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IndieFab Book of the Year Bronze Award Winner from ForeWord Reviews

A #1 Best Seller in Romance and an Amazon Book Club Pick!

Set in 1977 West Virginia, A Sinner in Paradise is a heartwarming, uproarious affair with love in all its forms.

Jilted by her fiance, Geneva watches her seemingly idyllic life suddenly fall apart. Bereft and desolate, she packs up her nine cats and leaves her home in Washington, DC to return to her native hills of West Virginia where she plans rest and heal from her heartbreak. When Geneva's ambition, and machinations run up against rugged mountain ways, she finds herself flung from one perilous adventure, romance, crazy circumstance, and heartbreak to another. After facing illness, disaster in the wilderness and an encounter with an old mountain man who teaches her that her soul needs more than men, courtship, and adventure, Geneva finally finds what she's been missing. Ultimately, Geneva realizes she must face herself before she is free to truly love and be loved.

A Sinner in Paradise Details

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Author : Deborah Hining

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Genre : Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Romance, Christian Fiction, Historical, Historical Fiction

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From Reader Review A Sinner in Paradise for online ebook

Jessica says

I liked this book. It's a bit Christain but not too much.

I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads.

Mary says

Just a wonderful book. I have never read anything quite like it. It does not fit the mold for a "Christian fiction," because it deals with real-life situations. The heroine is not one of those sappy, sweet, virginal types who can do no wrong, but a real sinner, one that "Christians" would find objectionable. But the message here is that God loves sinners and can redeem anybody. Plus, it's really well written! Very funny, the characters are well-drawn and vivid. I loved all the side characters, especially Lenora, the old mountain midwife with great wisdom and capabilities.

It also was easy to read, fast-paced, with lots of action and surprises. A great read for open-minded people who like to explore the spiritual side of life yet live in the real world.

Jean Janeri says

I must admit, I wasn't sure that I'd like this book. Though the writer's wit drew me in, Geneva, our heroin was a little self centered and a whole lot "too big for her britches". I didn't think that I was going to like her at all. In hindsight, her character is what kept me turning the pages. Perhaps a little "misunderstood"?

Geneva is a planner and things don't seem to go as planned (whether good or bad). We have a heroine who has some growing up to do and Geneva's progression to understanding that is the real story.

I laughed, I cried, I couldn't wait to get home to bury my nose in the book. There were so many twists and turns I even yelled at her! Ms. Hining has a clever expression that I certainly understand. It's obvious she draws characters from real life experiences.

Late Summer/early Fall is the perfect time to pick up this book. In fact sit outside, and listen to nature - it'll only add to it's delight.

Betty Turnbull says

I'm not surprised it won the bronze for Foreword Reviews INDIE Book of the year. It's entertaining, thought provoking and inspirational. Ms. Hining does a wonderful job of character development. From her description of the mountains, I felt as if I was there.

Elizabeth Hein says

A SINNER IN PARADISE is a charming romance set in the beautiful hills of West Virginia. The descriptions made me want to sit on the porch swing with a cuddly kitten while the characters live out their fascinating lives. The main character, Geneva, has left her fast paced life in Washington, DC to spend some time with her family, who are a well drawn group of funny, real people that propel the story forward and endear you to Geneva. As the story progresses, Geneva collects suitors in the same way she collects cats. They are all lovable in their own way and she could have been happy with whoever she decided she loved.

Deborah Hining's novel is considered Christian fiction, yet is in no way preachy. The inspirational themes are just that, inspirational. The character of Holy Miracle Jones is wonderful. The scenes where Geneva visits with him were some of my favorite parts of the story. Geneva's faith was genuine and added to the plot in an organic, important way.

I thoroughly enjoyed A SINNER IN PARADISE and look forward to reading more from Deborah Hining.

Paul Batten says

The path of Geneva's search for true love goes from a sweet but annoying, superficially obsessed and manipulative young woman, to a character transformed. Her journey and perils are both internal and external, and develop with a twist in rhythm and readers' expectations, from an almost Harlequin Romance beginning - a phase which I found somewhat difficult - to a wildly adventurous, surprising and dangerous time. The open heart of Geneva, to passion and her own truth, are wonderfully done. Deborah Hining does fine work, a fact that is only fully revealed once this story has been herded into its final corral. Wit, great humour, characters that come vividly alive, with a sense of place, speech, and family that is quite wonderful, are all part of her skill. Ride it to the end. I believe you will really enjoy it.

Emily says

I think that this probably deserves something like a 3.5 or 3.75, or maybe a 4. I say "probably" because I am not at all familiar with romance genre writing, so I imagine that it could be a very good example of its genre, but I just don't happen to prefer that genre.

That said, I think that Hining is a great story-teller. The best parts of the book are very good indeed - the narrative, the exciting parts, some of the dialogue.

I also think that the characterization is good. Hining captures the complexity of human nature. Most of her characters are not two-dimensional, but have strengths (some not discovered immediately) and weaknesses, saintly qualities and sinful qualities. I found myself disliking certain characters early in the book, but then coming (as the heroine did) to appreciate them much more as I got to know them better.

Joleen says

I guess because I thought this was Christian fiction, and it was NOT, I am rating it lower. It was very funny in parts, and there was talk of God and a mystic who clearly believes in God, and an older man speaking in tongues, but much of the storyline was not really what I'd call Christian fiction. The main character had no problem sleeping with the men in her life, and she talked about it.

The main character has 4 men interested in her, and two of them are named Howard. Gets confusing for even the other characters in the book.

She's already slept/lived with one of them, chasing another and sleeps with yet another man. And yet there are Christian (sort of) themes within some of the characters... except her.

When she had a mountain top experience with God, no mention of Jesus was in that experience. Others mentioned Jesus, but not her.

I don't know... I just had a hard time with it, even though it was entertaining. I just felt bad that young folks either new to the faith or someone seeking might read this and think this behavior is okay.

Not my cup of tea.

Dianne says

She left the hills of West Virginia to start her own life, but after being dumped by her fiancé, Geneva packs up her life in Washington, D.C. and heads back to family and the life she left behind. The fresh air, the welcoming arms of family and the chance to relive childhood memories seem to unlock some primal urge in Geneva that was fueled by her ex dumping her. She finds herself testing the waters of her femininity, her sex appeal and imagining romantic trysts with three men she meets, directing how each scene will play out.

Deborah Hining sure knows how to create a quirky tale and sock away some pretty deep messages for our heroine. **A Sinner in Paradise** pretty much sums up what this tale is about! What it doesn't say is that there is humor, pretty amazing and beautiful scenes described that are breathtaking to picture and some well-developed characters along the way. I do have to say, I'm not sure what the pull to Geneva is, but that's the magic of wanting love, I guess!

I received this copy from Light Messages Publishing in exchange for my honest review.

My Rating: 3.5 Stars

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For Reviews & More: <http://tometender.blogspot.com>

G says

This book sucked me in from the start- a wonderful & engaging story. Loved it!

Summer Kinard says

I was fortunate enough to read an advance review copy of this book. I admit that I was hesitant about loving the main character at first. Like any oldest child, I couldn't help getting annoyed with Geneva (the protagonist) for some of her younger sister-style foibles. But she made me laugh and cry, and I loved her anyway! The setting in this book is beautifully written throughout, so that the sense of place shines through and carries the reader right into the story. The supporting characters are wonderfully drawn, with rich local flavor. There are so many things to love about this book, besides the fact that it had me alternately gasping in awe at beautiful passages, crying like Peter Rabbit, and chortling loud enough to send my children running to find out what's so funny. Here are a few:

- A wonderful sister relationship
- Well-drawn characters
- Gorgeous mountain scenery, vividly written
- Holy Miracle Jones
- Horsemanship that is realistic (rather than stilted and awkward as one often encounters in romances)
- People with virtue
- Loyalty among the characters
- A memorable and beautiful love scene that didn't make me worry that my grandma was peeking at me from heaven
- One of the funniest endings I've read.
- Healing and faith worked out in gentle everyday fashion.

I could go on, but I am trying my best to avoid spoilers. I am so glad that I read this book here near the end of summer. I can imagine it being a great autumn, winter, or spring read as well, of course, but in the summer, my tea doesn't go cold quite as soon. I wound up sacrificing several good cups of tea to my absorption in the story. The only thing lacking is an on-location vacation! I hope that the author eventually offers reader tours of the locations in the story, because I have fallen in love with the mountains in the pages!

I highly recommend this to lovers of women's fiction. There are a few small anachronisms in regards to technology, but on the whole, the story stays well within its time while speaking accessibly to modern readers. The story has rich elements of Christian faith and maintains discretion on intimate matters. I plan to recommend it to my friends who love Christian fiction as well as mainstream women's fiction.

Carol says

I am not one who typically chooses the romance genre and I had a tough time getting into this book. I could not identify with the main character very well and I was itching for some adventure. I persisted because the book was written by an acquaintance. I eventually found the adventure I was hoping for. The authour does an excellent job of developing her characters and painting the background scenes with words. She is a gifted writer and I hope she continues to persuade her talent.

Megan says

I bought this book purely because it was the amazon daily deal. The reviews looked good so I gave it a try. I

had a hard time getting into this book. The first part of the book felt so disconnected with the rest. I struggled getting through the first part but I'm glad I stuck with it. It felt like this it was 2 different books. The first part was really a drag to get thru and felt choppy and awkward. But I kept at it and I would say that about 1/3 of the way thru it became an entirely different book. I wonder if a better editor might have solved this problem. I really enjoyed the book once Geneva and Rachael went on their drive up the mountain. That is where it began for me. After that Geneva became more real and not such an amazingly immature girl with her silly fantasies.

I enjoyed the changes that came over Geneva and her quest to be a better person. I liked the religious tone of the book. It was a part of the people and who they were and didn't feel preachy or condescending like so many books can be. I loved a lot of the side characters and it was easy to see why she loved her home and her people.

It got a little ridiculous with all these men hot after Geneva. She just had to walk into a room and had men falling at her feet. What woman wouldn't love that? Some of her silly antics in the beginning of the book seemed like a bad episode of Three's company. The second half of the book had some laugh out loud funny things. It just felt like the author's writing improved as she moved further into the story.

Tom Brown says

Geneva is quite a character. While my wife and I were continually amazed at how self-centered that the protagonist was, we were both also struck by how many people truly loved this woman. There must have been something charming and perhaps a little magical about Geneva to make so many people care for her. Perhaps it was God, as Holy Miracle said in the book, showing others that she was a special person. We enjoyed being taken away on Geneva's many different adventures from helping her sister give birth to twins in the rain near a swollen river to her flight from a wild boar as she tried to seek help for an injured friend. Geneva's suitors were quite a mixed bag and one was never sure who might finally win her heart. It must be noted that Geneva sure didn't live a boring life and her adventures kept both of us reading the book until the very end. Considering that one of us is not someone who usually reads romantic stories, it says a lot about Ms. Hining's storytelling abilities!

Jessica says

www.2thepointbooks.blogspot.com

When I picked up this ARC, I wasn't sure what to expect. Is it a romance? A smarmy cheesefest? A fictional memoir?

Instead, I found it to be an uplifting tale of a woman named Geneva who journeys from the throes of immaturity to a life filled with wisdom and humility by eschewing city life and returning to her roots in rural West Virginia. I was happily surprised with how much I liked it!

The writing was fluid and easy to read. I usually hate it when accents are phonetically spelled out, but the author Deborah Hining does it well. It's actually easy to read. I could hear the accent in my mind.

The ebook had some punctuation problems, but that is easily overlooked in favor of the prose.

Hining has a knack for descriptive writing. Her descriptions of the mountain country where Geneva lives were beautiful, and they transported me to the times I have been in the mountains and experienced that

natural splendor.

One theme of the book: every person in your life can be a source of knowledge. Every person on earth is equal, and they all have the ability to enrich your life. Geneva starts out looking down her nose at the “hillbillies” she meets and morphs into a woman who appreciates and loves them. She learns from every person that she meets.

There are religious elements to the story, but it only gets overly preachy two or three times, and those are towards the end of the book when the main character is discovering and trying to fix her flaws.

My favorite characters in the book are Lilly and Sally Beth. Whenever those two show up together in the prose, you know you are going to get some hilarious bickering. I loved it. I delighted in discovering that there was more to Sally Beth than a bickering cousin. She made me want to look at people differently.

One reason I gave it 4 stars instead of 5 is that the ending was a bit abrupt. All the concerns that Geneva brings up about her situation are not resolved satisfactorily. The ending also leaves the other three men in Geneva’s life hanging – they were all in love with her. It seems unfair to leave them unhappy – they were all good men. There is also a smattering of mild swearing and premarital sex.

I can recommend this book to those in the mood for an uplifting, Christian book.

Thank you NetGalley and Light Messages Publishing for the opportunity to review this book.
