off in *Slightly South of Simple* (aren't these titles the best?) with Ansley and her daughters Caroline, Sloan, and Emerson. Grammy is there too, as well as the kids, the estranged husband, the old flame, and all of the loving members of the community. While the first book focused mostly on Caroline, this book moves over to Sloan and continues with the heartaching drama that ended *Slightly South*'s story. Charm weaves in Emerson as well, and I have a feeling the third installment will add more to her plate than anyone could have imagined. Ansley better gather her strength for this one. In the midst of everyone's stories, Harvey perfectly describes that southern atmosphere (and fantastic design choices) we love to read about and wish we lived in. Gorgeous sunsets, evenings on the porch, and loving neighbors wrap this family up in all the southern charm (see what I did there?). Escape to Peachtree Bluff and spend some time with the gals. Grab some wine while you're at it.

I received an advanced copy of this book. All opinions are my own.

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### **Erin says**

**Grammy had said earlier that the accent was the secret to southern charm. But she was wrong. This putting on a brave face, carrying on, helping others, being kind and humble and giving, believing with all your heart that the world could be a better place and that maybe you could make it that way...that was southern charm.**

The sequel to *Slightly South of Simple* picks up with middle daughter Sloane reeling from the news that her army husband is M.I.A in Iraq. Leaning on her sisters, Caroline and Emerson, and her mother and grandmother, Sloane is lost among memories of her relationship with Adam. But mother Ansley is also suffering as she tries to help her daughter and also sort out her feelings for a first love.

I absolutely love this heartfelt series and I was riveted to each page. Kristy Harvey writes a compelling and beautiful story that has me wishing I had a beach house in Peachtree Bluff.

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### **Sherri Thacker says**

I love all books by Kristy Woodson Harvey. This is my 4th book of hers. I liked this one alright. I preferred her others. This book was given to me free of charge by the publisher and NetGalley in return for an honest review.

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### **Donna Hines says**

A story of second chances, love, family, biology, nature v nurture, and the bond that can never be broken.

Three sisters ( Sloan, Caroline, and Emerson) are involved in process of uncovering their true identity by way of their own mother (Ansley) who puts her own life on hold to process grief.

So many troubled lives ; the passing of the girls father during 911 terror attack, the loss of their grandmother, the near loss of a sister who stricken and fallen ill yet through it all they uncover the tie that bonds them together.

Questions arise over their biological parent yet what's love got to do with it is actually at stake because biology is only part of the story.

Can you truly have it all? Can you have a blended happy family? Can a missed chance become a golden opportunity to find love later in life?

Ansley has always been there for everyone else will her family do the same for her?

When the going gets tough the tough get going and this story was a true southern charmer .

The fact that Sloan's husband (Adam) has gone missing is just one more piece of the will to survive and see it through till the end.

Nothing seems to break this family apart and nothing should if all goes well.

I love stories that remind you of the real reason we all need love, support, guidance, nurturing, and affection. This is just one of those happy go lucky ones that you won't want to miss.

Thank you to Kristy, NetGalley, and Aldiko for providing me this copy.

I hope everyone enjoys this touching , heartfelt, romantic, and challenging story as much as I have.

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### **Lisa says**

The Secret to Southern Charm

Kristy Woodson Harvey

MY RATING ??????????

PUBLISHER Gallery Books

PUBLISHED April 3, 2018

A warm, witty and entertaining book perfect for a sunny day at the beach.

### **SUMMARY**

This is the second novel in the Peachtree Bluff series which features the three Murphy sisters and their mother as they struggle with the hardships life throws at them. Sloane's world is turned upside down when she is told that her military-strong husband, Adam is missing in action in Iraq. Finding the strength to climb out of bed or parent her two boys was impossible. Thankfully, her mother and sisters are there to help. Her mother Ansley puts her personal and work life on hold in order to support Sloane and to care for her own aging mother. Sisters, Caroline and Emerson are finally after three weeks able to coax Sloane out of bed. As she was emerging from her funk Sloane's strategically place painting easel called out to her. She began painting again, and painting helped. But other family issues soon arose. Ansley's mother health was declining, and Emerson didn't feel well either. In the midst of all the chaos, a new neighbor moved in next

door to Ansley. Actually, it was not a new neighbor but it was Jack, a lifelong friend and love-interest of Ansley's. Jack holds all the secrets of her past. Jack was the one person she wanted a future with, but just not right now.

## REVIEW

This little gem should be devoured on a beautiful day at the beach with wine and special brownies. *The Secrets of Southern Charm* is three generations of strong women who face life's major challenges and overcome. It may not be easy, but they do it. The characters are well-developed and the sense of family is beautiful and strong. Even the family friends are delightful. I want Kimmy and Hippie Hal hosting my next birthday party. And Kyle can deliver my coffee everyday...and I don't even like coffee. Do you think I can get him to bring me a sweet ice tea instead!

Kristy Harvey's story telling is witty and warm. She creatively uses letters from Adam to Sloane before he was MIA to exhibit their loving relationship and highlight some of their issues. The tension Harvey created by Ansley's fears of her past coming to light is very palpable and masterfully done.

While I did not read Harvey's first book in the Peachtree Bluff series it did not stop me from enjoying this one. Never once did I believe I was missing something, but just the same, I have ordered the first one, *Slightly South of Simple*, which will just have to be read second! I'll bet it will be just as entertaining as this one. *The Secret of Southern Charm* is recommended for those who love Southern fiction or anyone who wants to know what the secret is!

Thanks to Netgalley, Gallery Books, and Kristy Harvey for an advance reading copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says**

I just want to make a comment about this cover before I review the book. The cover I had on my ebook version of the book was of a woman on a beach stool reading a book. So, you wonder, what's so special about that? Well, on my version is she reading a book while on other versions I have seen is she reading on a tablet. Yes, perhaps it's not a big deal however, I just love that little detail that changes from version to version.

**READ THE REST OF THE REVIEW OVER AT FRESH FICTION!**

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### **Lisa says**

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## **The Lit Bitch says**

I have a soft spot in my heart for southern literature. In college I had to read *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* and that book actually revived my interest in reading. At that time I hadn't picked up a 'for fun book' in about five years so when I read that book even though it was for a class, I remembered how much I loved books.

One of the things that I loved about that book was the unique southern charm. Now that book was obviously not chick lit or women's fiction and I am most certain that it was not meant to be 'charming' but the setting really stuck with me and since then I have read a number of books set in the south which brings me to this book and the *Peachtree Bluff* series!

So many things about this series scream southern charm! The characters, the setting, even the covers just remind me of sweet tea! When the first book in the series came up for review, I couldn't say no. It just sounded so summery and fun and I absolutely fell in love with it. I have read other books by Woodson Harvey and she writes with such confidence in the genre that it's hard for me to pass on any of her books! Since reading her first book, *Lies and Other Acts of Love*, then I have been eager to read anything by Woodson Harvey!

I love how real and honest Woodson Harvey writes. She doesn't try and make her characters and their lives look all pretty and glamorous. If she did I feel like the characters would ring false. It's her ability to create real characters with flaws, secrets, issues, and real life problems that makes them so endearing and entertaining. She adds in this great mixture of humor to her stories that even though the issues some of her characters are facing are tragic and sad, there is always a hint of humor which I think helps balance out some of the tragedy that's going on. While this book has some seriousness to it, for me it was still a beach/summer read though, so don't let the description fool you. I know reading about a military wife who's husband goes missing etc doesn't sound like a beach read but I promise that it isn't bleak. Rather than give away too much, just pick it up and read it and you will see what I mean!

This book picks up where *Slightly South of Simple* left off but I don't think you would need to read that book first to enjoy this one. Sure there are some references to the first book, but this book stands on its own so you could easily pick this one up and start there. Each book is about one sister (there are 3) so each book is each sister's platform rather than one long narrative if that makes sense.

If you are taking a vacation and need something light to read and get lost in, *Peachtree Bluff* is a great place for that. Woodson Harvey's writing is refreshing, confident, and knowledgeable and I love watching her stories unfold. Each one is just as good or better than the one before!

See my full review [here](#)

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## **Chris C - A Midlife Wife says**

Touching story about family and life.

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When it comes to family, it can be complicated. Arguments. Fights. Misunderstandings. When it all comes down to push and shove however, family is usually there to pick you up and brush you off.

This story is about a typical southern family. It is second in the series but I never read the first book. However, I never felt lost about what I may have missed as the author reconstructed back stories as they applied.

Told from a dual point of view, daughter and mother, we get a peek inside of an emotional minefield family who's husband and soldier was missing in action. It is heartbreaking and emotional, but yet we see how family is there to help with the healing process. The author teaches us that we can move on, existing, and still function even with a broken heart.

And that's just the daughter story. We also get mom's story. Emotional about caring for her mother. Her secrets. Her desires. We see that it's hard to face the truth without hurting people. But this author took us on a ride of her anguished choices and the effects on her life.

The story had a lot of ups and downs for me. Both women had secrets and lies that they had to deal with that changed their life and those around them. I don't want to say there was a happy ever after per se, but choices were made that would put a smile on your face in the end.

Delving into this family story will tie you up in their emotions and issues. This author writes a compelling and sometimes painful story that makes us thankful for family, messy or not. And she does it with beautiful southern charm.

\* copy received for review consideration  
\* full review - <http://amidlifewife.com/the-secret-to...>

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### **Judy Collins says**

*Review to follow.*

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