



The Goddess Rules

Clare Naylor

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Here's the delightful new novel from Clare Naylor, whose sleeper hit *Dog Handling* was one of *Cosmopolitan*'s Best Beach Reads for 2002. Fresh and fun, *The Goddess Rules* is an outrageous, wry, and razor-sharp portrait of a girl who thinks her life is just fine—until she meets a woman who swears by the belief that life is meant to be *fabulous*.

When obsessed pet owners have pooches or kitties they want immortalized on canvas, Kate Disney is the artist of choice. From her shed (which doubles as a studio and apartment) in London's Primrose Hill, Kate caters to the whims of the rich and famous while herself living a decidedly bohemian existence. The problem is, she has a tendency to cater to her on-again, way-off-again boyfriend as well. Jake is so erratic, that most of her friends don't understand why she even bothers. But it's hard to fall out of love with a man who writes her songs and calls her "Angel"—even if he disappears for weeks at a time.

Luckily for Kate, Mirabelle Moncur isn't buying any of that claptrap. Mirri was an actress, a legend in her time. Now, at age sixty, she's given up on fame and men and lives in Africa, where she raises lion cubs. But her reclusive nature has done nothing to dull her beauty, mar her incredible figure, or dampen her outrageous joie de vivre.

After sweeping into London to have Kate paint a portrait of her favorite cub, Mirri seizes hold of Kate's life—from the baggy wardrobe to the hopeless taste in men. Under Mirri's tutelage, Kate learns to dance on tables with abandon, drink like a dockworker, and flirt like a goddess. And when her old friend Louis reenters the picture, she begins to see things in a whole new light. But Mirri has secrets that hint at a less than divine future. Now it's Kate's turn to teach Mirri a thing or two about life, love, and being fabulous.

From the Hardcover edition.

The Goddess Rules Details

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From Reader Review The Goddess Rules for online ebook

Jennifer Johnson says

I must say that Clare Naylor's book, The Goddess Rules was not what I expected it to be. Yes, it's about a single girl looking for love- but it took turns that I didn't expect. The story follows Kate Disney, who's dating a hopeless loser, because she's happy to settle for what she has. When Mirabelle Moncur, Marilyn Monroe like sexpot from the sixties, moves in, she begins to teach Kate to embrace her inner sexpot. Yes, this sounds more hokey than it is-- I actually really liked the Moncur character. Mirabelle helps Kate learn and discover new things about herself and make decisions that she may not be ready to accept.

Yes this book follows all the same patterns for traditional chick lit. However, at one point it did get a little eyebrow raising, (they threw in a juicy sex scene... yeah!) and I enjoyed it. It took a slightly different route than most books, and I enjoyed that it was something "new" to a "getting old" format. I had fun when I was reading this book- it wasn't life changing or entirely engrossing... but it was still good to read. I'm giving it a positive 6.5/10- recommended for light and fluffy beach reading.

Js says

A quick, amusing read, with some good supporting characters. The protagonist is frustrating, though. You sometimes want to yell at her not to be an idiot! Her relationship with the older woman on the scene, however, is great fun.

Gacia says

Definitely not what I expected especially with a title like "Goddess rules". This was a fun read, I really liked the characters and it was somewhat inspirational and relatable. If you're in the mood for a chick lit book, this will be a light, amusing read.

Kathy says

From a blog post I wrote in 2005:

If you're not into Chick Lit, read no further as Clare Naylor's latest book is just that. British Chick Lit to boot.

The protagonist is a youngish painter of animal portraits in London called Kate Disney. Kate's trying to get over a bad boy boyfriend whom all of her friends loathe but to whom she's completely addicted. Into Kate's life appears French actress Mirabelle Moncur, a sex symbol from the 60s who's still got it and wants to show Kate that Kate's got it, too. The two form an unlikely friendship, our heroine makes a bunch of stupid choices (common for the genre) but everyone does live happily ever after.

This was a perfect book to read on a lazy holiday afternoon.

Jodotha says

2.5 stars. It was a bit hard to get behind the protagonist on this one. She was one of those girls who has it better than you but is an idiot and doesn't realize. Good cast of secondaries, though. Certainly an amusing little book, just a bit too realistic for my tastes, only with more hot men. I prefer, if it's going to be realistic, that it not get my hopes up. :-P

Ashley says

I wasn't sure what I was getting when I chose the audiobook of *The Goddess Rules*. I was looking for something "chick lit" and something with a bit of romance to it, because I'd been being far too practical lately.

The Goddess Rules delivers completely. Set in England (a nice surprise as I started listening), *The Goddess Rules* tells the story of twenty-nine year old Kate Disney. An artist who makes her living painting animal portraits, Kate lives in the converted garden shed on her friend Leonard's estate in Primrose Hill. Not the typical starving artist, Kate's saving money to buy a flat with her boyfriend, musician Jake. The problem is that Jake is a cad, refusing to completely commit to Kate.

Enter Mirabelle Moncur (Mirri), an aging, but still beautiful and sexy and oh-so-French former screen goddess. Mirri commissions Kate to paint a portrait of a lion cub Mirri has adopted. After an awkward start, Kate and Mirri become friends. Mirri has always been a free spirit, forging her own path and collecting and discarding lovers along the way. Mirri helps Kate see Jake's flaws and tells Kate, in no uncertain terms, that she can do so much better than him.

The adventures unfold as Kate becomes more sure of herself, more open, and embarks on a journey that might lead her to her true love. Aside from the main story, there are enjoyable subplots, including the plight of Kate's best friend, and Mirri's long lost love.

I got more out of *The Goddess Rules* than I do a lot of other chick lit books. I think first it is because of the characterization. Mirri is strong and sexy and confident and plays by no one's rules but her own. Yet, she's vulnerable, afraid to take the steps that could reunite her with the one who got away. Kate, too, comes across as authentic. She's insecure about the same things a lot of us are, like when we feel like all our friends are miles ahead of us in "life". And while she wallows in self pity a bit, she also learns to take charge of her life and her decisions.

Mirri shows Kate how to enjoy life, to enjoy men. She helps Kate see that there's so much more to life than just what Kate was experiencing. She teaches Kate to live in the moment, to enjoy the small experiences. And most importantly, to listen to her heart and be true to herself. Kate, in turn, teachers Mirri that Mirri is not the center of the universe. She brings out a compassionate side to Mirri. When Mirri is too afraid to look up her old flame, the only man she's ever really loved, Kate steps in and encourages her.

All in all, I found *The Goddess Rules* to be an enjoyable listen. I'll definitely check out more Clare Naylor.

Kim Power says

Insightful, funny, poignant

This is a great story. There is real growth of self-awareness and honesty, yet nobody becomes perfect. Well written, beautifully and compassionately characterised, (though sometime I could have shaken Kate, this is a novel that truly engages the emotions.

J.H. Moncrieff says

Hmm...3.5 stars for this one.

Naylor is a good writer. This book has a lot of potential, and I wouldn't rule out reading more from her. But why do heroines in women's fiction, especially younger women, always have to be so insecure? Kate, the protagonist, is a phenomenally talented artist. She's pretty, as we get told over and over again, and she has amber eyes, as we also are consistently reminded of. She's smart, although not in the ways of love, but an insecure wreck to the point you want to scream at her. How many times does she have to have people throwing tons of money at her before she believes her artwork is kinda sorta okay?

The POV switches are odd too. Naylor jumps into anyone's mind, at any time, often leaping into three of four different characters' brains in one page. It's unsettling.

While the title is a bit misleading--this is really a book about a young woman learning not to settle for less than she deserves from men--it's decent brain candy. I'd just love to read about young women whose inner dialogue consists of something other than, "I suck," until a man comes along and makes them feel better about themselves. Call me crazy.

Amanda says

This was a well written book. Not often that I read a book from an English author. This was one I just happened to see while browsing the shelves at the library thought it looked interesting so I got it. Took a little to really get into it but once I did it was great! Wonderful story of how relationships are; especially as I have been in similar relationships and had similar endeavors as both Katie and Mirri had. Ironically I have been in both Kate and Mirri shoes a number of times. Really allows you to put into perspective your own life when you read a similar story through the eyes of others. Definitely consider reading other books from this author when I come across them.

Tonya says

This was your basic british chick lit. Nothing special.

Donna says

This was an enjoyable romance. The MC is dating a real loser. One of those guys that play with you but don't really respect you. Waiting in the wings is a wonderful guy who has been in love with her for years. Of course, the loser notices and tries to keep her and she is foolish enough to fall for it (as many of us tend to do from time to time). There is a lot of personal growth and friendship as well in this book. I would definitely recommend this book.

Martha Wewer says

I thought this was a hilariously funny book. Haven't we all chosen the wrong man. Like the REALLY wrong man. And the sad things is, you know you are doing it at the time too. Anyway, if you have ever made a decision out of sheer panic, you can relate to the main character. Super-easy read, I finished it in about 4 hours.

Monkeyface says

Another book Listened to The Goddess Rules by Clare Naylor. This book was ok I got lost in the first 3 chapters, al in all the romance was good and the story was fun. I give it a 6. I think my favorite part was when the main character make friends with an actress and he lion cub.

Rebecca says

Another turd blossom. And the sad thing is, I have tons of books from this author in my car, waiting for me, I don't know if I'll get to them now. I am not looking forward to it at all, but I hate returning books to the library unread. Already on a bad note with this one. Girl lives in the shed of her father's rich (gay) (old) friend. Girl is a painter. She is in a sucky relationship with a horrible boy. Rich, old, famous women comes from Africa and stays with old gay friend. The girls don't get off on the right foot to start. Things happen and of course they end up the best of friends! Whatever happens and girl ends up with an old art school friend, who they don't get into all that much, but you know he is better for her then the slag. Took place in London, mainly because the author is British, but it didn't bring anything to the story. I couldn't wait for it to end.

Maria (Ri) says

My review for Armchair Interviews:

Kate Disney has her life all figured out--a job that she loves (well, painting pet portraits isn't exactly her passion); a loving boyfriend (well, Jake's unfaithful ways leave a bit to be desired); and a fabulous home (well, technically she lives in the shed behind her friend's lavish home).

Kate is content to move blindly through life, that is, until Mirabelle Moncur, a larger-than-life cinema diva, breezes into her life and opens her eyes to a whole new world. Mirri is elegant and brash and says exactly what is on her mind. She introduces Kate to the goddess lifestyle. Everyone has a lot of growing pains in store when Kate walks the line between goddess and plebeian.

The Goddess Rules is a fun romp with some truly hilarious scenes. Mirri's fabulous over-the-top life provides most of the humor in the book. The most engrossing part of the book, though, is seeing the surprising relationship develop between two very unlikely friends.

Though Kate and Mirri couldn't be more different, they have much to teach each other and much to discover is truly the same between them.

As is typical for chick lit, The Goddess Rules provides a lighthearted look at finding love and discovering yourself. Truly empowering!
