



# Magnolia Wednesdays

Wendy Wax

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**Magnolia Wednesdays** Wendy Wax

**From the author of *The Accidental Bestseller* comes a wonderfully entertaining book about what to do when life comes at you full swing.**

At forty-one, Vivian Armstrong Gray's life as an investigative journalist is crumbling. Humiliated after taking a bullet in her backside during an exposé, Vivi learns that she's pregnant, jobless, and very hormonal. This explains why she says 'yes' to a dreadful job covering suburban living back home in Georgia, a column she must write incognito.

Down south, it's her sister's ballroom dance studio that becomes her undercover spot where she learns about the local life-and where unexpected friendships develop. As she digs up her long buried roots, she starts to wonder if life inside the picket fence is really so bad after all.

## Magnolia Wednesdays Details

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Author : Wendy Wax

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# From Reader Review *Magnolia Wednesdays* for online ebook

## Erin says

Yawn inducing predictable, minus one surprise. Total joke that they feel the need a Reader's Guide in the back, as the book has the same depth as a kiddie pool.

If I have to say something nice, I will say that I want those purple strappy sandals on the cover.

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## Vickie says

*Magnolia Wednesdays* is the first book I have ever read by Wendy Wax, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Vivien Armstrong Gray is a Southerner at heart whether she realizes it or not. When her life as a investigative journalist in NYC spins out of control, she heads home to her sister in Georgia where Vivian attempts to blend her old life into her new life.

I look forward to reading more by Wendy Wax.

Go Cards! L1C4!!

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## Jennifer says

One of the best things about being a blogger is discovering new authors that I have not heard of before. When I was asked to review Wendy Wax's novel *Magnolia Wednesdays*, I jumped at the chance. This book is right up my alley. As soon as I started reading it, I was hooked. The characters are so richly portrayed and drawn out. The plot moved steadily and all loose ends were wrapped up nicely. I actually tried to read this book as slowly as possible because I wanted to savor each and every word on the page. I loved this book!

Vivian Armstrong Gray is a 41 year old investigative journalist living in New York City. While investigating a story, she is shot in the backside (yup, that backside), the video of which ends up on YouTube (yup, that YouTube). Humiliated, jobless, and newly pregnant, Vivi's life is falling apart. Desperately seeking work, she accepts a job writing scathing articles about suburbia for the *Weekly Encounter* - a job she must write under a pseudonym. Vivi heads to Georgia and moves in with her sister (Melanie), niece (Shelby), and nephew (Trip) and promptly immerses herself into the suburban life. She joins Melanie as she goes through her daily (and exhausting) life as a single mother of two teenagers, trying to keep her business afloat, while keeping her kids on the right path -- and trying to figure out what the heck her sister is doing back in Georgia.

Melanie runs *Magnolia Hall*, a dance studio, in her Georgia hometown and is always trying to offer new and exciting classes to try and bring in new business. Her latest venture is a Wednesday night belly dancing class, which much of the novel revolves around. Melanie forces Vivi into taking the class (she needs as many people as possible to make people feel comfortable!) where we are introduced to two secondary characters whose stories we learn about throughout the rest of the story. The Hall almost becomes a character unto itself in this novel. A lot of action takes place here and it was very easy for me to visualize the Hall, with bustling

activity and classes taking place concurrently. Melanie, Vivi and their friends decorating for the holidays; lining up for belly dancing class; joining the Friday night social party. It really sounds like a happening place! It's also the place where Vivi learns a lot about the local suburban life for her articles.

Meanwhile, Vivi is struggling with her pregnancy and how to tell the father of the child, Stone, that he's going to be a daddy. Stone is a war correspondent and is overseas in hostile war territory covering extreme situations where he is in constant danger. She can never seem to find the "right moment" to divulge her news to him. Will she ever get the chance?

As Vivi continues to write her articles in anonymity, she begins to forge a deeper relationship with her sister and make new friendships with people at Magnolia Hall. What Vivi discovers about herself and her relationships while "undercover" in suburbia will have a profound impact on her life. But what happens once her secrets are revealed? Will her family and new friends ever forgive her?

Magnolia Wednesdays is an amazing story of family dynamics and relationships. It makes you realize that, no matter how old you are, it really is never too late to go home again.

Jennifer

<http://www.crazy-for-books.com>

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## **April says**

nope nope nope. I really tried. I did. I couldn't take it any more.

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## **Melody says**

I totally enjoyed reading Wendy Wax's previous novel, *The Accidental Bestseller* so when the publicist asked if I wanted to review her latest release, *Magnolia Wednesdays*, I said yes without hesitation.

While *The Accidental Bestseller* tells the story of a writer's life, this time around *Magnolia Wednesdays* allows readers to get a glimpse of the life of a journalist and I have to say I totally loved the setting as I have always been intrigued by this profession (and not to mention I am in awe of journalists who would go to great lengths to cover a story).

In this story, Vivien Armstrong is just one of them but it seems she ran out of luck one day when she got shot in the butt while investigating a story. To add up the humiliation, a video showing her getting shot is being circulated on the net and all of a sudden she became the news. Her employer is definitely not impressed by the way she works, and decided she should take a break. Vivien would not allow someone younger to take over her job, so she quits.

She decided to move in with her sister Melanie in suburban Atlanta, thinking this would be a good opportunity to spend more time with Melanie and her family, after all she has been neglecting them; it is also at that time she realised she is pregnant at age forty. She decided not to let anyone know about her pregnancy, not even her boyfriend since he is a correspondent and he is always travelling. Vivien later found a job in writing columns for a weekly magazine but under the pseudonym of Scarlett Leigh, as she writes

about her observations living in the neighbourhood in suburban Atlanta. After staying there for a while she began to see things differently while she search for her own happiness.

Magnolia Wednesdays is basically a story about family, secrets and life in general. One of the things I liked about this story is reading about the changes in Vivien, right from the beginning of her life being an ambitious journalist to being a woman who has a strong liking to her family and the simple things surrounding her. Besides Vivien, there is also a sub-story about Ruth and Angela; both women living in suburban Atlanta and are also friends of Melanie.

As much as I enjoyed reading Magnolia Wednesdays, I would have to say I'd prefer The Accidental Bestseller more partly there are more interactions between the three protagonists comparing to this, as it seems to focus more on Vivien. I understand this is simply a different approach by the author on the plot and style so I do not really have an issue with it and is simply my own preference. Nevertheless, Magnolia Wednesdays is a heartwarming story and if you love a good Southern women's fiction, this book is for you.

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### **Ashley Deniz says**

this book was painful. There are not many books I have disliked more than this one. the characters were not likeable, I hated the story line and I detest women who do not tell the father of a child that there is a child. Only read it for book club, took me forever, could not force myself to read it but finally did and I am glad I did for book club but I never want to read another book by Wendy Wax, sorry.

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### **Lynnie says**

If I can't finish it, it only gets one star. It might have been better than that, but to be honest, I don't care. I'm about halfway through & the characters are pretty useless, boring & one-dimensional. The trajectory of the book is predictable. I'm pretty sure I have the whole "mystery" of JJ & Clay figured out (& if I don't, I don't care that I'm wrong). I'm just not interested in picking up the book up & read any further so I won't spend another moment trying to inspire myself when there are better books out there to read.

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### **Andrea says**

Since my undergrad was in broadcast journalism, I am always excited to read a good story about a journalist. If it has a chick-lit theme with a good plot and good characters, that's even better. And Magnolia Wednesdays was just that.

While I didn't completely connect with the main character, Vivi (although I love the teaching job that I have now, it's not my life), I definitely remember how intense broadcast journalism can be and how life-consuming it can be. I loved how Vivi grew into a warm, loving sister and mother. She had setbacks, but in the end she had grown so much.

The other cast of characters were great as well. From Melanie, Vivi's sister and the all-around great single mom, to Ruth, the elderly lady who spent her days in the dance studio and wanted her marriage back to the way it used to be, to Amanda, the bride-to-be who can't get over her formerly obese days, to Shelby and Trip,

Melanie's children.

And there was a twist with Vivi's brother-in-law's death that I didn't see coming at all. I had my own theories about what would come out about the death but I was so far off!

This was a heart-warming story and one that I truly enjoyed.

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### **Julia says**

Vivien Armstrong Gray is reaching that certain decade in broadcast journalism that can be a little difficult to breach. As one of her investigative pieces winds up more popular on You Tube and her body is becoming a hormonal mess, Vivi heads home to Georgia. This suburban life of her sister Melanie is very foreign to Vivi, but the sisters adult relationship eventually begins to flourish. Many of the nuances of any Southern novel are here, but Wax does a gentle job with her characters and they are not typecast. It's always nice to read chick-lit of women of a more realistic age and place in life.

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### **Alicia Jones says**

I was pleasantly surprised. I didn't have any really high hopes, but was enchanted by the characters. I loved this book!

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### **Kathleen says**

The opening pages of "Magnolia Wednesdays" set the stage for Vivien Armstrong Gray's personal and professional life to unravel. With smart dialogue, entertaining circumstances, typical of Wendy Wax's novels, the story quickly drew me in. Pregnant, humiliated by a video of herself gone viral on YouTube, and jobless, Vivi returns to her widowed sister's home in Georgia to figure out her next steps.

The sister, Melanie, has opened a dance studio, a venue which allows the reader to meet a number of characters struggling with personal conflicts, supported by their friendships.

But as the story developed and the plot complicated by all the secrets harbored, I discovered the larger part of Vivi, the edgy, investigative journalist, focused on getting at the truth regardless of danger, was self absorbed, selfish, and emotionally immature. While she grew up a bit and took on some responsibility, she largely did what she wanted. Yes, the columns she published under a "Gone With the Wind" pseudonym, often made me laugh, but I realized I didn't like Vivi very much, wasn't terribly invested in her outcome and cringed at the damage she caused around her.

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## Cheryl says

Vivien Armstrong Gray was covering one of the biggest stories when things went terribly wrong and Vivien ended up getting shot in the butt. After this incident, Vivien has become the butt of everyone's jokes. Vivien needs a break, so she heads down to stay with her sister, Melanie and her two children, Sheila and Trip.

Vivien soon realizes things aren't always as they seem in the suburbs. Vivien comes up with the idea to write a news column about the burbs. She calls it Postcards from Suburbia. She writes under a pen name of Scarlett Leigh. Things don't quite add up in the death of Melanie's husband, J.J. Vivien decides to do some investigating into his death. How long will Vivien be able to survive in the suburbs?

Magnolia Wednesdays is the first book I have read by author, Wendy Wax. I have wanted to check out her books but just haven't until now. Vivien has so much life and character to her. The funniest moments were when she was driving. Anyone and everyone had better stay in their homes when Vivien is on the roads. I felt sorry for the poor cop who kept having run ins with Vivien. Though, he got back at her when he made her walk to the gas station in her bath robe. Magnolia Wednesdays does not have to be read on a Wednesday, it can be enjoyed any day or time of the week. Don't take my word for it, pick up a copy today and see for yourself.

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## Sara says

Wanted to like this novel and to be able to recommend as a lighter read for book club, but alas this will not do. Vivi is a smart reporter in NYC until she gets shot on a story. Humiliated as her shooting hits the net and after learning she is being replaced at work, she quits her job. She decides to return home to a sister in the South whom she no longer knows. And there she sees the lives of suburban minivan moms and writes up snotty articles making fun of their lifestyles. So, she is living in her sisters house--free, doesn't spend any time "working", she gets food prepared for her nightly and her room is cleaned, and she's pregnant (but reluctant to tell baby daddy)...I just never had empathy for Vivi, she could do so much more than be a selfish obtuse mooch.

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## Macwolf01 [Elise] says

I'd actually give this book 3 1/2 stars but it won't let me. I really like Wendy Wax's writing style and the book was a quick easy read. This story bounces back and forth from the perspectives of 2 sisters. Vivi gets shot in the bum, quits her job in an emotional explosion and then finds out she's pregnant. She heads down to live with her widowed sister and her two teens.

~~~SPOILER~~~

My only complaint with this book is that NO ONE is so completely self delusional about their own life as Vivi is written. She sees and writes about the 'truth' of everyone elses life but when it comes to her own she spends the WHOLE book (until the very end) before she starts to believe that the baby is really coming and that maybe she should have told Stone (her boyfriend of 3 years ... who's in Afghanistan) REALLY NOT

BLOODY LIKELY! Otherwise, a pretty good book.

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## **Laurel-Rain says**

Wendy Wax has magically turned "Magnolia Wednesdays" into one of those homey, cozy, and totally intriguing peeks into the Southern way of life. For a woman who thought she'd totally escaped that world, Vivien Armstrong Gray finds herself suddenly catapulted back there when she is shot in the derriere while investigating a story. When the video ends up on You-Tube, and her employers think she needs to take a step back and they bring in an "understudy" for her to train, she quits.

Huffily, she takes off for her home in Atlanta, where she moves in with her sister Melanie and prepares to follow her around in suburbia. But first, in the process of quitting, she has taken on a free-lance assignment to write Postcards from Suburbia for her NY newspaper.

On the way out of NY, though, she visits her doctor to follow up on the "wound," and discovers something else unexpected...she is pregnant. Her boyfriend is on assignment in various spots around the world, and she decides not to tell him...not for awhile, anyway.

What does Vivi discover while exploring this "strange land of suburbia"? What happens along the way to totally change her view of almost everything? And in the end, will she finally find her own happiness?

This could have been one of those predictable chick-lit stories, but Wendy Wax has a way of turning a phrase and pulling the reader in. She writes with humor, depth, and insight, which earned five stars from me.

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